

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

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Nicholas Bayly
<b>Project title</b>	Crossing the Caribbean – Conserving the Darién migratory bird hotspot by building capacity for ecotourism
<b>RSG reference</b>	1061-C
<b>Reporting period</b>	September 2013 – December 2014
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£24,908
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:nick.bayly@selva.org.co">nick.bayly@selva.org.co</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	11 December 2014

**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
Increase capacity for ecotourism by carrying out five training courses for wildlife guides			Yes	The five training courses were completed successfully and were attended by a total of 58 individuals from six communities: Lechugal, Marimonda, Bocas del Atrato, San Francisco, Capurganá and Sapzurro. 48 individuals completed the course, at an average of eight people per community. The level of learning from the courses was good, with >70% of individuals attaining a score of >60% in evaluations. A post-course questionnaire revealed that all those who responded had practiced wildlife observation afterwards and that 60% had guided tourists in the four months post-course. The local ecotourism company, Ecohuellas, and representatives from the Tacarcuna Reserve also attended two or more courses. Finally, as a result of the course a guide association was formed in the community of San Francisco.
Capacity for ecotourism increased through five community workshops		Yes		The community workshops were well attended - Marimonda/Lechugal (four), Bocas del Atrato (eight), San Francisco (12), Capurganá (10), Sapzurro (14) – and they achieved the purpose of defining trails and zones for wildlife watching and identifying the needs of each community in terms of further training and equipment. The workshops were not successful in defining community reserves, although a number of promising options were discussed, particularly in Capurganá. One of the barriers to advancing this theme further was the private nature of much of the land within walking distance of the villages, which had not been anticipated prior to the workshops. Nevertheless, in each

				community a strategy to secure areas of natural habitat for wildlife observation was proposed and could be implemented in future projects.
Increase awareness of raptor migration through an awareness campaign and a newspaper article			Yes	A raptor festival was carried out in two successive years in the village of Sapzurro involving 34 children in 2013 and 26 children in 2014, with extremely positive feedback from teachers and parents alike. The engagement of tourists was not as successful as hoped, due to the difficulty of simultaneously counting raptors and showing them to passing tourists, as well as the unpredictability of when large numbers of birds will migrate. A newspaper article was published but we were unable to get an article published in a national newspaper (attempts are still being made).
Implement an education curriculum in five schools to create awareness of biodiversity and conservation			Yes	The education curriculum was implemented in six schools, with participation by 11 teachers and 208 students. The curriculum was very well received in three of the schools and we believe that there is high probability that the curriculum will be implemented in future years. In two of the schools, the lack of teachers from the local community and an associated high rate of turnover of teachers, were the primary reasons for why we believe that the curriculum may not be adopted in the long term. To encourage the long-term adoption of the curriculum we presented each school with a poster with a photographic record of the activities carried out and further projects are being planned with the objective of “institutionalising” the curriculum.
Promote wildlife tourism through the publication of a guide to the wildlife of the Darién			Yes	The guide with the title “Darién y Urabá: Fauna al descubierto” or “Darién & Urabá: Wildlife uncovered” was published in September 2014. With additional support from the Colombian Zoological Association (Asociación Colombiana de Zoología), 1000 copies were printed, which are to be sold

				exclusively by the local communities. The most satisfying result, was the decision by three of the communities to use 100% of the profits from sales to buy equipment, such as binoculars, and to generally develop tourist infrastructure. The other three communities elected to use at least 60% of profits for the same end. All communities agreed to set aside funds from the sale of the guides to cover the cost of a second edition. The initial feedback from publication and sale of the guides is extremely positive, with the local community councils showing considerable gratitude and with tourists seeking tours having bought the book.
Promote birdwatching in the Darién through the publication of a birdwatchers guide to the Darién			Yes	50 copies of the bilingual guide were printed and have been distributed within the region and to birdwatching tour companies. The guide is also available online and over 50 visits have been received to date.
Promote wildlife tourism in the Darién through a website			Yes	The bilingual website went live in November 2014, 2 months after we had planned. The website has received few visits in the short time it has been live, but we expect it to start generating more traffic soon. <a href="http://www.faanadarien.co">www.faanadarien.co</a>
Generate knowledge base for ecotourism and conservation activities			Yes	Wildlife surveys were highly successful, and the project database contains 7854 records of 32 species of mammals, 354 birds, 28 amphibians and 39 reptiles. Two critically endangered species and a number of threatened and/or endemic species were recorded. Bird records have been uploaded to the open access database <a href="http://www.ebird.org">www.ebird.org</a> and mammal records were delivered to Corpouraba, one of the local environment authorities. The entire database is being prepared for upload to the national biological database (SIB) housed by the Humboldt Institute.

