



Limbe

Wildlife Centre

A collaboration between
Pandrillus & the Government of
Cameroon, Ministry of Forests
and Wildlife MINFOF.



COLLABORATION PROPOSAL TO

Save the Drill

For the AFRAMOMUM PROJECT

Several species from the genus *Aframomum* sp (Zingiberaceae) are major food plants for drills throughout the lowland rainforests and mountain areas. This is a green leaf vegetable whose stem is known to have antiparasitic, antifungal, antibacterial, and antiviral properties and helps maintain the gastrointestinal balance. This is one of the most preferred plants by wild primates.



We feed this browse to our drills every day. Green leaf vegetables are an important part of the drills' diet. *Mandrillus* sp. are specialized forest-floor gleaners feeding mostly on fruits, grains, green vegetables (especially herbaceous plants such as marantacees and zingiberacees) and in a smaller portion arthropods and small vertebrates. These vegetables provide an important quantity of the vegetal proteins necessary in their daily nutritional requirements.

We hire former hunters, now retired from their hunting job, to harvest this wild plant from the forest. In this way, we provide employment and a reasonable income for their families. The Aframomum Project has led to the extinction of the Batoke Hunting Club, which previously had 40 members; today, nearly all are instead employed by the project.





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Aframomum is a plant that grows naturally in the secondary bush and does not need to be planted so there is no need to clear forest for farms. During harvesting, the farmers cut the plants sustainably, that is they cleanly cut with a sharp knife approximately two feet of the stalk above the rhizome allowing regeneration of the stem, which in a few months is mature for harvesting. The rhizome is essentially the underground portion of the plant from which the vegetative aboveground shoots emerge.



Aframomum is harvested three times a week in the area of Batoke (Isongo) in the buffer zone of Mount Cameroon National Park, where the Cameroon Development Corporation cleared a piece of forest for a plantation some years ago but only used half of it. Today, thanks to the use of the land for the harvest of *Aframomum*, the forest is recovering from degraded tertiary to secondary forest.

Since Mount Cameroon is one of the few remaining retreats for the drill (as well as the most probable release site for our second largest captive drill group in the world) it is invaluable for the conservation of this species. One of the main threats for the drills in the national park is hunting. Hunting is widespread and law reinforcement difficult to implement. We need to make the area as safe as possible for the wild populations as well as for the breeding group for the release to be feasible.



We are trying to reduce the hunting pressure by giving alternative means of living to the hunters of the nearby village of Batoke. Batoke used to be well known for its bush-meat market. We



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have been working there with the hunters through the Aframomum program. Three times each week after harvesting, we travel to Batoke in order to pick up the Aframomum and transport it back to Limbe Wildlife Centre.

The Aframomum Project does not only benefit the drills cared for at Limbe Wildlife Centre, but also the forest trees which hold Aframomum plants, as they are not cut down.



LWC is grateful to **Rettet den Drill** for being part of this integrated program of habitat protection and optimal care for the releasable drill group housed at LWC by funding partially this Aframomum Project.

Thanking you for your interest in preserving the habitat of these wonderful creatures,

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