Project Update: February 2023

***Rungwecebus kipunji* and *Paragalago* sp population survey**

Field surveys were conducted in Mount Rungwe Nature Forest Reserve (MRNFR) to assess the current population status of *R. kipunji*, its ecological habitat and potential human activities threatening the species. The surveys were carried out between November 2020 and July 2021 in four phases. This was done every 3 days per week per month. Below is a summary of the results obtained during the surveys.

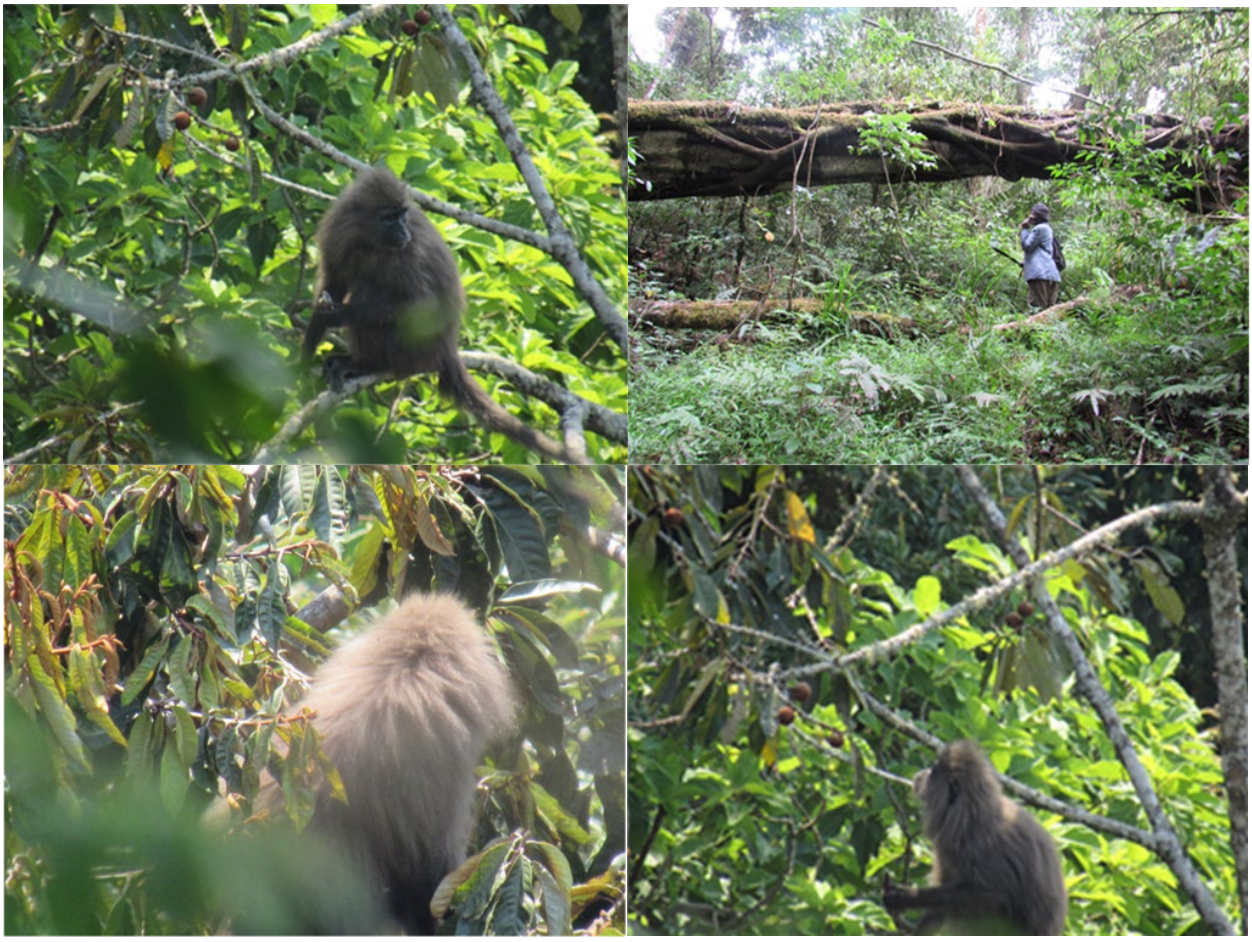

Fig 1: Pictures of *Rungwecebus kipunji* and field work in MRNFR

From July 2022 to December 2022, we conducted field surveys to assess the population status of *R. kipunji* (Table 1) and *Paragalago* sp. (Table 2). We used a complete count method to assess kipunji's population. Observers slowly walked while scanning the understorey and canopy at 1–2 km/h between 07.00 am and 18.30 pm. One observer counted the number of kipunji in each group. The total number *R. kipunji* recorded are presented in Table 1. Observations of *Paragalago* sp. **(**nocturnal) was made from 6 p.m. to 11 a.m. and from 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. We