

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation.

We ask all grant recipients to complete a Final Report Form that helps us to gauge the success of our grant giving. The Final Report must be sent in **word format** and not PDF format or any other format. We understand that projects often do not follow the predicted course but knowledge of your experiences is valuable to us and others who may be undertaking similar work. Please be as honest as you can in answering the questions – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Please complete the form in English and be as clear and concise as you can. Please note that the information may be edited for clarity. We will ask for further information if required. If you have any other materials produced by the project, particularly a few relevant photographs, please send these to us separately.

Please submit your final report to jane@rufford.org.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Edem Ekpe
Project title	Conserving the Straw-coloured Fruit Bat, <i>Eidolon helvum</i> (Megachiroptera: Pteropodidae) and its habitats through networking of conservation volunteers in Ghana
RSG reference	10818-B
Reporting period	February 2012 to February 2012
Amount of grant	£12,000
Your email address	e_edem@yahoo.com
Date of this report	19 th February, 2013

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Document a database on the location of the Straw-coloured fruit bats, <i>Eidolon helvum</i>			YES	This documentation has been prepared and submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. This will make it more available to the wider scientific world.
Establish and mobilise conservation volunteer groups at selected roosting sites.			YES	Bat conservation volunteers groups established at Kyebi, Agbasiagba, and Wli. Machetes and wellington boots supplied to volunteers. A networking meeting of all volunteers was held at Wli. Volunteers exchanged contact information and discussed different local customs and ideas that are used for bat conservation.
Train conservation volunteers in bat ecology and conservation education.			YES	Conservation volunteers trained in bat ecology, and the need to conserve tall trees that serve as the roosts of <i>Eidolon helvum</i> . Project staff and volunteers collecting data on bat hunting at Agbasiagba
Conservation education			YES	Fact sheet on bats developed and distributed in project communities. Awareness and knowledge about bats and their values increased by 11.5% since project started.
Organise media interactions for journalists			YES	Journalists from radio, and the national newspaper, Daily Graphic were involved in covering project activities. A brief article on the project to be published in the near future

2. Please explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled (if relevant).

During site identification and selection, it was realised that island communities host very important bat roosts sites. This required working in such communities by hiring boats, which were not planned for. The resultant increase in cost was addressed by saving on other budget components.

One roost site is located near a traditional healer's community, who refused to join the network. Even though, they did not join the network, they still protect the bats using their traditional system. Therefore, the project officer regularly contacts them to encourage them.

3. Briefly describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

- i. The first network of local conservation volunteers (not professionals) established in Ghana. Before the implementation of this project, only professional conservationists and scientists have established a network in Ghana. Since local conservation volunteers are very important to effective conservation of natural resources, the importance of their network cannot be overemphasised.
- ii. Roosts of *Eidolon helvum* fruit bats in Ghana have been located, mapped on Google Earth, and submitted for publication. It is important to document the location of *Eidolon helvum* roosts in Ghana because it will facilitate future research on the status of the species in the country.
- iii. Among the participating communities, awareness and knowledge about bat conservation increased. An increase in the awareness and knowledge about bat conservation is important for conserving the mammals. This increase in awareness and knowledge was assessed by conducting pre-test and post-test studies.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project (if relevant).

The local communities have been involved in conserving bat roosts through site location and protection.

Some local conservation volunteers were involved in conservation education in their communities. Therefore the local communities were conservation education participants and implementers.

Within the network, local communities have exchanged information about local bat conservation activities with other communities. In addition, these local communities exchanged cultural ideas and information with different communities.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. Currently, there is the need to give increased attention to the island communities, which I developed a small projects proposal for and received funding from Bat Conservation International. There is a greater need to continue and expand the active networking among local communities for conservation purposes.

6. How do you plan to share the results of your work with others?

I plan to share the results of this project by presenting posters at professional meetings, publishing in journals, and through newspapers. I have already submitted some information for publication in a scientific journal.

7. Timescale: Over what period was the RSG used? How does this compare to the anticipated or actual length of the project?

The RSG fund was used over a period of 13 months instead of 12 months.

8. Budget: Please provide a breakdown of budgeted versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figures should be in £ sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Meetings	300	250	50	
Transportation	2,500	3,000	-500	Caused by increase in fuel cost, and unbudgeted rental of boats to island communities
Field equipment for volunteers	1,200	1,145	55	
Office supplies	300	305	-5	
Training programmes	1,000	1,000	0	
Communication	1,800	1,700	100	
GPS	300	280	20	
Digital camera and 3 pairs of binoculars	500	517	-17	
Room and board for volunteers	1,000	850	150	
Hiring of equipment for conservation education	500	460	40	
Media interaction & radio programs	500	575	-75	
Documentation for project closing	100	100	0	
Field allowances	2,000	1,850	150	
Total	12,000	12,022		

9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

The next important step would be to keep the network active by encouraging exchange of information. Also, it is very important to expand this network by extending it to other communities undertaking active conservation work. This would not be limited to only bat conservation.

10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes. The RSGF logo was used on the T-shirts for the project participants. RSG received publicity for providing funding for documenting *Eidolon helvum* roosting sites. RSG receives publicity in Ghana's best selling newspaper as the funding institution for the project.

11. Any other comments?

In order to consolidate the gains of the project, and also to further develop community conservation in Ghana, it is necessary to expand the network established by this project into one that includes communities that are conserving other aspects of biodiversity and natural resources in Ghana.

As mentioned earlier, Bat Conservation International (BCI) contributes to conservation education in the island communities of the Volta Lake. In addition, In order to continue this work, I have liaised with a Ghanaian conservation NGO, Centre for Human and Environmental Security (CHES). This will help to sustain the project activities.