



TBA Field Course Kibale Forest, Uganda

28th July – 24th August 2023





INSPIRING CAREERS IN CONSERVATION

Africa supports an immense wealth of biodiversity – from iconic species to rich habitats, which are vital for supporting people's livelihoods, cultures and economies. The case for conserving this biodiversity has never been stronger, and the TBA is giving the next generations of conservationists the expertise and know-how to bring about a real change on the ground.

TBA field courses are unique because they provide real-world training that no-one else is providing, particularly for upcoming African conservation scientists. Our courses take place in the habitats that need conserving which means students gain the tools, skills and inspiration needed for a impactful career in conservation.

There is a real demand for our training. This year we received more than 280 applications from Africa (86% of the total applications), for the 12 places we were able to provide on the Kibale course.

"The TBA course was unique from start to finish. From starting learning theory and practical methods for conservation field work to carrying out our own research project."

Gareth Fee, South Africa



THE KIBALE FIELD COURSE

Our 2023 field course gave hands-on training to 24 young scientists from 19 countries (half from countries in Africa and half from the rest of the world). This international group made the the Kibale Forest National Park their home for a month of learning, inspiration and networking. Based at the Makerere University Biological Field Station (MUBFS), the course ensured a full immersion in a forest ecosystem with a vibrant biodiversity.

The participants mixed well from the start, supported by deliberate pairing and grouping to promote gender and geography mixing. All the teachers and staff encouraged this as an unique opportunity to collaborate and engage with people from different cultures, which was happily taken and owned by the participants.

"The TBA course has given me an amazing introduction to tropical biology and conservation, and that has inspired me to continue working in tropical areas in the future."

Anna Ahlberg, Sweden



The course included an online component using the 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.

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



OUTDOOR LEARNING

A hands-on, practical approach is at the core of the TBA field courses. Participants gain new skills that cannot be gained in the classroom and are the foundation of effective conservation work.

In Kibale, participants learned on site how to frame ecological questions observing the forest around them. In a series of practical workshops and exercises guided by our expert teachers, they learned about the forest and forest regeneration, insects, birds, and bats. They have also experimented with a range of identification techniques, survey methods, and research protocols.

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

" The opportunity to work in a real-world setting allowed me to refine my field skills and gain the confidence needed to conduct ecological research independently."

Purity Njambi, Kenya

"The knowledge and experiences I acquired in Kibale have exerted a considerable influence on my career aspirations. The insights and skills I gained through TBA are highly transferrable. "

Brett Hoy, UK

WORLD CLASS TEACHERS



Our awesome teachers led research talks and lectures in forest ecology and restoration, human wildlife coexistence, aspects of nocturnal ecology and impact of artificial lights, the process and ethics of gene drive, as well teaching more practical issues such as acoustic sampling and data analysis. The participants were highly engaged and participative in all topics.

A key feature of TBA 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. Also, the majority of the teachers in this course were TBA alumni, now in strategic and high-level positions, who enthusiastically come back to teach. This creates an inspiring example for the students, and reinforces their motivation for a career in conservation.

"The mentors of the course were incredible, helpful and fun to work with. It made the whole experience amazing."

Selina Glebsattel, Germany

"I never had a training like this. But exercises which were boring at university were fun and interesting in this course! The teachers knew how to inspire the students."

Arianna Monteleone, Italy





COLLABORATION AND RESEARCH

The course gave the students a valuable opportunity to design and carry out their own field research projects, from coming up with a question through to devising field methods, analyzing data and presenting their results. Participants from different countries and cultures collaborated together on the projects, which is an incredibly enriching experience.

These projects also generated new information and insights into the ecology and resources of Kibale Forest and MUBFS, namely a first guide for the macrofungi diversity of Kibale or a study on primate recognition of human gender and its role in human-wildlife conflicts.

Students tell us that the projects teach them a suite of research skills which have a huge impact on their careers afterwards.

“The TBA course strengthened my capacities and equipped me with theoretical and practical aspects to further deepen my knowledge and skills in tropical ecology and conservation.”

Romarc Tenang, Cameroon

“The most unique aspect of this course was the opportunity for interaction with people from different countries and backgrounds, as well as the extended field experience.”