Monitor autumn bird migration			Yes	The bird migration monitoring activities of Crossing the Caribbean were continued for two years giving rise to over 3000 ringed birds. In 2014, the team counted over a million migratory birds for the first time. Data from previous years of monitoring were published in two peer-reviewed articles.
Increase local capacity for migration monitoring			Yes	Martha Rubio, resident in Sapzurro, was trained for one month and half in bird ringing techniques. Two members of local communities have begun to monitor the raptor migration through the encouragement of the team.

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

One of the problems faced during the project was ensuring full participation in the capacity building activities and education activities. In the communities where we worked, there was no mechanism for disseminating the program of activities except by word of mouth and this often meant that not all potentially interested community members were informed. To try to solve this issue, we adopted a variety of approaches in each community, including disseminating the information through community leaders (part of the “Consejos Comunitarios” or community councils), through known guides or individuals interested in ecotourism, and through a small poster inviting community members to attend.

This issue also arose due to the informal nature in which many community members treat such capacity building opportunities, typified by participants often arriving late to sessions or only attending once other individuals had told them that it was going to be worthwhile. We tackled this problem by being as flexible as possible, to ensure maximum participation and adapt our schedule to that of the interested participants. Nevertheless, there were still individuals who only expressed interest in the training once activities had been completed and when they had heard positive feedback from participants. To tackle this issue in the future, we would recommend planning a series of “warm up” activities to generate interest and to illustrate the benefits from attending the training activities.

During wildlife surveys, we lost three days of fieldwork as a result of operations by the Colombian security forces close by. The only option in these cases was to suspend activities until operations were completed and the safety of the team could be guaranteed.

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

1. Publication of a guide to the wildlife of the Darién and Urabá – The guide has been extremely well received and the quality of the photography, design and printing has been widely praised. Crucially, the communities who will receive the first 1000 copies of the book, took the decision to invest between 60-100% of the profits from sales in developing their infrastructure for ecotourism, by buying essential equipment and maintaining trails etc. This was an excellent result and a sign that the guide will have a positive impact in the long term, especially as the communities are committed to setting aside funds for a second edition.
2. Visualisation of wildlife watching – Despite the abundant wildlife to be found the Darién and Urabá, wildlife tours were not part of the existing tourist market, except to see nesting sea turtles. The combination of the book, the website ([www.faunadarien.co](http://www.faunadarien.co)) and trained local guides offering their services, is now changing this and even in the short period since the end of the field activities, guides who received training have reported that they have guided tourists interested in seeing wildlife.
3. Changing attitudes in school children – The implementation of the curriculum “The biodiversity week” had an immediate effect, particularly in Sapzurro, where education activities have been carried out over 3 years. Teachers from four out of the six schools involved recognised the importance and benefits of the curriculum, and in Sapzurro teachers reported a change in how the children treated wild animals.

