

Project Update: October 2009

The study started in August 2009 and I was in the field up to September 28th. The first phase of the study in the dry season, a habitat survey to establish the factors that render the primates vulnerable to the conflict, was done despite the challenge of high elephant presence in the area. Several issues are emerging, and I hope to discover more. So far there is unsustainable extraction of resources from the primate's habitat, loss of some forest patches utilized by primates, snaring, and competition with the elephants which seem to have invaded the forest during this dry spell. More importantly it emerged that from the questionnaire interviews yet to be analyzed, that people eat meat from monkeys living in the area, including Tana River Mangabey which is endangered and endemic. Otherwise it was very exciting, and it went well. I am looking forward to some more fieldwork in the wet season when the farmers have cropped their fields after the rains. I have trained three local assistants and they are collecting the conflict data and geo-referencing the conflict points as stated in the proposal.



Top left: An invasive species (*Prosopis* sp.) and mango tree. Top right: Anti-predator husbandry practices. Bottom left: Endangered Tana River Red Colobus. Bottom right: Harvesting of *Phoenix reclinata*; a key food resource for Tana River Mangabeys.