

The Rufford Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford 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	Rigardt Hoffman
Project title	Recreational SCUBA diving interactions with the vulnerable ragged-tooth shark, <i>Carcharias taurus</i> , on the coast of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.
RSG reference	18598-1
Reporting period	
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	righof@gmail.com
Date of this report	29/5/2017

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
Monitor ragged-tooth shark behavior				
Monitor SCUBA diving behavior around sharks				
Educate public on shark protocols				Public talks provided a good platform for educating general public and diving enthusiasts on importance of shark protocols
Evaluate whether protocols are satisfactory for shark conservation				

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

Any big predator research can be unpredictable. During this research, the sharks that were meant to be taken footage of arrived at the study site much later than anticipated. Added on, unforeseen floods provided very limited access to the diving site as the launch sites for the boats were closed as a consequence of massive logs being washed out onto the beach. In this case of unforeseen natural conditions disrupting research plans, we could only wait for the correct time to resume research. We were fortunate enough to continue research when the sharks arrived and launch sites were cleared.

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

We discovered that the data collected suggests that the ragged-tooth shark population is not negatively affected by the presence of the SCUBA divers. This outcome is shared by the Australian study.

The SCUBA divers are adhering to the protocols set up at the study site when swimming with the ragged-tooth sharks.

The diving community received conservation education on the importance of conservation-sighted diving with the sharks and the dive instructors appreciated the importance of teaching customers on the importance of SCUBA diving with conservation-minded behavior.

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

The local diving community have benefitted in understanding their role in protecting the sharks and their diving business. They understand that if the sharks get chased away from the area that a huge part of their business will be affected as well. Therefore, the sharks are protected as well as the local diving operators' businesses.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Currently, no.

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

Via conference presentation and posters as well as the sharing of the thesis that is written up.

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

1.5 years. The actual project was anticipated to be around 1.5-2 years long.

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
Food	150	150		
Accommodation	450	400	+50	Free accommodation was occasionally provided
Fuel	200	200		
Dive slates	250	200	+50	Diving charter provided some slates
Diving charter	250	315	-45	Given budget amount was an estimation
Air refills	50	50		
Diving equipment rentals	200	215	-15	Given budget amount was an estimation
Laser underwater housing	1000	1025	-25	More expensive than anticipated
Green light laser pointer	350	300	+50	
Go PRO x2	600	650	-50	Deliver cost
Underwater housing	1500	1400		Given budget amount was an estimation

Total	1500	1405	95	Rand-Pound exchange- 1 South African Rand equals 0.060 British Pound (29/5/17)
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9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

Increasing sample size to get a more accurate statistical evaluation on the behaviour of both shark and diver.

Increasing ragged-tooth shark conservation awareness

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?

Yes, when I presented at conferences the RSGF logo was visible on both the presentation slides and poster. Yes, customers and listeners frequently asked me where I received funding and some recognised the RSGF logo.

11. Any other comments?

Thank you! Without RSGF this research would not have been possible.