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

Six local communities were extensively involved in the project, with 208 children participating in a week of biodiversity orientated education activities and 48 adults attending a three-day training workshop for guiding tourists interested in wildlife watching. A further 48 community members participated in a workshop to assess the needs for developing ecotourism infrastructure and twelve individuals were employed as guides during wildlife surveys, where they practiced their identification skills. 1000 copies of a photographic wildlife guide were donated to local communities and will be sold to visiting tourists. The sale of the book will create awareness and interest in wildlife watching opportunities in the region, as well as generating approximately £4250 in funds that will largely be invested in ecotourism infrastructure. Future editions of the book will continue to generate revenue for the local communities. In San Francisco, a guiding association formed as a result of the project activities <http://asociaciondeguiasdelaselvafodarien.blogspot.com/>

Finally, the local ecotourism company, Ecohuellas, was extensively involved in the training activities and community workshops and will begin to offer specific tours for wildlife watching, as well as benefitting from the sale of the wildlife guide.

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

The community workshops identified a wide range of needs and potential projects that we hope to address through future projects. They included developing the infrastructure for visiting the Ciénaga (lagoon) de Marimonda, including a small reception area, a wooden walkway and canoes (a proposal has been submitted), the development of viewing platforms in Bocas del Atrato (proposal under consideration), a watershed protection project in San Francisco, a community reserve in Capurganá and the improvement of the trail infrastructure around Sapzurro. A proposal has also been submitted to expand the monitoring of migratory birds of prey to two additional sites and train individuals who took part in the guide training courses to undertake the surveys. This project would form part of a range of activities aimed at consolidating the guide training activities and raising standards in terms of wildlife identification, ecological knowledge and the ability to communicate with tourists.

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

Regular updates on the results of the project have been posted on the SELVA website ([www.selva.org.co](http://www.selva.org.co)) and the blog ([www.avesmigratoriascolombia.wordpress.com](http://www.avesmigratoriascolombia.wordpress.com)) of Crossing the Caribbean. Outcomes from the project are also visible on the website ([www.fauнадarién.co](http://www.fauнадarién.co)). The wildlife guide in itself is an excellent means of sharing the results from the wildlife surveys and it also promotes the employment of local guides. Around 25 copies have been donated to key actors in the region including the Consejos Comunitarios (community councils) of the Afrocolombian communities (COCOMANORTE, COCOMASECO and COCOMASUR), the two regional environmental authorities (CORPOURABA and CODECHOCO), and to national actors such as the National Parks authority, Conservation International Colombia, the Colombian Zoological Society and researchers from the Universidad de los Andes and the Universidad Nacional. Results from the migration monitoring were recently published in the journal *Neotropical Ornithology* and *The Auk*:

Bayly, N.J., Cárdenas-Ortiz, L., Rubio, M. & Gómez, C. (2014) Migration of raptors, swallows and other diurnal migratory birds through the Darién of Colombia. *Ornitología Neotropical* 25: 63-71

Gómez, C., Bayly, N.J. & Rosenberg, K.V. (2014) Fall stopover strategies of *Catharus* thrushes in northern South America. *Auk* 13: 702-717.

A story on the migration of raptors in the Darién was recently published in an English newspaper in Bogotá and we are currently trying to get a similar story published in the national Colombian media.

**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 grant was used over a period of approximately 14 months, 2 months longer than the year-long project we had planned. This was primarily down to the project leader having a major health issue in the last three months of 2013 that delayed the initiation of certain project activities.

**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.**

£1 = 2817 COP when the grant was received.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Autumn Migration - Researchers x 2	£2,860	£3,384	£524	One full migration field season and one partial season were carried out, instead of just one as budgeted, hence the increased cost. This was to make up for the partial season in 2013, which arose because the project leader suffered a major health issue.
Autumn migration - Educator/Raptor Counter	£535	£950	£415	
Autumn migration - Accommodation and food	£1,260	£1,250	£10	
Travel Expenses and transporting equipment	£435	£755	£320	See above for explanation of increased costs.
Bird ringing intern	£279	£285	£6	
Awareness materials - Raptor Festival	£143	£163	£20	Increased costs as we carried out two raptor festivals instead of just one.
Research Permit	£89	£0	£89	A research permit covering multiple regions was successfully processed immediately prior to the initiation of activities and was funded by a separate project.
<b>Environmental Education - Educators x 2</b>	£2,002	£2,086	£84	