had one observation period for each night. Recordings was made by placing a recorder close to the location known to have high animal density. Forest was searched for a maximum of 25 nights. For visual observations, we used Fenix TK-25 red-beam handheld flashlights. The red light was used because it does

not disturb *Paragalago* sp., and the species was identified by the colour of its eyes, i.e., reddish with a distinct eyeshine. The total number of *Paragalago* sp. is shown in Table 2.

Table 1. Number of *R. kipunji* recorded from different sites in MRNFR.

Site	July	August	September	October	December	Total
Mkukwa	42	68	46	39	74	269
Mpata	45	39	52	61	56	253
Ngalikali	29	58	23	34	63	207
Kibisi	66	59	51	35	57	268
Mbeghele	54	59	22	44	48	227
Ilolo	74	46	61	42	63	286
Nditu	30	38	41	35	61	205
Bujingijira	24	33	39	28	66	190
Marambo	41	26	28	37	48	180
Total						2085

Table 2. Number of *Paragalago* sp. recorded in different areas.

Site	July	August	September	October	December	Total
Mkukwa	11	9	6	10	9	45
Mpata	4	9	10	6	13	42
Ngalikali	2	8	9	8	6	33
Kibisi	5	4	6	6	7	28
Mbeghele	6	5	7	8	8	34
Ilolo	7	6	6	5	6	30
Nditu	5	3	4	5	10	27
Bujingijira	4	10	9	6	10	39
Marambo	6	8	12	7	8	41
Total						319

