

## 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Julian Fennessy
<b>Project title</b>	Ecological assessment of key giraffe populations and subspecies in Kenya as a baseline for a continent-wide analysis
<b>RSG reference</b>	RSG 04.12.07
<b>Reporting period</b>	Final Report
<b>Amount of grant</b>	4,940
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:Julian.Fennessy@gmail.com">Julian.Fennessy@gmail.com</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	November 2009

**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
Establishment of individual recognition files of all giraffe in the study areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nairobi NP</li> <li>- Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu Conservancy</li> <li>- Samburu NR</li> </ul>		X	X X	The focus of the Nairobi NP study changed from individual identification (although population surveys were undertaken and individual files established for many) to an assessment of habitat and use by giraffe – request of Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). The Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu and Samburu population research was well established and are planned to continue.
Population dynamics assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nairobi NP</li> <li>- Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu Conservancy</li> <li>- Samburu NR</li> </ul>			X X X	Population dynamics current and historical data was undertaken and analysed in the Nairobi NP. The Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu and Samburu population dynamics research was well established and both planned to continue.
Range assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nairobi NP</li> <li>- Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu Conservancy</li> <li>- Samburu NR</li> </ul>		X X	X	A quality assessment of the Nairobi NP range and habitat use of giraffe was undertaken. The Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu and Samburu range assessment research was achieved and is planned to continue: range assessment was not key component of this component of the study.
Forage and behavioural interactions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nairobi NP</li> <li>- Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu Conservancy</li> <li>- Samburu NR</li> </ul>		X X	X	A quality study of the Nairobi NP forage and to a lesser extent behavioural interactions was undertaken. The Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu and Samburu forage and behavioural research was begun despite it not being a key component of this study, and is planned to continue.

N.B. It is important to note that the project components in Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu and Samburu were preliminary studies although far greater amount of research efforts and in turn results were achieved than initially expected.

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

There were two key changes in the project and/or study areas.

The first was the slight shift in focus of the Nairobi NP study from being a population identification and dynamics focussed study to a more rounded assessment focusing on what factors are affecting habitat use by giraffe in the park. A close collaboration was created with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the project sought to significantly support a Masters student who was also a KWS scientist – after graduating he was promoted to Senior Scientist. Project support through this Rufford Small Grant enabled the student to undertake much of his field work and support materials needed – additional equipment was also donated to KWS by the Giraffe Conservation Foundation to assist with this work. It was thought that this was the best way to provide capacity, training and collaboration in the country which in turn will hopefully provide the KWS with more qualified and experienced staff.

The other change was the shift of focus from Lake Nakuru NP to neighbouring Soysambu Conservancy, although work was begun in Lake Nakuru NP. This was undertaken because of the greater interest by the Conservancy to have this research ongoing and a critical part of their ongoing monitoring and research programmes. The giraffe have been integrated into the Soysambu Conservancy as one of their key wildlife species and important for them and their habitat to be managed appropriately. The Conservancy has and continues to work collaboratively with the Giraffe Conservation Foundation, and ably assisted by a regular group of international volunteers helping on all aspects of the research.

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

Support, training and capacity building to a Kenyan MSc student who was undertaking research on giraffe in Nairobi NP and subsequently who graduated and was promoted to Senior Scientist. This was by far the most important outcome of the project.

Commencement of the first broad Rothschild's and Reticulated ecological studies and population assessment ever – which is hard to believe. Coupled with the initial efforts of this study has been the attraction and guidance of two PhD students to study these populations in collaboration with the Giraffe Conservation Foundation post this project.

Compilation of Rothschild's data from across their extant range in Kenya and Uganda, and subsequent submission of these results and associated conservation status assessment to the IUCN RedList for it to be officially listed as an 'endangered' subspecies – the outcome of the assessment based on the IUCN criteria.

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

The project was very inclusive of local (and international) communities, students, visiting researchers and property owners.

As described, working with Kenya Wildlife Service was an integral part of the project. Because of the close relationship with KWS in Nairobi NP it was decided that instead of focussing research efforts on the Rothschild's giraffe in Lake Nakuru NP, it would be better to target the adjacent Soysambu Conservancy which has a population of similar size and one which has and continues to increase in comparison to Lake Nakuru NP. This privately owned land is critical wildlife habitat for a range of species and throughout the project visits to the Conservancy, work was undertaken collaboratively with local game scouts and staff, international volunteers and interns. In Samburu NR, close relations were established with Save the Elephants and local guides, and a network of sharing information and data has been established (and continues).

All in all the sharing of information regarding the plight of giraffe has reached much further afield than previously, with government and non-government entities alike requesting the Giraffe Conservation Foundation to assist with the majority of giraffe matters across the country. This is a great step forward and a role which is necessary to fill.

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

Yes. The project plans to continue and be expanded through collaborative partnerships in two of the three study areas. Two PhD students – John Doherty from Queens University, Belfast, Ireland and Zoe Muller from University of Bristol, England, will be commencing full-time field research from 2010 on Reticulated giraffe in Samburu National Reserve (and surrounds) and on Rothschild's giraffe in Soysambu Conservancy/Lake Nakuru NP, respectively. This project and the work of the Giraffe Conservation Foundation were critical in encouraging these two students to work in Kenya and on these respective projects/populations. Both these research students are 'research associates' of GCF and hopefully Rufford Small Grants Foundation can provide support to these students in collaboration with Giraffe Conservation Foundation through their proposed independent applications (to be submitted). Continued research on the two populations is critical with Rothschild's giraffe soon to be listed in one of the threatened categories of the IUCN RedList, while reticulated giraffe have suffered marked drops in population numbers over the past decade and greater information is required on them to understand the true impacts. The first longer term piece of research on these populations will yield invaluable results and the Giraffe Conservation Foundation is keen to be actively involved.

