

Project Update: February 2016

In the beginning of the project we presented our aims to the caving community in Costa Rica. After a meeting with experienced cavers, we managed to create a list of caves for exploration. A team of qualified researchers was established to begin with the fieldwork. To gather more publicity, popularise our aims and give information about the bats and caves in the Brunca region, we created a project website (www.bruncabats.info). This website contains the main information about our project and is frequently updated with news about expeditions, photos and future events. In addition to the website we are managing a Facebook page with 270 followers.

We started our field expeditions in December 2015 with exploration of an unknown vertical cave, together with cavers from Anthros Speleological Group. Since then we investigated 14 caves in total and our field work continues. Our results so far are very exciting – we discovered new bat colonies and confirmed the presence of existing ones. Also during one of the field expeditions we managed to discover and investigate six completely unexplored new caves. Our field work is still in its beginning and we expect to gather very important information about the bat species in the region.

Our next steps will be to initiate information campaign among the local communities. The field work will continue until the end of the dry season. We will try to collect as much data as it is possible before presenting the results among local decision makers and taking conservation efforts.



Left: Stanimira Deleva is researching an unknown cave. Right: Common vampire bat (*Desmodus rotundus*).



Left: Common sword nosed bat (*Lonchorhina aurita*), captured in harp trap. Right: Team of researchers posing before entering a vertical cave.



Capturing bats on cave entrance using harp trap.