

Project Update: January 2018

Report on trip to Ghana and project thus far

In the beginning of 2017, after successfully receiving the Rufford small Grant, a lot of changes had to be made to my proposal, for it to be accepted by the faculty of the institution. Yes, it was a good project and proposal, but it had to be restructured to highlight the science behind the project. When all was said and done, project commenced in May 2017.

Digitising Grubb et al. 1998 data, from QDS point to GPS co-ordinates, took much more time than planned. There were not any similar projects that had or were using his publication the way this project intended to use it. It was challenging to find assistance from any online publication. This became a tedious task I had to take on.

Before heading to Ghana as promised, it was negligent to consider school holidays. So therefore any contact made with a lecturer or professor, was received around late August. The idea was to try arrive once universities were back from the summer break, to have a chance to speak and interact with lecturers' students and professors at the various universities.

Through correspondence it was noticed or made aware to me that, only the University of Ghana, had any specimens that may be of use to the project being conducted. This was taken into consideration and a flight to Ghana was then scheduled.

On 18th September 2017 I started my quest of looking for specimens at the University of Ghana. It started with a meeting with the Head of Department of the Animal and Conservation Biology Department. He was very welcoming and immediately arranged for me to see the lab technician and anyone else that I would be in contact with whilst conducting my research at the university.

After thorough inspection of the specimens I would be working with, it was noticeable that almost all specimens were dry specimens and were all from the 1950s. There were no new specimens that were being housed at the university. This was good and bad at the same time, it meant that I could compare what information I had from other literature to what I found. But it was unfortunate that there were no new specimens to give an idea of what is in Ghana currently.

All in all, I recorded about 148 specimens. Photographs were taken and relevant information taken. Unfortunately, due to the Ghanaian school year starting in September (similar to the United States) my scheduled presentation could not be done as they were busy with lectures. But interesting information and discussion were had with other lecturers and professors.

The project is set to be finalised and completed by August 2018. This is when it shall be submitted for completion of masters. A final report to Rufford should be submitted by July 2018.