

Project Update: November 2017

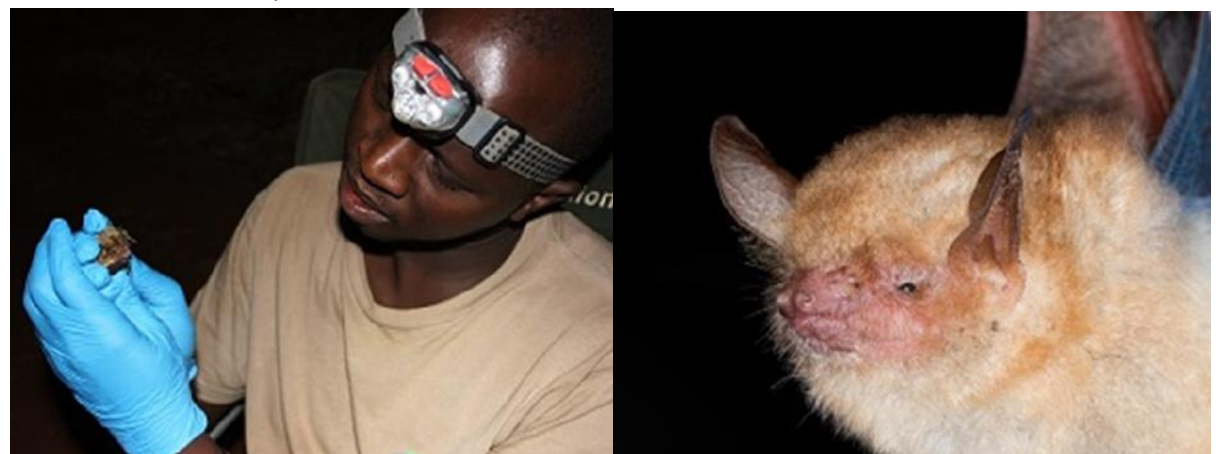
My project focuses on quantifying temporal insect availability as a food source for insectivorous bat assemblages. I began monthly field data collection in June 2017 and plan to continue till February 2018. I collect night flying insects using malaise traps and a light trap (control sample) for 10 nights each month. Collected insects are categorised into various taxa and size classes. Bat detectors are placed adjacent to each malaise trap to record bat activity during each sampling night. I am additionally investigating potential insect size prey consumed by specific bat species. Preliminary results show changes in insect diversity and size from dry to early wet season (June – October). Bats are further captured using harp traps and mist nets to sample fur, wing punch and faecal for future isotope analysis. I have thus far collected isotope samples from 12 out of the 16 known species occurring at the study area.



Left: Ms Monique Shanahan and myself setting up a malaise insect trap on site at the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site. Right: Myself (left) and Ms Monique Shanahan setting up a mist net. ©Ernest Seamark.



Left: Removing *Myotis tricolor* from a mist net at Meletse. Right: Removing a bat from a mist net. ©Monique Shanahan.



Left: Releasing a *Neoromicia capensis* at Meletse. ©Monique Shanahan. Right: *Myotis tricolor* close up picture. ©Ernest Seamark.