Antonia Marula, Mozambique



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CREATING A LASTING IMPACT

The end of these young scientists' time on the TBA course marks the beginning of a career in conservation. Joining a global network of more than 2600 conservation champions from 90 different countries trained by TBA, our alumni are our greatest asset: They form a global community of conservation scientists who are transforming our training into action and real conservation impact on the ground: saving species and protecting habitats, carrying out research, or working for decision-making bodies.

The need for skilled conservation professionals to meet the challenges on the ground has never been more urgent. It is vital that we put these courses on a sustainable footing so that we can train more students in Africa and South East Asia. Looking ahead, we aim to increase the number of our flagship field courses to meet the huge demand from aspiring conservationists. To do this, we are looking for new partners to help us launch more conservation careers where they are needed most.

"You will always be remembered for your irreplaceable contribution in my career, and biodiversity conservation. I would recommend continuous effort through this course to train more conservationists. I anticipate to apply the gained knowledge, skills, and advice in conserving biodiversity in Rwanda and Africa at large."

Gilbert Ndatimana, Rwanda



"This course remains a fantastic highlight, and I have no doubt students benefit tremendously. What a privilege to be able to attend as a student and then to give a little bit back to this fantastic initiative as a teacher. Bravo!"

Dr Tilly Collins, UK

The impact this course had on the lives of its students would have not been possible without the generous contributions of our funders, university members, partners, supporters and wonderful teachers. They are helping us have a real impact in conservation through our field courses.

We hope you can help us keep doing what we do best – empowering and connecting the conservation leaders of the future.

Thank you!



THE TEACHERS



PROF JORGE PALMEIRIM

University of Lisbon, Portugal

Jorge's research interests are centred on Conservation Ecology in tropical and mediterranean ecosystems and mostly involve the study of bats and birds.



DR TILLY COLLINS

Imperial College of London, UK

TBA Alumna. An experienced entomologist, Tilly's work is interdisciplinary and has a theme of enhancing opportunity for increased ecological, social and economic sustainability.



DR DAVID TUMUSIIME

Makerere University, Uganda

TBA Alumnus. Director of the Makerere University Biological Field Station, David is strongly interested in the social development issues associated with natural resource management.



DR BERNARD COETZEE

University of Pretoria, South Africa

TBA Alumnus. Bernard is a global change researcher focusing on how humans are altering the natural environment, how that changes biodiversity, and what that means for our well being.



DR PATRICK OMEJA

Makerere University, Uganda

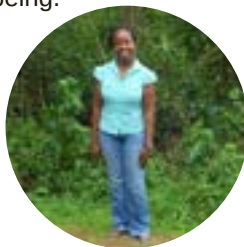
Patrick is a conservation scientist with over 20 years of experience working in Kibale National Park, conducting research on forest restoration, elephant biology and leading a number of training efforts.



DR PERPETRA AKITE

Makerere University, Uganda

TBA Alumna. Perpetra has been the lead entomologist for several development projects in Uganda. She has worked with NGOs, private and public sectors to enhance knowledge in management of natural habitats.



DR MOREEN UWIMBABAZI

NAFORRI, Uganda

TBA Alumna. Moreen is an experienced forest ecologist with close to 15yrs of forestry research. Her research aims to inform effective forest ecosystem management strategies.



DR EMILY OTALI

Kibale Chimpanzee Project, Uganda

TBA Alumna. Emily has been the Field Director of the Kibale Chimpanzee Project since 2005, directing the daily activities of long-term data collection on chimpanzee behavior.



DR MARIANA CARVALHO

Tropical Biology Association, UK

TBA Alumna. 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	Institution
Alicija Goc	Poland	Jagiellonian University
Anna Ahlberg	Sweden	University of Oxford
Antonia Marula	Mozambique	Eduardo Mondlane University
Arianna Monteleone	Italy	Lund University
Benedetta Longoni	Italy	University of Lisboa
Bezawit Abebe	Ethiopia	Addis Ababa University
Brett Hoy	United Kingdom	University of Edinburgh
Clean Bernard	Tanzania	University of Dar es Salaam
Daniel Illsley	United Kingdom	University of Granada
Elodiade Houindote	Benin	University of Abomey-Calavi
Francis Ssenkuba	Uganda	Mbarara University of Science and Technology
Gareth Fee	South Africa	University of Cape Town
Gilbert Ndatimana	Rwanda	Federal University of Technology Minna
Jakko Chmura	Poland	University of Aberdeen
Johanna Pascher	Austria	University of Vienna
Lennox Kirao	Kenya	A Rocha Kenya
Meva Fanamby	Madagascar	Blue Ventures Conservation
Omer Darel	Israel	Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Purity Njambi	Kenya	National Museums of Kenya
Romarc Tenang	Cameroon	Biodiversity Environment and Sustainable Development (BEDD)
Ruiqiao Franz Chai	Switzerland	University of Lausanne
Selina Glebsattel	Germany	Universität Koblenz
Stephanie Amstutz	Switzerland	University of Fribourg
William Luwaga	Uganda	Makerere University

