

Final Project Evaluation Report

We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF 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 – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Complete the form in English and be as concise as you can. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to jane@rufford.org.

Your Details	
Full Name	William Goulding
Project Title	Conservation of Endemic Birds in the Louisiade Archipelago.
Application ID	18034-2
Grant Amount	£4395
Email Address	w.goulding@uq.edu.au
Date of this Report	16/09/2017

1. 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
<p>Improve communication pathways with local residents so research can be conducted in an ongoing manner.</p>				<p>Phone reception was established in parts of these island a few years ago. However, getting contact details remotely had been impossible. Most local residents can now gain access to mobile phones and a database of contact numbers has now been initiated. Several smaller solar chargers were donated to individuals on Junet and Sudest Islands, and a larger solar charging setup was given to one worker/contact on Sabara Island. This allows them to keep their phones charged to contact people. Financial account details of important contacts were exchanged so that an avenue for payment for ongoing work could be established.</p>
<p>Further employment and opportunities for local involvement in the conservation project</p>				<p>In addition to the above changes that will continue to allow greater opportunities, seven individuals were employed for various aspects during the most recent trip. Further financial benefits extended across the local communities through renting boats, paying for lodging, buying food, and through contributions to Christmas celebrations.</p>
<p>Undertake a survey trip to the interior of Sudest Island to seek further data on the endemic bird species; namely habitat-use, altitudinal ranges,</p>				<p>As planned, we undertook a field trip to the interior of Sudest Island. Despite inclement weather, the observations made were valuable for better understanding the distributions of Sudest's endemic birds.</p>

and population densities.				
Educational posters and talks will be presented at key locations to disseminate conservation information on endemic biodiversity and findings, and to reinforce local cultural values of the species of conservation concern				Several discussions and talks were presented in villages on Sudest and Junet Island. It was apparent from dispensing the posters that the best approach was to place them directly on school classroom walls (with a talk). Otherwise they tended to be secreted away/guarded by individuals (with good intentions) which unfortunately reduced the amount of exposure.
Results will be widely disseminated to maximise their value to conservation efforts. This will include peer-reviewed journal articles and presentations at a minimum of one international conference.				All information is shared with local residents. Two articles were published last year relating to work conducted. Two more articles are ready to submit. Summary reports and publications have been and continue to be forwarded to provincial and federal government bodies. The ongoing results of this project have not been presented at a conference since 2016. We expect this to occur at the next relevant conference.
To fly a PNG National Museum and Art Gallery staff member to Brisbane (Queensland Museum) for training in specimen preparation and taxidermy in Early 2016.				National budget cuts/delays to the PNG National Museum reduced staff numbers. Several staff left and the selected candidate left this institution to follow other opportunities in wildlife studies. The remaining employee in the Life History Unit could not be spared due to prior commitments conducting wildlife surveys across PNG. Consultation with The Rufford Foundation allowed diversion of these funds to purchase equipment to aid the museum/Life History Unit in this research role. This comprised field equipment for wildlife research.

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

A large portion of this grant was to be spent on further training for an individual from the Papua New Guinea National Museum and Art gallery and for a staff member to help with field work. The training aimed at improving collection management and taxidermy skills. This national institution offers logistic support and officially supports the research project in the Louisiade islands. Unfortunately, budget difficulties meant that the earmarked candidates left the museum (along with others) to study or follow other opportunities. The single remaining employee could not leave due to a heavy workload and prior commitments. We diverted these funds and those to take a staff member into the field. Much of this went to further help this remaining individual conduct rapid biodiversity assessments, which is part of his role at the museum. This was in consultation with this individual regarding the best support we could offer. In turn, this allows him to conduct much needed biodiversity assessment work in the PNG national interest.

Boat fuel that was being shipped down to the islands from the mainland took several weeks due to engine difficulties and repairs in Alotau. I purchased some extra fuel to allow coastal work to continue in the meantime.

