

## **Project Update: January 2023**

As the project reaches the final 3 months, I am still happy to report that we are well on our way to successful project completion.

The data from the first fieldwork season is currently being analysed and I am working on a journal article that will document the diversity and distribution of insect pollinators in relation to different Afro-temperate forest tree species.

Field work for the next phase of the project, to determine pollinator availability in the fragmented southern Cape landscape, has been successfully finished as planned on the 22nd December 2022. During this second, and important, phase of the project, we are documenting the pollinator diversity and distribution over a fragmented forest biome. Elevated pan traps, sampling from canopy, subcanopy and understorey layers, have been placed in various forest fragments, including the larger, continuous forest. This study is done in collaboration with South African National Parks, Garden Route National Park.

The next phase of the project entails the sorting and identification of thousands of insect pollinator samples, which are currently safely stored in the laboratory and Nelson Mandela University's George Campus. I will also include two honours students to work on this with me, due to the high volume of insects sampled and the many questions that can be answered in terms of forest ecology.

In terms of the budget, I've spent ca. 92% of the allocated amount. The remaining ca. 8% of the budget will mostly be used towards funding the laboratory work that lies ahead between now and April 2023.

April 2023, which is 3 months away, marks the 2-year mark since Rufford funded this project. I will then provide a final update, including everything that I have achieved with the Rufford Small Grant, as well as my plans for taking this project further.