



Announcement

The College of African Wildlife Management, Mweka announces a New Conservation Project to Develop a Pollinator Monitoring Program for Tanzania

The College is grateful to inform you that it has received a grant from JRS Biodiversity Foundation, USA to undertake a three years conservation project to develop and implement a monitoring program for Tanzanian bee-pollinator species. This project, led by Mr. Henry Njovu, will represent an important contribution to understanding the bee-plant interactions, diversity, abundance, and distribution of bee pollinator species in Tanzania. This is a collaborative research project which involves scientists from a number of local and international research and/or academic institutions.

Pollination is a critical plant-animal interaction that maintains ecosystem health and function, facilitates plant reproduction, and improves crop production and human welfare. In Tanzania, most people rely on agricultural activities for their livelihoods, and a majority of cash and food crops rely on insect pollination. Of these insects, bees are the most important pollinator.

There is an increasing global concern regarding the decline of pollinator population caused by land use intensification, climate change, and poor pollinator management. However, lack of empirical data on pollinator population status limits the potential for appropriate actions to halt their decline and impedes identification of links between population declines and potential drivers of such changes. In Tanzania, the situation is exacerbated by a combination of high pollinator diversity with lack of taxonomic expertise and financial resources. Furthermore, although agriculture is vitally important in Tanzania, awareness of pollinator services and application, and their importance in improving agricultural crop productivity is either very scant or altogether lacking - even among the farmers.

This project will help to address this gap by developing a baseline understanding of the status and trends of bee pollinators and their interactions with plant communities for Tanzania. The team predicts that this will allow for the development of more sophisticated analyses of bees foraging specialization, seasonal trends in bee species abundance and composition, and their response to climate and land use changes. Greater knowledge will allow for more informed conservation and management decisions. Additionally, through outreach and scientific publications, the team hopes to provide education on the importance of pollination and the requirements for healthy pollinator communities.

About the JRS Biodiversity Foundation

– The mission of the JRS Biodiversity Foundation is to enhance knowledge and promote the understanding of biological diversity for the benefit and sustainability of life on earth. Founded in 2004, the JRS Biodiversity Foundation supports biodiversity data and knowledge tools that are used to preserve biodiversity in developing economies where biodiversity is most threatened. The foundation has awarded \$13.5M in grants since 2007. Visit online at <http://jrsbiodiversity.org>

