

Human Wildlife Conflict

In recognition that there is a human-wildlife conflict concerning the Mauritius Fruit Bat, MWF approached the North of England Zoological Society (Chester Zoo) who have experience in these conflicts to work with us on the strategies needed to address the situation. Information has been gathered from meeting with stakeholders affected (orchard owners, back yard growers, fruit sellers etc) and via a questionnaire survey. The first action identified from the initial findings was to hold a netting workshop.

In August 2017, MWF organised a 'Netting Workshop' in collaboration with the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, Chester Zoo (UK) and the IUCN. This workshop was attended by fruit farmers and received technical advice of farmers and researchers from Australia and Thailand. Recommendations were provided for pruning of trees, netting, equipment and subsidies in a multi-stakeholder workshop held in August 2017. See full report here <https://adobe.ly/30HyefE>.

The second action held under the human-wildlife conflict project was a research workshop in May 2018. The aim of the workshop was to share and disseminate to all organisations and individuals involved or interested in research into the Mauritius Fruit Bat, covering conservation, agriculture, extension, animal welfare both locally and internationally.

The results of research that had been carried out or was ongoing were discussed and the workshop identified future research priorities. (See full report here: <https://adobe.ly/2YY6OBF>)

The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation has also set up a Bat Education project on Mauritius, funded by The Rufford Foundation (UK). This project aims to: promote the awareness amongst Mauritian people about the levels of damage that bats actually cause to fruit production, the value of bats to the ecosystems, the advantages of pruning trees and netting, our opposition to culling and promoting a positive image of bats. This project works along with the human-wildlife conflict actions.

The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation has made a 10 minute educational film 'Mauritius Fruit Bat under Threat' in the context of the current Human Wildlife Conflict to explain why this has arisen and why it is important to protect the Bat.

(Watch video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypZP3fkmWd8&feature=youtu.be>)