

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. 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. 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	Robin Whytock
Project title	Conservation of bird communities under threat from bushmeat hunting and the traditional medicine trade in the Ebo forest, Cameroon.
RSG reference	16076-1
Reporting period	January 2015 – January 2016
Amount of grant	£4,990
Your email address	rcwhytock@gmail.com
Date of this report	8 th January 2016

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
Identify the socio-economic factors that motivate people to hunt birds for food and traditional medicine and determine the scale of the problem.			X	Between February and June 2015, we administered 790 questionnaires using the unmatched count technique in 19 villages around the Ebo forest. Data were digitised in Cameroon by staff from the Ebo Forest Research Project and results are being prepared for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. Focus group discussions were held in 10 villages in December 2015. These data have not been received from Cameroon at the time of writing, but I expect to complete analysis in February 2016.
Generate baseline quantitative population and distribution data for focal species so that population trends can be monitored, and hunting sustainability can be assessed.			X	<p>In January 2015 we completed approximately 150-point count bird surveys in the Ebo forest and other areas of Southwest Cameroon.</p> <p>Field assistant Zacharie Bekokon surveyed raptors, hornbills and parrots in the Ebo forest between July and November 2015. Data have not been digitised at the time of writing, but written field reports suggest the work was successful.</p>
Engage with local stakeholders in study areas, developing a conservation strategy for vulnerable species based on the results of points 1 and 2.		X		We found it difficult to fully achieve this aim due to time constraints. However, results from the successful questionnaire work and bird surveys will be integrated into ongoing work carried out by the Ebo Forest Research Project in 2016. We hope to seek funding in future to further develop a more concrete bird conservation strategy that satisfies the needs of local people and conservation objectives. In addition, we will produce two articles about the results of the project for inclusion in the quarterly Ebo Forest Project newsletter, which is distributed widely throughout the Ebo forest area.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Fully train two local ecologists to collect data for 12 months.			X	Senior research assistant Zacharie Bekokon was trained to undertake questionnaire work and focus group discussions in January 2015. We also built on his previous bird survey experience and provided specialised training to survey raptors using vantage point surveys. We conducted 2 days of training with a further six ecologists working with the Ebo Forest Project, focusing on using the unmatched count questionnaire technique. Additionally, we spent 3 days with two MSc students (Kamdoum Ngute Alain Senghor and Guilain Tseguil) at the University of Dschang and provided intensive training on bird survey methodology.
Contribute to and engage with student research activities in the University of Dschang, Cameroon.			X	I formed an excellent relationship with the two MSc students mentioned above and have been in regular contact over email. I provided a reference for Alain Senghor's successful Rufford grant application. I also assisted Guilain Tseguil with a successful grant application to Idea Wild, and he now has his own field equipment including GPS, binoculars and range finder. This will greatly enhance the outcome of his MSc project.
Build lasting research collaborations between local and international NGOs and academic institutions.				I have formed an excellent relationship with Dr Taku Awa of the University of Dschang and hope to work with more of his MSc students in future. During fieldwork in January 2015 we also benefited from being accompanied by Dr Mark Hulme from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, who joined us due to the cancellation of his fieldwork plans in Sierra Leone. Mark greatly contributed to bird survey work and training sessions with Ebo Forest Project field assistants and MSc students.
Present findings at symposia and international ornithological conferences, with results published in peer-reviewed journals.		X		Although not achieved within the timeframe of the project, I hope to present results at the Pan African Ornithological Congress in 2016. Analysis of questionnaire work will be complete in January 2016 and we hope to submit a manuscript to a peer reviewed journal by March 2016.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Identify priorities for further research and conservation management activities.		X		Analysis of results from the successful questionnaire and bird survey work will allow us to complete this aim in 2016.

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

We had planned to use a motorbike to travel between villages, but an increase in logging operations meant that this was too dangerous, and we relied on public transport instead. Although this reduced the number of villages surveyed, we were still able to administer a sufficient number of questionnaires and are confident that results will be broadly representative of bird hunting in the region.

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

1. Successfully administering 790 questionnaires in 19 villages using the unmatched count technique.
2. Conducting 7 months of systematic bird surveys in the Ebo forest region and other areas of Southwest Cameroon. These are likely to be the most extensive carried out in the region to date.
3. Providing support and training (which is ongoing) to two MSc students from the University of Dschang, resulting in both students successfully applying for grants to cover equipment and fieldwork costs

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

Zacharie Bekokon is a Senior Field Assistant with the Ebo Forest Research Project and a former commercial bushmeat hunter. He lives in Logndeng Village at the edge of the Ebo forest, and the work funded by the Rufford Foundation has greatly enhanced his understanding of bird conservation issues. Zacharie is a respected member of the village and a great advocate for conservation in the Ebo forest. Through his continued work with the Ebo Forest Research Project, he acts as an ambassador for conservation in the local community. Although it was a requirement of the questionnaire technique that he did not reveal detailed information about the project's focus on bird hunting, he held meetings in all 19 villages with chiefs and elders to discuss the general conservation work carried out by the Ebo Forest Research Project prior to administering questionnaires. This also gave many people the opportunity to discuss any concerns they might have about the proposed national park.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Data analysis will be completed in 2016 and results will form part of the ongoing conservation work carried out by the Ebo Forest Research Project. I will continue to mentor MSc students Alain and

Guilain throughout 2016 and will maintain contact with Dr Taku Awa, in the hope of creating further collaborations.

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

I intend to present at the Pan African Ornithological Congress in 2016 and results will be submitted to peer reviewed journals. Results will also be covered in the Ebo Forest Research Project newsletter which is distributed to villages throughout the Ebo forest region.

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

Twelve months as planned.

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 Description	RSGF Budget Amount	RSGF Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Field assistant x2	2880	2880	0	
Field assistant food when in field	0	0	0	
Field assistant per diems	460	482.5	22.5	Extra to support MSc students during training
Applicant food in January (field assistant)	0	0	0	
Applicant accommodation in Cameroon when travelling (training in January)	0	0	0	
Research permit	0	0	0	
4x4 fuel travel to main field sites over 12 months	0	0	0	
Public transport & 4 x 4 hire between field sites for questionnaire work	600	535	-65	
Applicant international return flight UK to Cameroon	700	746.08	46.08	
Applicant entry visa	0	0	0	
Airport taxes	25	25	0	
Applicant travel insurance	85	85	0	
Two stereo audio recorders for point count surveys	240	240	0	
TOTAL	£4990	£4993.58	£3.58	

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

Complete data analysis and formulate an evidence-based conservation strategy for birds in the proposed Ebo National Park that will balance the needs of local communities as well as conservation objectives.

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

The logo will be printed in the Ebo Forest Project newsletter alongside two planned articles to be printed in 2016.

11. Any other comments?

Receipt of the grant has made a fantastic contribution to our understanding of how birds are valued by people in the Ebo forest and elsewhere in Cameroon. It also enabled the largest systematic survey of birds in southwest Cameroon to date, resulting in valuable baseline data for many species. The collaborative work with students from the University of Dschang and their successful grant applications also greatly exceeded our expectations. None of this would have been possible without receipt of the Rufford Foundation grant, thank you!