The delay meant we embarked to reach the higher elevations of Sudest Island just as another research trip was being conducted there (invertebrates). This is almost unbelievable (an extremely unlikely event) given the few researchers that have ever visited the island. The other research group arrived in the coastal village the day before our group, and many of the local residents with land rights to this area were already employed on this project and had gone. Furthermore, the researchers camped at our intended destination on Mt Riu, where space is limited. To deal with this, we delayed in the local village to get approvals and find help. We then worked at lower elevations until they had finished. Unfortunately, this meant we missed the good weather and our time at the higher elevations was marred by rain, whipping winds, and sickness in virtually every team member. However, we were still able to make valuable observations.

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

- a) More accurate assessments of the habitat use and distributions of the endemic bird species at higher elevations on Sudest Island. In particular, greater knowledge of the population density and habitat-use by the endemic *Tagula* honeyeater (*M. vicina*) via radio telemetry studies also undertaken on this trip. This resulted in the first description of the nest of this species, foraging and movement behaviour, and home range sizes.
- b) It forged stronger ties with the local residents, many of whom are now well accustomed to facilitating research and sharing knowledge or skills relevant to conservation research.

- c) The Life History Unit at the PNG National Museum and Art Gallery has much needed equipment to help them conduct biodiversity research in the national interest.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.

This project cannot be conducted without local involvement. The first key step in every location involves the involvement of local communities to explain the project, seek permission and learn local knowledge. All land is owned, friendships have to be formed, access fees negotiated, guides and manpower hired, local produce purchased, boats hired, to name a few. This directly benefitted communities through monetary gain and the increased pride they developed through understanding the larger context of their island species, many of which have high cultural value. It also allowed some community members whom have been involved before to further their field skills in ornithological field research. These are skills that can be used when working with other visiting researchers in the future.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, this is a long term project that is intended to continue. This capitalises on the investment in communities, training, knowledge of endemic island birds and ringed bird populations. Hopefully it will increase opportunities for local residents and allow them to be more informed around conservation issues and the potential costs of commercial resource use should (when) commercial attention increase in the islands.

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

At the local scale, there are constant ongoing discussions with the individual and at the village level. Talking is almost a currency in PNG and local residents display genuine interest in the results and findings. This in turn generates pride and consideration for the forest birds. On the provincial and national government levels, official reports are submitted to several departments and copies of published peer reviewed papers also provided. Contributions on the conservation status of these species have been made to BirdLife International for their conservation status updates submitted to the IUCN (BirdLife International 2016). Material and information has been shared with other researchers, e.g. D, Mitchell 2017 Bull. B.O.C. 137:156-158. I will continue to publish the results of this work in peer-reviewed journal articles, conference presentations, government reports and community presentations. Two more manuscripts are currently ready for submission to journals.

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

The grant was used during the year 2016 with some expenses during the tail end of the trip in January 2017. The bulk of the grant was used purchasing before the field

trip in November 2016 and for field costs/payments during the trip. This was in line with the expected length of project expenditure.

8. Budget: 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. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Food costs for PNG national Museum staff training trip to Queensland Museum 15 days x \$60 AUD	£413	£0.00	+\$413	*Cancelled arrangement due to changes at the PNGNMAG.
Food @ 100PGK/day includes feeding staff and hosts	£653	£900	-\$247	Due to the lengthened stay of six weeks, there were greater food expenses. This ended up including contributions to village Christmas feasts.
Village accommodation 4 weeks @ ~ 50PGK with land access	£327	£491	-\$164	Trip length extended into 6 weeks using local accommodation in the islands.
Accommodation Alotau 2 pax 4 nights (PI and PNG museum staff member) UQ funded	£187	£161	+\$26	PI spent 7 nights in total at Saugere Guesthouse Alotau. PNG Museum staff did not attend.
Accommodation Port Moresby 1 pax - CWA Guesthouse 5 nights @ 100 pgk	£117	£140	-\$23	1 x extra night required for meeting government and fitting in to flight schedules.
1 drum of outboard motor fuel (500AUD) + drum transport to islands (50AUD)	£253	£368	-\$115	An extra £115 worth of outboard motor fuel was purchased in the first week in the island whilst awaiting delivery of fuel drums (delayed) - to conduct work.
Wages for field assistants for one week coastal work x 5 @ 85 PGK a week	£100	£87	+\$13	Variation due to individual availability and sporadic work conducted on Sabara Island.
Wages for local boat and navigator 28 x 50 PGK/day	£327	£491	-\$164	We actually hired the boat for 6 weeks transport. This increased costs but was needed for the safety and back up of having