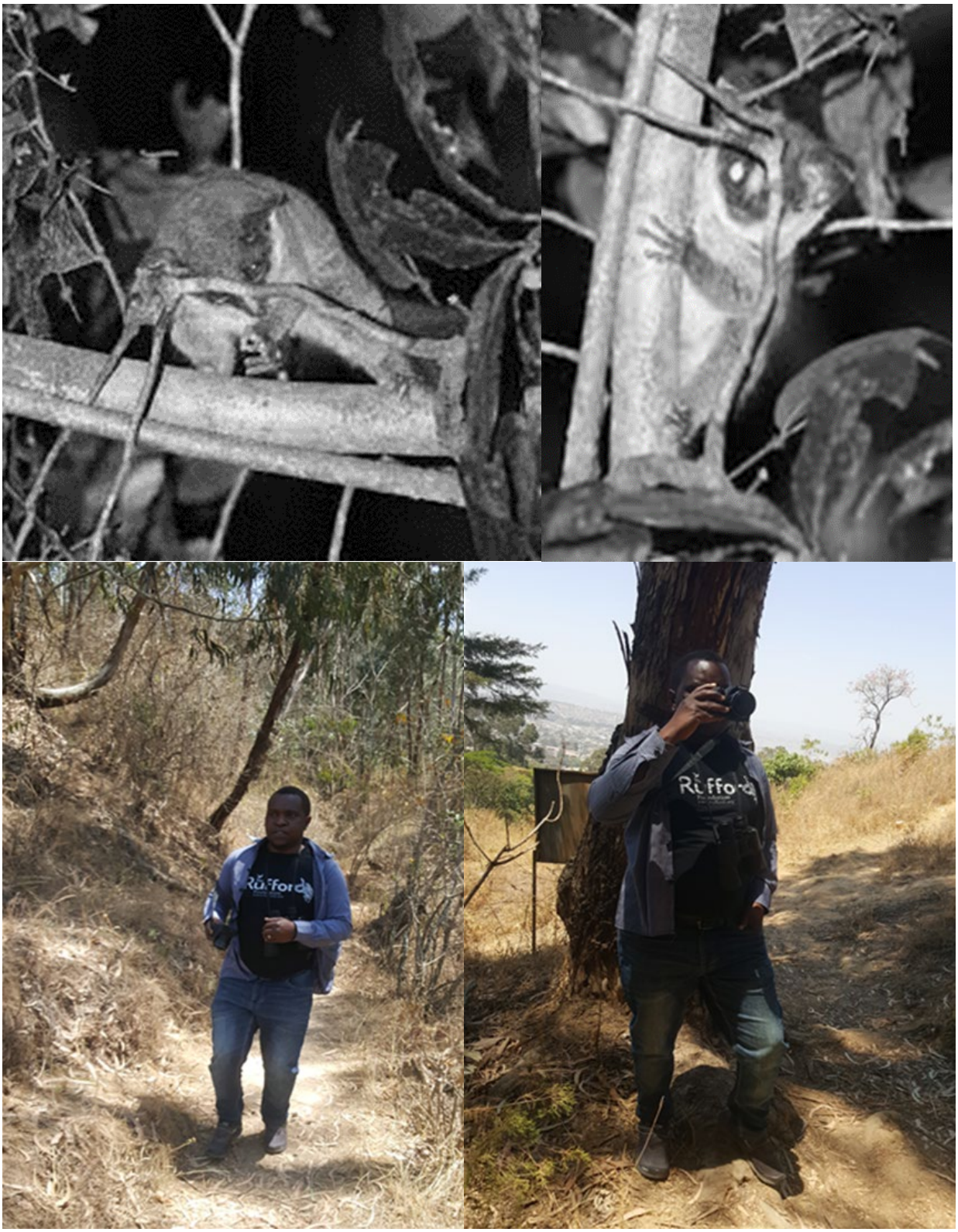

Fig 2: Pictures of *Paragalago sp* and field work in MRNFR

Restoration of degraded habitats in MRFNR

We planted tree seedlings in degraded areas. The planting was done in collaboration with local people adjacent to MRNFR. Also, local people were given tree seedlings to plant on their farms and/or areas, which would provide them with fuelwood and building materials in the future. In addition, people were trained on how to prepare tree nurseries, plant trees and how to monitor their growth.