Educators - Accommodation & food	£490	£393	£97	
Educators - Travel expenses	£506	£445	£61	
Education Materials - Curriculum manuals	£445	£397	£48	
Pre-visits to schools and communities	£125	£664	-£539	An error in the project planning was not to budget for a visit by the project leader to each of the communities before initiating activities. These visits became an essential requirement for gaining permission to carry out the project activities and increased costs.
<b>Guide training courses</b> - Instructors x 2	£1,000	£1,036	-£36	
Instructors - Accommodation and food	£588	£443	£145	Accommodation costs were discounted in recognition of the project's positive impact.
Course Materials	£180	£98	£82	
Course Promotion	£36	£57	-£21	
<b>Wildlife surveys</b> - Researchers x 3	£3,218	£3,221	-£3	
Wildlife surveys - Accommodation and food	£1,596	£1,429	£167	Accommodation costs were discounted in recognition of the project's positive impact.
Promotion and Materials Community Workshops	£179	£98	£81	
Wildlife surveys - Travel expenses	£760	£774	-£14	
Guides during surveys	£700	£430	£270	Despite contracting guides on the majority of days of surveys, we did not need as many guides as we had expected to successfully carry out the surveys.
Camera Traps x 3, Binoculars x 5	£743	£700	£43	

<b>Design &amp; writing of wildlife guide</b>	£2,321	£1,527	£794	The project leader designed the guide and a graphic designer was only employed to check the final design. This greatly reduced costs without compromising quality and made up for deficits in the budget associated with the migration monitoring activities.
Design & writing of birdwatching guide	£357	£357	-£0	
Printing of 500 wildlife guides	£1,075	£1,088	-£13	
Printing of 50 birdwatching guides	£268	£192	£76	
Distribution of guides	£214	£373	-£159	The guide was launched in each of the six communities, which increased travel costs.
<b>Website design &amp; content</b>	£625	£446	£179	The design and writing of the content did not take as long as anticipated.
Registration web domain name 10 years	£143	£98	£45	Registration for 5 years only, as this is the maximum allowed.
<b>SELVA Administration</b>	£1,738	£1,738	£0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£24,908</b>	<b>£24,878</b>	<b>£32</b>	

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

The wildlife guide is already fulfilling its purpose and it is essential to ensure that it does so in the long-term. This will require constant encouragement from SELVA, Ecohuellas and the Tacarcuna Reserve to ensure that local communities continue to make the most of the guide as a way to generate revenue and to formalise the mechanisms by which they offer the guide to visiting tourists. We hope to print a second edition in 2015. It is also vitally important to provide more capacity building opportunities for guides, to ensure that the process does not stall and to create local capacity for training the next generation of wildlife guides. Equally, it is necessary to work for the institutionalisation of the education curriculum in local schools, to guarantee that it has a long-term impact. Finally, the formal

recognition or designation of reserves for wildlife observation is an important step in order to provide a solid base for the future of ecotourism activities.

**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 Rufford logo was widely used and appears in the following: the wildlife guide, the guide for birdwatchers, the website [www.faunadarien.co](http://www.faunadarien.co), the SELVA website [www.selva.org.co](http://www.selva.org.co), and in all the guide training materials and in the manual that accompanies the education curriculum. Rufford was also acknowledged and the logo included in presentations given at the Partners in Flight conference in Utah, August 2013, at the University of the Andes, September 2014, and at the Colombian Zoology Conference in Cartagena, December 2014.

The RSGF was publicised as the funder of the wildlife guide training courses and in the community workshops and is acknowledged as the source of funds for the publication of the wildlife guide and the birdwatching guide.

**11. Any other comments?**

We would like to thank the RSGF for continuing to believe in the work we are doing, and we want to pass on the gratitude of the communities where we worked. Community leaders and members alike expressed their thanks for the work undertaken in this project and were particularly impressed by the transparency of the project and the direct benefits it had for the community. In particular, the donation of the wildlife guides was very well received, creating an important relationship of trust and the recognition that the project was genuinely designed to benefit the local communities and not the NGO undertaking it.