

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	Mátyás Prommer
Project title	Saker Falcons in the Ukrainian Steppe Zone: Survey, Risk Assessment and Implementing Conservation Measures
RSG reference	11246-1
Reporting period	March – December 2012
Amount of grant	£6,000
Your email address	mprommer@yahoo.com
Date of this report	31 st January 2013

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
(1) Collecting and analysing the information available to identify important saker areas in the Crimea and South Ukraine, and choosing pilot areas.			X	Based on the available data from previous field trips, and literatures, the most important saker areas have been identified and pilot areas have been chosen, where the field activities were implemented.
(2) Field survey in the identified areas – an extensive field survey was carried out to gain information on a. the population status; b. habitat types and status; c. threats on the species and the habitats; d. the stakeholders and their impact and attitude towards the project's aims; e. other bird species with special regard to birds of prey as a collateral result.			X	Field trips were carried out in June and October 2012. Field data about the Saker population, habitats and threats, as well as other relevant information were collected and processed. Data were used to compile a saker conservation plan in Ukraine.
(3) Tagging juveniles with satellite transmitters to learn new saker areas.			X	Two 2 nd -year females (named: Alexandra and Natasha) were tagged and they not only showed the best sites for sakers in some areas in the Crimea, but also showed the migration routes to Africa. Based on their routes, risks were assumed along the migration routes and on the wintering ground. Their maps are available at www.satellitetracking.eu
(4) Building 5-10 artificial nests. Saker, do not build nest, thus the distribution of the species is limited by natural nesting possibilities.			X	Ten artificial nests were created in October 2012 in one of the pilot area in NE Crimea in the most appropriate habitats.
(5) Evaluating data and preparing management plan proposal on the			X	The management (conservation) plan has not been entirely completed yet

species and on habitats in the pilot areas.			(see draft attached). However, the final version will be ready in the coming weeks. Once it is finalised and translated, it will be sent to the responsible Ministries in Ukraine.
(6) Publishing results and proposals, and contacting local and national authorities to facilitate the implementation of the conservation		X	<p>The objective is considered as partially achieved because there are still articles and a website to be published in 2013 (this work is in progress and will be achieved in the coming months).</p> <p>Results have been published so far (providing publicity for Rufford Small Grants Foundation too):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in various websites (e.g. see: http://raptors.org.ua/ru/576 and http://raptors.org.ua/ru/561) – all information about the project will be uploaded to the website www.raptorsonsteppes.org as soon as it is ready (within a few weeks); - on the 6th International Conference of Birds of Prey and Owls in North Eurasia, 27th-30th September 2012, Kryvvy Rih, Ukraine (see proceedings: http://raptors.org.ua/en/2012/12/proceedings-of-the-6th-international-conference-on-birds-of-prey-and-owls-in-north-eurasia/); - 1st Meeting of CMS (Bonn Convention) Raptor MoU Signatory countries 9th-12th December 2012, Abu Dhabi, UAE (see attached poster) - further articles are expected in 2013 describing various parts of the project in details in <i>Heliaca</i> (Hungarian annual journal on birds of prey) and <i>Raptors Conservation</i> (periodical on birds of prey)

				conservation in the ex-Soviet countries) Some local authorities and organisations (mainly NGOs and research institutes) were contacted in the field. However, some more (including the Ministry) will be contacted as soon as the final version of the conservation plan is ready.
(7) Involving local 'allies' in saker conservation		X		Local organisations, schools, NGOs and research institutes have been involved in the project. The objective is considered partially achieved as there are fewer organisations in the region that can be involved, than we expected.

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

Involvement of local partners was not as easy as we expected. There are less conservation organisations in the area, we initially thought. Thus, instead, more effort was put to contact local schools. Also involvement of authorities and official bodies is not easy. Apparently, a new strategy should be prepared for these using contacts to the responsible ministry.