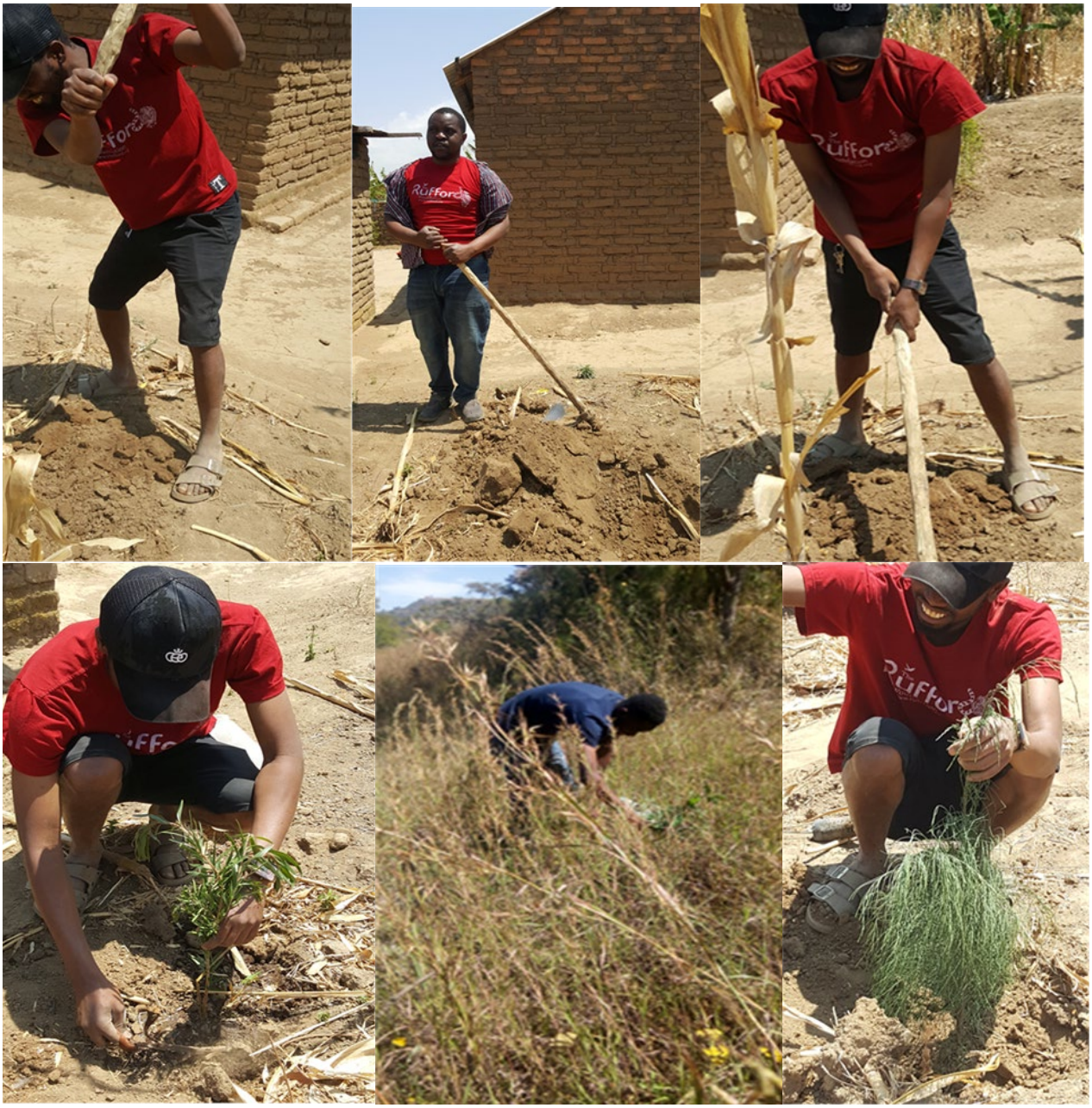

Fig 3: Planting tree seedlings

Training and initiating small income generating activities

Local communities adjacent to MRNFR were trained and supported to start small income generating activities to improve their income. We provided them with beehives and

working gear. Moreover, households were trained and sensitised to make and use energy-efficient stoves in order to reduce the amount of firewood needed for cooking, and thus, legal logging and firewood collection from the MRNFR.

