

TBA Field Course

MRC, Kenya

11th August – 7th September 2022



THE TBA FIELD COURSES

Our field courses are at the heart of TBA's mission: to help build the next generations of committed conservationists. With threats to nature in the tropics escalating, the need for African professionals to meet their conservation challenges has never been more pressing,

That is why we have developed a world-class, influential capacity building programme, that provides practical training and field experience for early career scientists to research, manage and protect tropical biodiversity. There is a real demand for our training: we received over 350 applications for this year's field course for the 12 places we were able to provide.

INSPIRING CAREERS IN CONSERVATION

Our 2022 TBA field course gave 24 young scientists from 18 countries practical hands-on training that will help launch their careers. A unique feature of TBA courses is that half the participants are from countries in Africa and half from Europe. This international group made the Mpala Research Centre their home for a month long of learning, inspiration and networking.

In addition to being an extraordinary opportunity for all, this was the first time many of the students from Africa had travelled outside their own country. Creating a multi-cultural environment is a key feature of TBA's field courses, because this is an effective way to create professional relationships between like minded conservationists that span the globe..



A VIRTUAL BEGINNING

For the first time, our field course included an online component using the new TBA virtual learning platform. The students were able to start their learning and engagement before heading to the field, learning about the programme's topics through our interactive and dynamic online resources.

It also provided an excellent introduction to the group, as the students met each other and shared information online before meeting in person.

"Prior to the course, we were given access to an online platform of learning materials. These included academic papers, podcasts and online lectures and activities to complete, a great preparation for the practical element of the course."

Isobel Hawkins, United Kingdom

"It was very educative and well informing. I could feel like I was at Mpala and knew it before i even arrived there."

Karen Chiro, Zimbabwe



OUTDOOR LEARNING

The field is our classroom

Learning in the field through a hands-on, practical approach is at the core of the TBA courses. Participants gain new field skills and broaden their research horizons through learning about a diverse range of topics from our expert teachers.

Importantly, the new knowledge and expertise that participants gain can be applied in their own work back home and can be built on throughout their careers.



"Not only has TBA taught me new scientific skills but also allowed me to challenge myself as a person and improved my collaboration skills."

Caka Karlsson, Sweden

"I especially liked how this class connected people, even though I am an introvert. The fact that it could combine: curiosity, fun, and, most of all, learning is also a unique aspect that we never had in college."

Tahiry Razafimanantsoa, Madagascar

THE TEACHERS

Excellence and real-world experience

We invited world-class scientists to teach on the course and share their expertise in current approaches to ecology and conservation. A key feature of TBA courses is that half the course teachers are drawn from the host country, creating an unrivalled mix of real-world expertise and a diversity of approaches.

Participants learnt about savanna ecology and conservation, human wildlife coexistence, freshwater systems and pollination, as well as topical issues such as citizen science and acoustic sampling.



"Each lecturer had a different way of teaching, this is always inspiring for me."

Jonathan Neumann, Germany

"The constant interaction we had with local researchers and the expertise they demonstrated regarding the local ecosystems they study was really inspiring."

Akiva Topper, Israel

COLLABORATION AND RESEARCH

The course gave students a valuable opportunity to design and carry out their own field research projects, which our experience shows has a huge impact on their careers afterwards. The projects teach students a suite of research skills from how to come up with a research question through to devising field methods, analyzing data and presenting their results. Students from different countries and cultures collaborate together on the projects, which is an incredibly enriching experience.

These projects also generated new information and insights into the ecology of Mpala, which we were able to share with the scientists at the research station.

"The TBA course provided me with a platform to work with many people from different backgrounds and ways of thinking. It gave me a feel of what a collaborative scientific environment in real-time looks like. I picked up some things about how these people think and their approach to problem solving in a way I would not normally approach problems based on my background."

Okposio Emmanuel Osibeme, Nigeria

"The projects taught me many new skills that are already being useful in my studies, such as managing a project and sharing it with others that might be experienced or new to the field."

