**Field surveys for the Endangered pygmy hippopotamus *Choeropsis liberiensis* in Sapo National Park, Liberia**

**Collen B**, Howard R, Konie J, Daniel O, & Rist J. (2011) *Oryx* 45: 35-37

This paper documented the beginning of bringing the pygmy hippo in to the conservation arena. Highlighted as a focal species by the EDGE of Existence programme at the IOZ, Ben was selected to lead the expedition to Liberia to try and capture it on ‘film’. He very kindly granted my request to join the team as a research assistant. Six weeks were spent training the local field team, setting up the cameras and collecting them back in. Success, we had managed to capture them on one camera! Not quite enough data to do the occupancy analysis Ben had hoped for, but the pictures struck a chord. They were presented to the President of Liberia who was delighted and the pictures made it in to several UK newspapers - you know you’ve made it when your science gets in to *The Sun* newspaper (‘Pygmy hippo gets Papped’).

These first pictures of the pygmy hippos in Liberia led to the production of the IUCN Species Survival Commission Regional Pygmy Hippo Conservation Strategy in 2010, and in 2012 the Action Plan for the Conservation of the Pygmy Hippo in Liberia was produced. It also sowed the seed for Ben’s enduring love of the species, and the work that he put in over the subsequent ten years will hopefully have created a strong enough foundation for the hippos to persist well into the future.

Olivia Daniel

Imperial College London, London UK