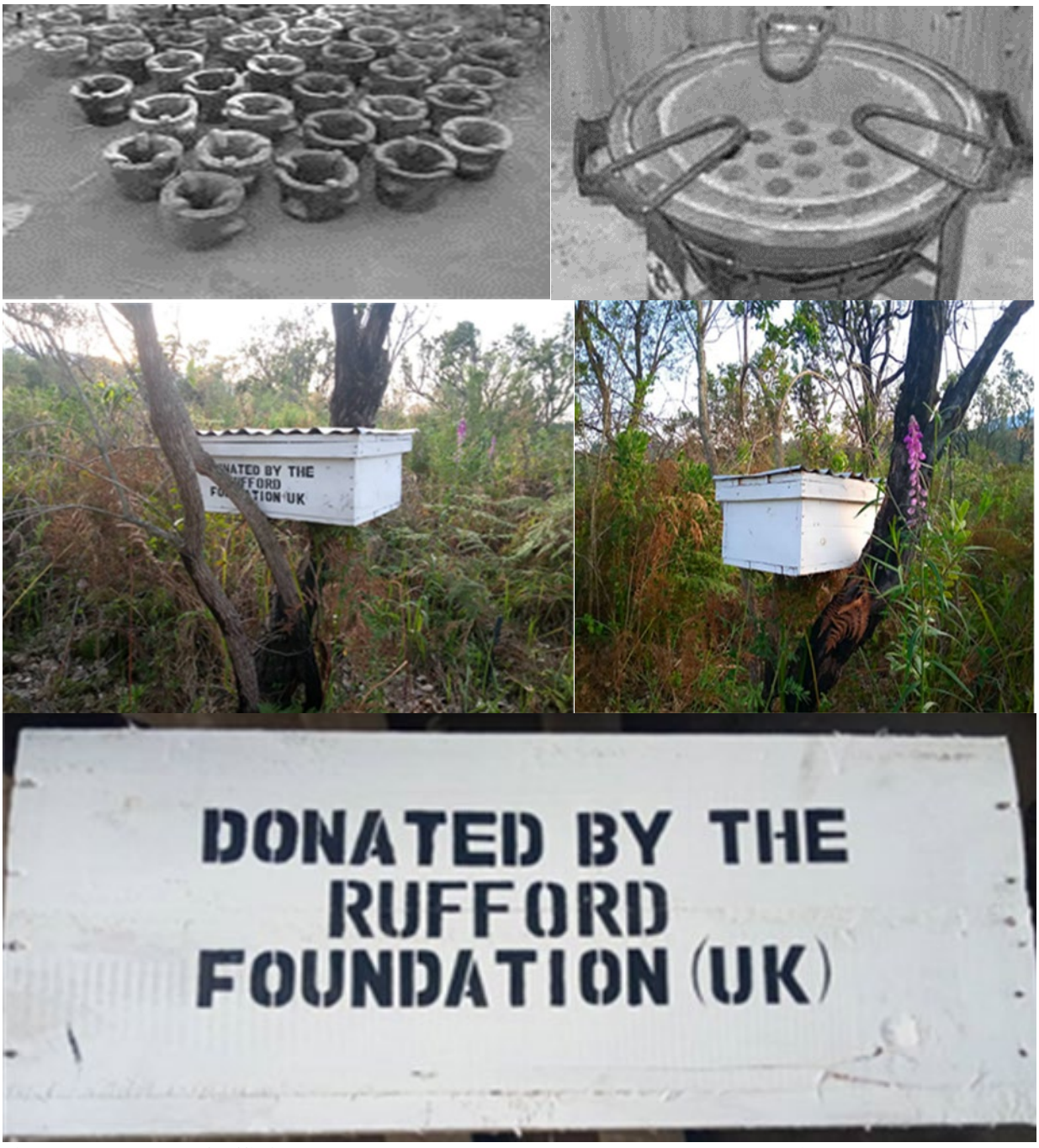

Fig 4: Examples of efficient energy stoves that local people were trained to make and use, and beehives fixed on trees supported through the Rufford Foundation Small Grant

Recommendations

The villages close to MRNFR need to receive frequent education on environmental conservation. The local communities must be made aware of any direct or indirect

advantages of the nature reserve since this may help to slow down the rate of environmental degradation and encourage them to protect the MRNFR, *R. kipunji*, and *Paragala*go sp.