THE TIMETABLE

Week 1

WEEK 1	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday 28	saturday 29	sunday 30			
7-8					BREAKFAST					
am				Arrivals in Entebbe	Arrivals in Entebbe	Travel to Kibale	Orientation walks: Introduction to MUBFS habitats (DT and PO)			
am									LUNCH	
13-14										Orientation walks: Introduction to MUBFS habitats (DT and PO)
pm										Research overview (DT and PO)
pm										
18					RENDEZ VOUS	free time	free time			
19-20					DINNER					
after dinner						Introductions	Guest talk			

Week 2

WEEK 2	monday 31	tuesday 1	wednesday 2	thursday 3	friday 4	saturday 5	sunday 6
7-8	BREAKFAST						
am	FIELD WORKSHOPS: i) Birds (BC and MU) ii) Insects & plant-insects interactions (TC and PA)	FIELD WORKSHOPS: i) Birds (BC and MU) ii) Insects & plant-insects interactions (TC and PA)	FIELD EXERCISE 1 (DT and PO)	FIELD EXERCISE 1 (DT and PO)	Introduction to field exercise 2 (JP)	EXERCISE 2 (JP, BC and MU)	FIELD EXERCISE 2 (JP, BC and MU)
am	iii) Forest ecology & plants (DT and PO)	iii) Forest ecology & plants (DT and PO)			FIELD EXERCISE 2 (JP, BC and MU)	Guest talk - intro to community day (SN)	
13-14	LUNCH						
pm	FIELD WORKSHOPS: i) Birds (BC and MU) ii) Insects & plant-insects interactions (TC and PA)	Guest talks	FIELD EXERCISE 1 (DT and PO)	Data analysis and Presentation of results	FIELD EXERCISE 2 (JP, BC and MU)	COMMUNITY DAY: Community conservation	Data analysis and Presentation of results
pm	iii) Forest ecology & plants (DT and PO)	SEMINAR: Asking questions in ecology MC)					
18	RESEARCH TALK (PA)	Introduction to field exercise 1 (DT)	RESEARCH TALK - Nocturnal Environment (BC)	LECTURE - Humans and Wildlife (JP)	free time	RESEARCH TALK (MU)	free time
19-20	DINNER						
after dinner		Social evening	Night walk - camp (group 1)	Night walk - camp (group 2)	Guest talk	Night walk - camp (group 3)	Conservation in my Country

THE TIMETABLE

Week 3

WEEK 3	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
7-8	BREAKFAST						
am	Introduction to field exercise 3 (TC)	FIELD EXERCISE 3 (TC and PA)	Travel to QENP	Walk and research activity	Travel to back to Kibale	Introduction to projects (MC)	PROJECTS: Clinics/projects
am	FIELD EXERCISE 3 (TC and PA)					PROJECTS: Clinics	
13-14	LUNCH						
pm	FIELD EXERCISE 3 (TC and PA)	Data analysis and Presentation of results	QENP - habitats, wildlife and projects	Boat ride - habitats, wildlife and projects	Stop at Fort Portal for shopping etc	PROJECTS: Clinics	PROJECTS: Clinics/projects
pm	"						
18	free time	Briefing excursion	RESEARCH TALK (TC)	Guest Talk - mongoose project	Back at MUBFS	RESEARCH TALK - Amazon forest (JP)	RESEARCH TALK - Artificial light (BC)
19-20	DINNER						
after dinner	Conservation in my Country	Guest talk (EO)					

Week 4

WEEK 4	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
7-8	BREAKFAST						
am	PROJECTS	PROJECTS	PROJECTS	PROJECTS	PROJECTS	PROJECTS: write ups	PROJECTS: write ups
am							
13-14	LUNCH						
pm	PROJECTS	PROJECTS	PROJECTS	PROJECTS	PROJECTS	PROJECTS: write ups	PROJECTS: write ups
pm							
18		SEMINAR: Data analysis and graphical representation (TC)			SEMINAR: Writing skills and presenting your results (MC)		RESEARCH TALK (TC)
19-20	DINNER						
after dinner	Conservation in my Country		Conservation in my Country	Conservation in my Country		Conservation in my Country	