Blanche Pioger, Switzerland



NURTURING REGIONAL AND GLOBAL NETWORKS

Creating a lasting impact

Thanks to your generous support, the end of these young scientists' time on the TBA course marks the beginning of a career in conservation. They now join a dynamic global network of 2412 alumni, creating a critical mass of skilled professionals. Our alumni have progressed to be leaders in their fields, saving species and protecting habitats, carrying out research, or working for decision-making bodies.

Our courses have a powerful multiplier effect - there are 16 alumni groups from across Africa sharing the skills they learnt on their TBA courses, training others and catalysing new projects.

"The Tropical Biology Association (TBA) field course is a dream come true for upcoming African ecologists."

Owino Raymond, Kenya

Looking ahead, the Tropical Biology Association will build on this year's success to develop more courses to meet the huge demand for our life-changing training.

With thanks to:



**Nick Waser and
Mary Price**



THE TEACHERS

**PROF JEFF OLLERTON**

University of Northampton,
UK

During a career spanning more than 30 years, Jeff has established himself as one of the world's leading experts on pollinators and pollination.

**DR KIM MORTEGA**

Museum für Naturkunde,
Germany

Kim's research and teaching interests are conservation, biodiversity, and urban ecology with a special interest in birds.

**DR DUNCAN KIMUYU**

Karatina University, Kenya

Head of Department of Natural Resources at Karatina University, Duncan's current research is on understanding responses of wildlife biodiversity to anthropogenic drivers of change

**DR LABAN NJOROGE**

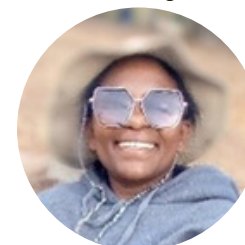
National Museum of Kenya

Laban is a Kenyan freshwater ecologist who engages citizen scientists to help monitor and manage their rivers and catchments. He is East Africa's leading expert on dragonflies.

**DR DAVID KIMITI**

Grevy's Zebra Trust, Kenya

Rangeland Ecologist currently working as Director of Research and Impact for the Grevy's Zebra Trust. David is broadly experienced in rangeland science and management.

**DR FLORA NAMU**

Karatina University, Kenya

Flora is a lecturer and researcher at the Department of Natural Resources Management. Her current research focus on the conservation of pollinators in urban green spaces.

**KIMANI N'DUNGU**

Mpala Research Centre,
Kenya

Kimani is a Kenyan ecologist who has carried out research on freshwater; the impacts of land-use change on vegetation; and habitat connectivity. He has over 10 years of field teaching experience.

**DR ROSIE TREVELYAN**

Tropical Biology Association,
UK

Rosie is a passionate advocate of capacity building as a vital tool for effective conservation. She has been at TBA from the beginning, making sure TBA's teaching has real and lasting impact.

**DR MARIANA CARVALHO**

Tropical Biology Association,
UK

Mariana has conducted most of her work in Africa, from social ecological research to training and support of local civil society. She is committed to empowering people to have an active role in global conservation.

THE STUDENTS

Name	Country
Akiva Topper	Israel
Alexander Schlatmann	Netherlands
Alexander Harry Philip	United Kingdom
Antoinette Prudence Tegueu Kemeni	Cameroon
Blanche Pioger	Switzerland
Carin Karlsson	Sweden
Cayla Silberman	Austria
Edlawit Bedada Debele	Ethiopia
Emmanuel Okposio	Nigeria
Iris Noordermeer	Netherlands
Isobel Hawkins	United Kingdom
Jonathan Neumann	Germany
Kumbirai Karen Chiro	Zimbabwe
Kwaku Afrifa Dwumah	Ghana
Luis Pfeifer	Germany
Mary Waithira Ngugi	Kenya
Janeth Mngulwi	Tanzania
Nolutho Makwati	South Africa
Placide Masengesho	Rwanda
Rares Cristea	Romania
Raymond Owino	Kenya
Ronja Härdtner	Germany
Swithin Kashulwe	Zambia
Zo Tahiry Andrianaivo Razafimantsoa	Madagascar



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Investing in people for conservation

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