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

(1) A significant amount of new information has been gathered in the project during the field visits and due to satellite tracking, and based on that information a saker falcon species conservation plan has been compiled, and will be sent to decision-makers, as well as (national and international) conservation organisations; (2) Drawing attention to the Ukrainian saker falcon conservation efforts on various international nature conservation forums is a major outcome (so far nothing has been known about that work for the outside); (3) Ten artificial nests have been installed for sakers in a favourable but otherwise nest-poor area, and the most important areas for further conservation actions have been identified and surveyed.

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

Lectures were given in local schools explaining the importance of the saker falcon and its conservation, as well as the importance of nature conservation in general. In addition, local NGOs and research centres have been contacted, to whom project objectives and activities were explained in details and possibilities for cooperation were discussed. They benefited from the project by learning more about saker falcon and nature conservation by lectures given 'professors of universities' and receiving information materials (posters, leaflets). Especially in small local schools in

remote areas, those visits were received with great interests. Local hunters were also met, and although they do not pose as big threat to birds of prey as e.g. the hunters on Malta, lecture were given about the importance of the conservation of birds of prey. Work should be continued in the future.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there is a plan to continue this work. One of the most important elements of the future work is to focus on the better involvement of police, ministry and authorities in the conservation work. Education of local staff working in the field and convincing regional offices to get involved better are the main objectives, beside continue regular monitoring of the population to identify actual trends and further threats.

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

The results of the work have already been shared in some conferences and websites (see above), as well as during lectures in local schools in the project area and presentations on various expert meetings in Ukraine and Hungary. In 2013, more articles and publications are planned in various journals. In addition, a new website is on the way, where – beside other birds of prey related projects in the region – this project will be described as well. It is important to mention that the results have been presented to the participants to CMS Raptor MoU meeting and the participants of the Saker Falcon Task Force meeting within. This latter is to establish a global saker falcon species conservation plan, thus the results of the RSGF-supported Ukrainian project can contribute to the global conservation of the species as well.

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

The actual timescale was almost according to the planned timeframe. The field activities were carried out between March and December 2012. It is only the management (conservation) plan that has not been finalised yet, although the draft is ready. Also, some further dissemination activities will be carried out later this year, however those may not even be considered as part of the project – they should rather be looked as follow up 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.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Travel	2079	2010	-69	Exchange rate used: 1 GBP = 12.414 UAH (1 June 2012)
Argos signals for satellite-tracked Sakers	1344	1320	-24	
A4 (threefold) leaflets (£0,4/piece including design + 1000 prints) + A2 posters (£0,8 including design + 300 prints)	640	590	-50	
Binocular (1 piece)	450	450	0	

Material and equipment for the artificial nests (wood, aluminium, wires, nails, etc.)	570	545	-25	Ten artificial nests were built. Some materials remained for 1-2 extra nests.
Overheads (meals in the field, proportional office costs)	917	1020	103	There were more expenditures in the field trip than we expected.
Total	6000	5935	-65	

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

The most important next steps are to prepare a working plan for 2013 and secure budget for the activities. As for activities, the most important task now is to involve authorities (environmental authorities, police, custom office) in field conservation of the species, because they seem to be reluctant to get involved, even if there are clear cases when they should act.

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, we used the RSGF logo on posters and websites. In addition, RSGF has been mentioned in all our presentations and articles about the project. RSGF thus has received a wide publicity especially among experts of birds of prey conservation mostly in Europe and North Asia, but also partly in Africa. This is partly due to the above-mentioned CMS Raptor MoU meeting, where also a meeting of CMS' Saker Falcon Task Force was held.

11. Any other comments?

RSGF support has been an important contribution that made possible to carry out the project. We are convinced that with RSGF's help this project contributed considerably to saker falcon conservation especially in Ukraine but also on global level as its results will be used by the CMS Raptor MoU's Saker Falcon Task Force work to compile a global species action plan. With potential future support of RSGF better involvement of national and local authorities, as well as communities, may be another important step to ensure the favourable conservation status of saker falcon directly and other wildlife indirectly.