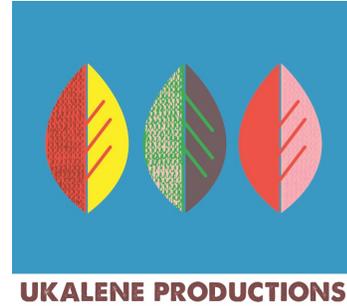


Team of Rock Climbers, Biologists, and Conservation Workers Wrap Successful Expedition to Mozambique’s Second Highest Mountain



Gurue, Mozambique – June 4, 2014 – An international team of rock climbers, entomologists, and herpetologists gathered on the summit of Mt. Namuli, Zambezia, Mozambique on May 27th at the culmination of the 30-day, 18-member Lost Mountain expedition. Three of the team members reached the summit via a new technical rock climbing route (*Majka and Kate’s Science Project IV 5.10-*) and ten team members via a variation on the existing hiking route on the mountain’s east ridge. On May 28th, the group visited the village of Curruca, near the base of Mt. Namuli, to join local community members and representatives from LUPA, the Lost Mountain’s Mozambican conservation partner, for a celebration of dance, music, and presentations about the science, adventure, and conservation findings of the expedition.

“It was incredible to stand on the summit of Mt. Namuli with so many of our team members. Seeing 360-degrees of the majesty of the region spread out below us was the perfect realization of a four-year dream and the crazy hard work and commitment it took everyone to accomplish it,” expedition leader Majka Burhardt said.

“One of the highlights of this expedition were the sounds that came out of the woodwork,” musician and sound recordist for the Lost Mountain expedition Jacob Bain said. “From sharing moments with local musicians in Malawi and Mozambique, to recording the sounds of nature on the mountain, to the stories that each of the members of the team and the Curruca community shared, there is magic in the melodies and words of Mt. Namuli.”

The Lost Mountain is an international venture combining rock climbing, cliff-side scientific research, and integrated conservation planning. Led by author and professional climber Majka Burhardt, the purpose of the Lost Mountain project is to establish and document the ecological diversity and conservation potential in a region of isolated granite domes in eastern Africa. The team explored Malawi’s Mt. Mulanje and Mozambique’s Mt. Namuli, conducting scientific- and conservation-focused fieldwork, and using rock climbing to access previously unexplored habitats.

Days before the team gathered on the summit of Mt. Namuli, Majka Burhardt and fellow professional climber Kate Rutherford completed the first ascent of a new technical climbing route on the southeast face of the mountain.

“The climbing route was established to connect scientifically interesting zones on Mt Namuli,” Burhardt said. “Our team of scientists—Dr. Flavia Esteves, Caswell Munyai, and

Harith Farooq—prioritized a hanging pocket forest at 1,600 meters, a vegetated chimney above, and the higher altitude sedge communities near the 2,418 meter summit.”

The climbers first established technical access to the hanging forest and then linked the other features to the sedges on the high slab ridges stretching to Namuli’s summit. The resulting climbing route, *Majka and Kate’s Science Project* (5.10-, IV, 12 pitches), is the first technical route on Mt Namuli and was established both in the name of research and with the intent to create a compelling climbing line up Namuli’s southeast face.

Over the span of two weeks, the whole team used technical access to explore the pocket forest and ridge, Dr. Esteves also joined Majka and Kate to collect ants on *Majka and Kate’s Science Project*, and LUPA conducted interviews and surveyed natural habitat impact with the Curruca community to create a baseline integrated conservation report for Namuli’s future.

Summary of the preliminary expedition outcomes:

Science

- Discovery of the second record of a Caecilian in Mozambique, the southernmost recording of a Caecilian in the world.
- First-ever comprehensive ant collection on Mulanje and Namuli massifs.
- 40 ant genera collected (species yet to be identified).
- Collection of the rare ant genus *Promyopias* on Mulanje massif -- the second record for the genus in Malawi, after 101 years after its first collection, and the seventh for Africa. It will be the first specimen available for DNA extraction within this genus, and an unique opportunity for better understanding relatedness of some ant lineages.
- 27 different species collected by herpetologist Harith Farooq with several yet to be identified.
- Extensive additions to the resulting diversity checklist for Mt Namuli.

Conservation

- Completed first ever integrated conservation study of Mt Namuli.
- Data collection on: agricultural practices and potential; natural resource management; health, civil society and infrastructure capacity and needs.
- Integrated conservation report forthcoming.

Climbing

- Establishment *Majka and Kate’s Science Project* (5.10-, IV, 12 pitches), the first technical route on Mt Namuli by Majka Burhardt and Kate Rutherford.
- Bolted on lead with additional protection added at the end of the expedition to increase the safety for future climbing parties on the route.
- Peter Doucette and Positive Tracks Youth Ambassador Charlie Harrison completed the second ascent of the route during the trip.

Documentary, Mozambican-radio broadcasts, and articles forthcoming.

For more information, please visit www.thelostmountainfilm.com or contact Majka Burhardt: mb@majkaburhardt.com or Sarah Garlick: sarahgarlick@gmail.com.

EXPEDITION TEAM

Lost Mountain Project Founder and Director

Majka Burhardt (Intervale, New Hampshire).

Science Team

Flavia Esteves (California Academy of Sciences, Brazil and USA); **Harith Farooq** (Lúrio University, Mozambique); **Caswell Munyai** (University of Venda, South Africa).

Climbing Team

Majka Burhardt (Professional Climber, Intervale, New Hampshire) **Kate Rutherford** (Professional Climber, Vashon, Washington); **Peter Doucette** (IFMGA Guide, Intervale, New Hampshire)

Conservation Team

Geraldo Palalane (LUPA/Namuli Project Director, Mozambique); **Canisio Macamo** (Mozambique); **Castigo Manhique** (Mozambique).

Positive Tracks Youth Ambassadors:

Grant Bemis (Golden Valley, Minnesota); **Charlie Harrison** (Etna, New Hampshire).

Media Team

Robert Frost (Director of Photography, Boulder, Colorado); **James Q Martin** (Cinematographer, Flagstaff, Arizona); **Jacob Bain** (Sound Recordist, Vashon, Washington).

Local Field Support

Luis Cotxane (Mozambique); **Alex Momade** (Mozambique); **Solorino Samuquela** (Mozambique)

Volunteer Crew

Richard Halsey (Cape Town, South Africa); **Eric Wilburn** (Tumwater, Washington)

Additional USA-based Production Team

Ukalene Productions: **Sarah Garlick** (North Conway, New Hampshire), **Paul Yoo** (Los Angeles, California)