

## The Rufford Foundation Final Report

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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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Alyona Koshkina
Project title	Identifying migration routes to conserve Central Asian population of White-headed Duck ( <i>Oxyura leucocephala</i> )
RSG reference	22516-1
Reporting period	01.07.17 – 01.07.18
Amount of grant	4998
Your email address	alena_shmalenko@mail.ru
Date of this report	18.07.18

**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
Train the project team and practice trapping and tagging White-headed Ducks				We invited the team of Russian partners experienced in trapping to consult as in Kazakhstan (knowledge exchange was sponsored by the CLP). Training was conducted one week prior the trapping activities
Tag 30 birds with geo-locators				Only four (4) birds were tagged in 2017, but additional funds were raised to continue tagging in July 2018 to prevent loss of purchased geo-locators
Implement post-catching monitoring and monitoring of autumn aggregations				More than 7000 birds were counted during autumn migration after trapping activities.

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

The main difficulties were related to trapping methodology. WHD belong to the group of diving ducks and has a particular ecology that makes it difficult to trap it with traditional methods. Therefore, we tested newly invented approach previously successfully applied by Russian ornithologists. Unfortunately, our lakes turned out to be less muddy and much larger than the Russian locations, so it was more difficult to chase and force birds to get into the trap. To overcome this, we used additional equipment, such as motor boats and more men power. Finally, the method worked as expected, but the trapping yield was low anyway. Thus, we decided to try another method (which is usually used for geese and ducks, but wasn't yet tested on White-headed Duck) in 2018 which we expect to be more successful in our conditions and for this particular species.

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

1 – For the first time ever White-headed Ducks were tagged with geo-locators and trapped in Kazakhstan. Trapping was successful and no birds were harmed. This experience will be crucial when satellite-tagging technology will become available for White-headed Duck.

2 – Kazakh experts were trained to trap White-headed Ducks and Kazakh-Russian collaboration in WhD conservation was improved. We have gained new knowledge and experience and agreed on further partnership.

3 – Post-breeding monitoring of WhD revealed the positive population trend. 7000 birds were counted on migration in the project area in 2017.

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

One biology student from the region was trained on monitoring and capture methods and implemented tagging under the supervision of team experts. Young experts from the Korgalzhyn Nature Reserve were involved in monitoring activities and improved their skills.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

As many geo-locators were left and their batteries are going to expire if not used in 1-2 year period we decided to continue tagging campaign in 2018. Additional funds were raised (4900\$ grant from National Geographic) to buy trapping equipment for the new method and involve more participants. There is also a chance to re-trap some of the tagged birds in 2017.

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

We plan to write one scientific publication on the results of 2017-2018 trapping seasons about the use of different methods to trap WhD. Another article on population trend have already been prepared and submitted to peer-review journal.

We prepared two (2) popular articles and one short movie illustrating project activities and results:

- Short movie <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IE7HfLvPUBc&t=3s>
- Koshkina. A.I. First experience of trapping and tagging White-headed Duck in Kazakhstan. ACBK News #8, 2017: <https://acbkvestnik.weebly.com/84708-105510771088107410991081-1086108710991090-108610901083108610741072-1080-1084107710951077108510801103-10891072107410821080-1074-1050107210791072.html> (In Russian)
- Zharbolova D., Koshkina A. Tagging the Elusive White-headed Duck. BirdLife News, 2017: <https://www.birdlife.org/europe-and-central-asia/news/tagging-elusive-white-headed-duck>
- ACBK report for 2016-2017 [http://www.acbk.kz/elfinder/files/Reports/Annual%20report%20ACBK\\_2016-2017.pdf](http://www.acbk.kz/elfinder/files/Reports/Annual%20report%20ACBK_2016-2017.pdf)

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

The budget was used as planned; most of funds were spent for purchasing geo-locators and colour rings before the fieldwork. The rest of money were spent during the fieldwork.

**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
Petrol for fieldwork	227	200	27	Spent as expected
Per-diems	622	302	320	Were co-funded from the CLP project budget
Geo-locators	4150	4497	-347	colour rings were needed additionally for tagging

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

The most important step is to try to set up the rest of geo-locators on birds in 2018, as otherwise their batteries will expire. Another important objective is to explore new method of trapping to increase trapping yield.

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

The Rufford Foundation was mentioned in every article, report and social media material (ACBK page on Facebook and VK) as financial partner of the project. The logo have been used only in presentations so far, as no printing materials were produced yet.

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

**Alyona Koshkina** – project leader (planning, coordination, data analysis and reporting)

**Ruslan Urazaliyev** – project participant (participation in planning, trapping and tagging birds)

**Evgeny Murzakhanov** – Russian partner, project consultant (organising training on trapping, participation in trapping)

**Andrey Bazdyrev** - Russian partner, project consultant (participation in trapping)

**Artyom Koshkin** – volunteer (implementing monitoring, participation in trapping)

*Irina Grigoryeva* – volunteer, biology student (participation in trapping)

**Maxim Koshkin** – project advisor (consulting on tagging and participation in trapping)

## 12. Any other comments?

We are grateful to the Rufford Foundation for the opportunity to implement our project. As we expect some delayed results of this project, we will stay in touch and inform you about our new achievements.