THE TIMETABLE

Week 5

Week 5	monday 21	tuesday 22	wednesday 23	thursday 24	friday 25	saturday 26	sunday 27
7-8	BREAKFAST						
am	PROJECTS: write ups	PROJECTS: write ups	PROJECT PRESENTATIONS		Departures		
am				Departure Kibale and travel back to Entebbe			
13-14	LUNCH						
pm	PROJECTS: write ups	PROJECTS: write ups	Free/pack				
pm							
18							
19-20	DINNER			Dinner			
after dinner							

GROUP T-SHIRT DESIGN



by Arianna Monteleone, Italy

STUDENTS' PROJECTS

Macrofungal diversity in Kibale National Park (A case study in different logging compartments)

Gareth (South Africa) and Arianna (Italy)

Assessing preference of strangler figs on different host species in the tropical forest.

Clean (Tanzania) and Brett (UK)

Hidden Kingdoms: An investigation of Ant-Epiphyte interactions in African rainforests.

A case study of Kibale National Forest.

Purity (Kenya) and Benedetta (Italy)

Effects of Human Disturbance on Ants' Behaviour in Tropical Forest Ecosystems.

Selina (Germany), Stephanie (Switzerland) and Gilbert (Rwanda)

Beetling around: can agricultural ecosystems contribute to supporting biodiversity surrounding natural forests?

Jakko (Poland) and William (Uganda)

Tropical Fruit-Feeding Butterflies Show Trap Colour Preference.

Kirao (Kenya), Danny (UK), Anna (Sweden)

Colour selection by moths (Order: Lepidoptera) in a tropical rainforest.

Omer (Israel) and Romaric (Cameroon)

The Effect of Logging and Habitat Conversion on Forest Bird Species.

Bezawit (Ethiopia) and Johanna (Austria)

Comparison between two methods to assess bird diversity and body size distribution in Kibale National Park (KNP).

Elodiade (Benin) and Antonia (Mozambique)

Discrimination of human gender by primates and its role in human-wildlife conflicts.

Franz (Switzerland), Alicja (Poland), Francis (Uganda) and Fanamby (Madagascar)



Students' comments

ON THE TBA FIELD COURSE

"The course has deepened my understanding of the complex challenges facing biodiversity and the importance of science-based conservation strategies."

Purity Njambi, Kenya

"The experience shared by the course supervisors has inspired me to take action to protect the environment, which will play an important role in my future career."

Alicjia Goc, Poland

"This course has really contributed significantly to my career growth in research and conservation through knowledge expansion, enhancement of my practical research skills, and international collaborations."

Francis Ssenkuba, Uganda

"The course also taught many new things that I was able to benefit from, both personally and professionally. I believe that all the knowledge I have acquired will allow me to advance even more in the field of conservation and environmental protection in my country, and why not around the world."

Meva Fanamby, Madagascar

"The TBA course was an unforgettable experience that enriched my knowledge and skills in tropical biology. I learned a lot from the lectures, fieldwork, and project work, as well as from interacting with the tutors and other participants from different countries and backgrounds."

Romarc Tenang, Cameroon

"The course was incredible. (...) I learnt a lot on the course and made invaluable connections with researchers and fellow students from around the world. I believe that this course will greatly impact my future career as it has given me the practical skills and confidence to pursue opportunities in field biology, skills which I unfortunately did not have the opportunity to learn during my university education due to the Covid-19 pandemic."

Gareth Fee, South Africa

"I have gained valuable skills in both research and cooperation with people from a vast array of backgrounds. As an aspiring researcher and conservationist, this course was transformative for both my capabilities and my career plans in this field."

Omer Darel, Israel

"This course has really changed who I am as a scientist, and as a human."

Arianna Monteleone, Italy

"This experience has been truly transformative, providing me with invaluable knowledge and unforgettable memories. (...) I am profoundly grateful for the chance to expand my horizons."

Stephanie Amstutz, Switzerland





TROPICAL BIOLOGY ASSOCIATION

Investing in people for conservation

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