

Project Update: February 2018

Field data collection has finally come to an end with the much needed financial assistance from the Rufford Foundation, support from the relevant field experts, agencies and communities in Bhutan. The research had deployed various field worker including students from Sherubtse College, College of Natural Resources, forestry staff from the park, territorial divisions, communities and village people.



Figure 1: Placing baited Pitfall Traps

Documentation of threats to cave biodiversity was conducted through direct observations and analysing the magnitude of anthropogenic activities around the study area and their consequences to cave biodiversity conservation. To better comprehend the biological importance of caves it is important to conduct further biological studies both outside and inside the cave. Until there is no biological baseline data or information of the cave it is impossible to enumerate the rigorous ecological impact that anthropogenic activities are having on the cave and its biodiversity.

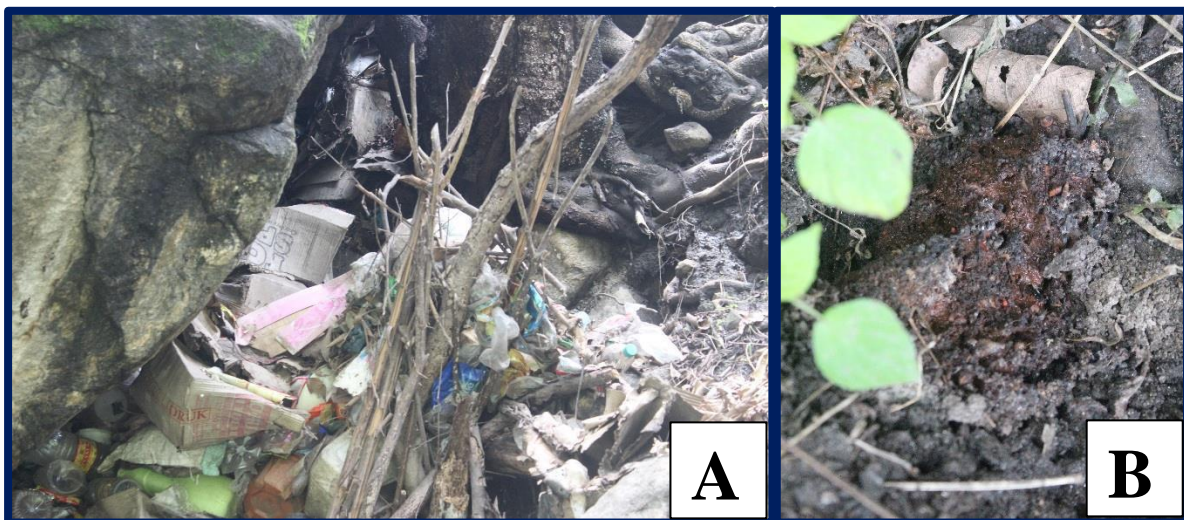


Figure 2: (A) Part of cave used as a dumping site by local residents; (B) Human feces found in the cave surroundings.

To conserve the ecological, biological and cultural distinctiveness of caves, it is significant that satisfactory and effectual management strategies are set in place. There is an urgent need to put an end to the progression of developmental encroachments (such as housing development, road, electricity, agriculture, etc.) and allow the natural regenerations of area that have been deforested. In order to set in place effective conservation strategies, it is important for the active participation of various governmental, non-governmental and civil society organizations.

Through this research project I have been able to inculcate abundance of knowledge and experiences in conducting research especially in the field of cave Invertebrates. Henceforth, I am much confident to continue with this work to document the diversity and distribution of cave invertebrates in the country.



Figure 3: Project leader recording geographical coordinates of the cave



Figure 4: Field assistant looking for cave insects (hand-picking method)