				access to a vessel.
Wages for field-assistants on the interior island field trip - 250 PGK for 3 weeks work x 8 workers to be split up to spread benefits.	£467	£240	+£227	Less help was available due to other researchers visiting at the same time and location, needing help as well. We employed 5 workers for 2 weeks.
Accommodation 1 person 2 weeks in Brisbane near Queensland Museum for training in taxidermy - Planning for Riverside Motel in Southbank.	£960	£0	+£960	Cancelled. Funds diverted to procuring useful research equipment for the PNGNMAG Life History Unit and PI flights.
Return flights x 1 pax (PNG museum curatorial staff) Port Moresby to Brisbane for taxidermy training two weeks at Queensland Museum	£280	£0	+£280	Funds diverted to procuring useful research equipment for the PNGNMAG Life History Unit and PI flights.
Return flights x 1 pax (PNG museum field staff) Port Moresby - Alotau	£200	£0	+£200	Funds diverted to radio telemetry transmitters for tracking Tagula Honeyeaters.
Return Flights x 2 pax (PI & 1 PNG Museum field staff) from Alotau to Misima Airport - Airlines PNG	£415	£159	+£257	Only PI due to other field staff member unable to attend.
*Alteration Return Flights x 1 for principle investigator from Brisbane to Alotau, PNG - Air Niugini.	£0	£410	-£410	Diverted funds from PNGNMAG staff training at Qld Museum (Taxidermy and collection management). Unable to attend.
*Alteration Research Equipment for PNGNMAG Life History Unit	£0	£801	-£801	Diverted funds from aforementioned. Handheld GPS Map64 (£165.60) Asus E200HA Notebook (£105) Panasonic Lumix DMC-FZ300 compact camera (£325) SanDisc 16GB memory card (£9.20) Seagate expansion 2 TB (£81) Pelican protective case (£115)
*Alteration ATS VHF radio transmitters x 4 for radio tracking Tagula Honeyeaters	£0	£231	-£231	Diverted Funds. 4 X A2414 VHF transmitters (Advanced Telemetry Systems)
Total		£4478	-£83	

Notes to budget: Rate when grant funds were received 1 PGK = 0.23 GBP = 0.50 AUD

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

The important next steps are to:

1. Produce a greater amount of culturally applicable education material for communities in these islands. This will help inform them of the potential issues around environmental change and how these might be dealt with.
2. Continue monitoring the ringed endemic bird populations to gather valuable life history and population data.
3. Investigate other lesser known endemic species on these islands and their status in relation to threats.

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

The Rufford Foundation Logo was used on posters. The support has been acknowledged orally in discussions with local communities. It will also be used in relation to any upcoming presentations relating to this project. The Rufford Foundation is acknowledged in journal articles produced from the findings.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Professor Clive McAlpine and Dr Patrick Moss are experienced scientists that offer strategic planning and methodological advice. In particular relating to monitoring environmental change in these islands, landscape ecology and biogeographical concepts. They also aid in getting University of Queensland support for aspects of the project, such as ethics and permit approvals, and other administrative support.

Ralph Adrian and Paul Buluge offer logistical support for field work in the islands and provide local knowledge and contacts.

William Goulding is the principle investigator (myself) and conducts the field work with assistance of local residents, in addition to Ralph and Paul.

12. Any other comments?

We thank the Rufford Foundation for continuing to support the project through the many changes that had to be made.

