

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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details

Your name	Nabajit Das
Project title	Assessment of threats and conservation of Bengal slow loris (<i>Nycticebus bengalensis</i>) through community participation in Arunachal Pradesh, Northeast India.
RSG reference	Ref No: 10858-B Date: 08.06.2012
Reporting period	18 months, 1st September 2012 to 28 th February 2014
Amount of grant	£ 11,880
Your email address	nabajit_das1@rediffmail.com and nabajit88@gmail.com
Date of this report	30 th March 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
To survey the Bengal slow loris population, present distribution and habitat use in the Kamlang Wildlife Sanctuary and Namdapha National Park of Arunachal Pradesh, Northeast India.	--	Partially achieved		Although we could not survey some remote parts of Namdapha NP, as originally intended due to some logistical difficulties.
To access and Identification of threats to the focal species	---	----	Fully achieved	A total of 132 household interviews in seven villages (Bhudhisatta, Anandapur-II, Devapuri, Pisi basti, M'Pen-I, Hozolo and Mazgaon) and four market surveys were conducted in nearby areas.
To Initiate an extensive conservation education and awareness campaign to promote awareness of Bengal slow loris among local community members	----	----	Fully achieved	Organising four village meetings, this was done in four selected pilot villages (Anandapur-II, Devapuri, Pisi basti and M'Pen-I). One mid- project workshop, three school awareness campaign with students was done. The attendance and response was general good.

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

Hilly terrain and remoteness of the study site make it almost inaccessible to some parts of the study sites (Namdapha NP). During rainy season we have to minimise our activity due to road blocked or heavy landslides, although the roads in all weather permits very limited access throughout the parks. The only means to go every corner of the park is by foot, crossing rivers and hills.

During preliminary attitude surveys in the local villages and local markets we faced a tough condition. Initially the local people cannot believe us; they thought us as an informer of Forests Dept. that inform about the unlawful hunting and other wildlife related trade. In many ethnic communities in the study site is almost uneducated having some strong cultural rituals which also pose a serious problems during some areas of our conservation education campaign

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

The present study confirms 30 Bengal slow lorises (*Nycticebus bengalensis*) in 71 km nocturnal transect survey (0.42 loris/km). Most of encountered lorises were found to be single individual and only in five instances where we have observed paired slow lorises.

Bengal slow loris sighted in Namdapha NP, Arunachal Pradesh is distinctly different (as per our preliminary observation i.e. facial marking and the size of the animal) compared to the Bengal slow loris in other parts of north-east India. To date both this species categorized as same species i.e. *N. bengalensis*. It is noted that the forest of Namdapha National Park is contiguous with the 'Hkakaborazi National Park' of Myanmar, forming the biggest forest landscape of Southeast Asia. Recent discovery of one more species of slow loris in Borneo i.e. *N. kayan* (Munds et al., 2013) is also impressed to think so in this areas also.

Traps are considered the most currently serious threat to the primates and other wildlife in the areas surveyed. A variety of traps were widely seen during the surveys. The most common traps used by local people are 'string traps' that are able to capture birds, small and large mammals, especially primate species. Guns and hunting dogs are also seen during the surveys and it is very common in some parts of the park.

The current threats faced by the Bengal slow loris throughout the study site are human-induced, i.e. hunting and non-hunting activities. The species is shot when encountered by local hunter, and are consumed or parts of it are made into medicinal products. There are unconfirmed reports of the species, its body parts or medicinal products made from it being traded locally and to neighbouring Myanmar and China.

A remarkable finding was done during our nocturnal field survey that confirmation of rare brown spotted pit viper (*Protobothrops mucrosquamatus*) with photograph for the first time in Namdapha NP. There is no record of this species in north-east India before this and as per Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) the species was last seen at Myanmar in 1839.

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

A change of local people's mindset has been observed after each education works. Peoples are now wanted to know more about primate species and their role in forest of their area. Villagers seem to be interested more about the nocturnal mammalian species.

Educational and awareness programmes for the village school children have helped in developing a more conservation conscious and environment friendly human front in the future.

Project activities had successfully motivated a considerable section of the local stakeholders through environmental education and other measures. They have now come forward to extend the necessary supports for protection of the primate population and other wildlife in general.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, with the successes achieved as described above, it is the right time to expand the present Slow Loris Conservation Program activities to cover the whole Kamlang-Namdapha landscape' area to address some of the important issues. This will further strengthen the conservation of the slow loris and other nocturnal animal population of the area.

Community support programmes like promotion of handloom and piggery are very useful in bridging the gap between the conservation initiatives and the local communities, besides improving their economic status. So, these type of programmes need to be continued in the fringe areas of present study site in near future.

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

Final technical report will be distributed to Forest Department of Government of Arunachal Pradesh, conservation NGOs and other policy makers of the study sites. Popular article in vernacular language will be published in local media. At least two scientific papers will be published in peer reviewed journals to share the results in scientific community.

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

The complete project is supported by RSG Small grants. So project period was fully utilised by RSG small grants.

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
Field Equipment	£ 850	£ 830	(+) £ 20
Accommodation & Others	£ 2700	£ 2770	(-) £ 70
Travel and local transportation	£ 1200	£ 1260	(-) £ 60
Daily wages / Per Diem for PI and Researcher	£ 2200	£ 2150	(+) £ 50
Local Salaries for project staff	£ 1800	£ 1740	(+) £ 60
Consumables items	£ 300	£ 310	(-) £ 10
Outreach/education activities	£ 1300	£ 1270	(+) £ 30
Stationary items	£ 300	£ 280	(+) £ 20
Logistics/ Unseen cost	£ 150	£ 190	(-) £ 40
Administrative (10%)	£ 1080	£ 1080	£ 00
Total	£ 11,880	£ 11,880	£ 00

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

More awareness work to be done in the whole landscape. Capacity building programme of the forest department personal should be done with emphasis on nocturnal animal monitoring.

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?

Yes, all the material published RSG logo is used, i.e. conservation awareness banner, poster, etc.

11. Any other comments?

Population survey reveals that the study areas having the highest abundance of Bengal slow loris within the entire Assam and Arunachal Pradesh that we have surveyed earlier. Furthermore, during our surveys, the local people reported that people from other tribes living or posted in the area hunt primates for food and sport. Thus, although seemingly adaptable to habitat change, the Bengal slow loris is seriously threatened by hunting.

It is realised that villagers seem to be more interested about the nocturnal mammalian species. Hence a long-term population monitoring and trans-boundary conservation campaign is urgently needed for the long-term survive of this population.