

Harrison Institute – Honorary Research Fellows

Our Honorary Research Fellows are more than collaborators. They are long-term partners who share the Harrison Institute's commitment to discovering biodiversity, developing scientific leadership and translating research into lasting conservation.



Aicha Gomeh-Djame (Cameroon)

Bat taxonomy, ecology, and conservation

Aicha Gomeh-Djame is a PhD student and lecturer at the University of Yaoundé 1. She has worked closely with the Harrison Institute since 2023 as part of her ground-breaking bat research programme in the Congolian Forest of southeast Cameroon. She has won numerous international grants for this work and joint outputs to date with the Harrison Institute include two bat species new to science, one species new to Cameroon, and ecological and conservation data on three Data Deficient species.

During this time, she also won scholarships to attend the SCCS meeting in Cambridge UK and the Congo Basin Science Initiative conference in Republic of Congo.



Aung Toe Khaing (Myanmar)

Community conservation and sustainable livelihoods

Aung Toe Khaing has worked with the Harrison Institute since 2014 on community-based conservation programmes in Myanmar. His exceptional ability to work alongside local communities has been central to the success of projects linking biodiversity conservation with sustainable livelihoods.

Working closely with Beatrix Lanzinger, he helped ensure that conservation initiatives are shaped by local priorities and become practical, community-led solutions that continue long after individual projects have ended.



Dr Awatsaya Pimsai (Thailand)

Rodent taxonomy and emerging diseases

Dr Awatsaya Pimsai is a mammalogist whose research spans rodent taxonomy, ecology and emerging infectious diseases. Since completing her MSc in collaboration with the Harrison Institute, she has helped deliver training programmes across Southeast Asia while building an internationally recognised research career, which included completing a PhD in Japan.

Her work reflects the Institute's commitment to developing talented early-career scientists into future research leaders.



Dr David Waldien (USA)

Community conservation, IUCN Red List, and bat ecology

Dr David Waldien is a IUCN Red List specialist on bats, and a conservation biologist specialising in community-led conservation, project development and international collaboration. He has worked alongside the Harrison Institute on initiatives across Africa and Melanesia, helping build partnerships that link biodiversity research with practical conservation.

His work demonstrates how strong international collaborations can strengthen conservation capacity while supporting local leadership.



Hnin Witt Yee (Myanmar)

Ecotourism and community engagement

Hnin Witt Yee has collaborated with the Harrison Institute since 2014 on community-based conservation and ecotourism initiatives in Myanmar. Her extensive experience in sustainable tourism has helped communities benefit from conservation while protecting their cultural and natural heritage.

She demonstrates how successful conservation depends upon building trusted relationships between communities, visitors and conservation organisations.



U Hpone Thant (Myanmar)

Ecotourism and cultural heritage

Known throughout Myanmar as Harry, U Hpone Thant has worked with the Harrison Institute on community conservation initiatives for over two decades. His expertise in sustainable tourism and cultural heritage has helped connect conservation with local economic development.

He brings people together across sectors, ensuring that conservation benefits both biodiversity and communities.



Dr Iroro Tanshi (Nigeria)

Community-led conservation and bat ecology

Dr Iroro Tanshi is one of Africa's leading young conservationists. Her research focuses on protecting threatened bat species and reducing fire risk. She has strengthened conservation across Nigeria's remaining tropical forests and is expanding the programme internationally.

Multi-award-winning, she is an internationally recognised conservation leader who has built research and conservation capacity in West Africa. She is based both in Nigeria and USA.



Dr Neil Furey (Cambodia)

Bat taxonomy, ecology and conservation

Dr Neil Furey has collaborated with the Harrison Institute since 2007 on biodiversity research, postgraduate supervision and species discovery throughout Southeast Asia. Based in Cambodia, he combines internationally recognised research with a strong commitment to strengthening national scientific capacity and outreach.

He publishes extensively on the biodiversity of Southeast Asia, including Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam.



Dr Paul Webala (Kenya)

Bat ecology and African biodiversity conservation

Dr Paul Webala is one of Africa's leading bat ecologists and an internationally respected conservation scientist. His research spans bat ecology, taxonomy and biodiversity conservation, while his teaching and mentoring have helped train a new generation of African researchers.

His particular interest is the process that drives rarity and abundance of mammals in natural and human-dominated environments.



Dr Parvathy Venugopal UK/(India)

Bat conservation

Dr Parvathy Venugopal is a biodiversity scientist whose research combines taxonomy, genetics, bioacoustics and ecology to understand the evolution and conservation of bats. Having trained in both India and the United Kingdom, she brings an interdisciplinary approach to biodiversity science. She shares the Institute's commitment to combining rigorous research with mentoring, communication, outreach, and conservation impact.



Dr Pipat Soisook (Thailand)

Bat taxonomy, outreach, and biodiversity conservation

Dr Pipat Soisook is Curator of Mammals at the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Natural History Museum, Prince of Songkla University, Thailand.

An award winning, internationally recognised bat taxonomist, he has collaborated with the Harrison Institute for more than two decades on research, student supervision and biodiversity training across Asia and Arabia. He publishes extensively and has described multiple new mammal taxa, many in conjunction with the Institute.



Tshering Dendup (Bhutan)

Bat and bird ecology, education, and community conservation

Tshering Dendup is an ecologist and educator whose work combines biodiversity research with environmental education in Bhutan. Through schools, citizen science and community projects, he inspires young people to become active participants in conservation.

He collaborates with the Harrison Institute on projects that are based on the mutual belief that lasting conservation begins with education and local leadership.



Tshering Yangzom (Bhutan)

Schools-based environmental education and inclusion

Tshering Yangzom is an educator who develops innovative approaches to environmental education in Bhutan. Working with schools and local communities, she encourages young people to engage directly with nature through practical conservation activities.

She helps demonstrate how education can inspire the next generation of conservation leaders.