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

The results will be shared both in both popular and scientific form. The data collected during the study has been compiled into the International Giraffe Working Group Giraffe Database (GiD). Of most value has been the gathering of relevant data on the Rothschild's giraffe population across Kenya and Uganda which has highlighted their status as 'endangered' according to the IUCN RedList criteria. An application to the IUCN RedList Authority has just been made to have them listed accordingly which is would be a great outcome from this study.

The MSc supported research in Nairobi NP has been completed and the student passed – and subsequently promoted to Senior Scientist in KWS. His research is planned to be published in a scientific journal and due credit to the Rufford Small Grant Foundation will be noted. The abstract from this research has already been published in the Giraffa – newsletter of the International Giraffe Working Group ([www.giraffeconservation.org/newsletter.php](http://www.giraffeconservation.org/newsletter.php)).

The physical data obtained has been shared with the Kenya Wildlife Service, provided to the Soysambu Conservancy (relevant data) and finally to the respective PhD students who will begin their studies on the Rothschild's and Reticulated giraffe population to assist them with baseline data. The project is listed on the Giraffe Conservation Foundation website ([www.giraffeconservation.org](http://www.giraffeconservation.org)) with some blogs under the Kenya projects uploaded.

Lastly, an adapted version of this report will be shared through the Giraffa newsletter in the next upcoming issue.

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

The project was undertaken over the eighteen month period proposed, with some aspects finalised earlier than others. The valuable efforts started on assessing some of the populations – most importantly the Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu and Samburu giraffe, now sets the scene for detailed studies to be begun by two PhD students from 2010 (as highlighted above).

**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
<b>Travel - vehicle expenses (running costs)</b>				
Nairobi NP @ 5000km (£0.20/km)	1000	895	-105	Additional expenses for Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu and Samburu components due to more/longer trips
Nakuru NP @ 500km/trip – 3 trips	300	360	+60	
Samburu NP @ 750km/trip – 3 trips	450	753	+303	
<b>Per diem</b>				
Nairobi NP @ 5000km	300	258	-42	Additional expenses for Lake Nakuru NP/Soysambu and Samburu components due to more/longer trips
Nakuru NP @ 3 trips/4 days	240	300	+60	
Samburu NP @ 3 trips/5 days	300	400	+100	
<b>Equipment</b>				
PDA/GPS with software	850		-209.13	Cost of PDA/GPS was cheaper than expected whilst the camera was more expensive: BUT the budget line was only slightly overspent
Digital camera and software	750	1024	+274	
Stationary, etc.	350	218	-132	Under spent due to cheaper than expected costs and

				use of 'others' equipment rather than charging to this project
Communications	400	621	+221	Overspent due to unexpected increase in communication costs in Kenya
Kenya Research Permit		167	+167	Unexpected cost
<b>Total</b>	<b>4940</b>	<b>5636.25</b>	<b>+696.25</b>	N.B: exchange rate for funding was £1 = US\$2 = Kshs120

All in all I think the budget was adhered to as much as possible with unexpected costs adding additional outlay which was covered by the researcher.

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

The project has stirred considerable interest and conservation efforts of giraffe in Kenya, and further afield in the continent. Recent discussions with the African Wildlife Foundation, African Fund for Endangered Wildlife (Giraffe Centre) and Kenya Wildlife Service have shown an interest in developing a giraffe conservation strategy for Kenya – possibly the first to be completed in Africa. The discussions had with the various parties and collaborators throughout this study have really opened their eyes to the plight of giraffe both within Kenya and further afield and this would be an invaluable strategy to guide all involved in giraffe's conservation and management.

To support the strategy, as well as the next steps for the project, the collaborative relationships between the Giraffe Conservation Foundation and the two PhD students starting in Kenya in 2010 (highlighted earlier) will provide the emphasis needed on placing these species as a critical animal to Kenya. The Giraffe Conservation will also play an ongoing role as 'supporters' of the projects through in-kind technical and other support as and where appropriate.

### 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?

The RSGF logo has been placed on the Giraffe Conservation Foundation (GCF) Website – [www.giraffeconservation.org](http://www.giraffeconservation.org), as one of its key conservation partners. The website has received considerable international traffic, even more so recently because of the work the GCF is involved in within Niger.

### 11. Any other comments?

Of course I would like to thank the Rufford Small Grant in assisting with this work and as highlighted by the three key outputs of the project, I think it has been tremendously successful in training and providing support to local and international students, set a basis for ongoing research in collaboration with PhD students and helped develop the first ever listing submission for Rothschild's giraffe as an 'endangered' subspecies to the IUCN RedList.



I do hope that Rufford Small Grant Foundation can continue to support the future applications of the said PhD students in collaboration with GCF – starting in 2010, with respect to the preliminary work undertaken in this project. Additionally, I encourage Rufford Small Grants Foundation to work more closely with future giraffe applications from the Giraffe Conservation Foundation and their research associates to learn more about one of the world’s most forgotten megafauna!

