

## The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

### Final Report

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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**

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Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Lucy Kemp
<b>Project title</b>	Re-wilding of Southern Ground-Hornbills
<b>RSG reference</b>	12097-1
<b>Reporting period</b>	October 2012 – September 2013
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£5966
<b>Your email address</b>	project@ground-hornbill.org.za
<b>Date of this report</b>	15 September 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
<i>We want to establish four 'bush-schools' in the next 12 months.</i>				The difficulty of catching a wild male is holding up this process. We are going to move a wild reared male from an existing release group to test this option (though an increased sample size will be required in the future). We established the sites, the aviaries are built, shepherds trained, hand-reared birds vaccinated.
<i>Final release-site selection will become increasingly GIS-based and this will be ground-truthed on the various 'bush-schools' to ensure maximum accuracy.</i>				In Northern Zululand the hornbill habitat has all but disappeared despite being fully protected due to under grazing as a consequence of the transition of land-use from cattle farming to game farming and private reserves. Land-owner perceptions are proving to be as important as habitat quality for sustainability. We have found that the GIS-scale site selection proves useful but that ground-truthing is vital.
<i>We will publish this work in a peer-reviewed journal.</i>	No time			We did present at the International Hornbill Conference but have not found the time to write up any of our work yet. We are working on this as we know how important it is.
<i>The associated education and awareness programme will allow us to reach commercial and rural farmers and rural schools.</i>				Our education programme, aimed at four age groups, is complete and freely available. It is being made available to all eco-schools, National park EE centres and we have hired a full-time educator to allow us to achieve.
<i>The need for a shepherd for the safety and monitoring of each group will create jobs in a country with</i>				This is ongoing as we will continually need to expand this programme. We have trained three new

<i>unemployment rate of over 24%. Acquisition of skills through our training programmes equips the shepherds with marketable skills.</i>				shepherds this year.
<i>We will write re-wilding and release protocols so that other African countries experiencing the same decline will have a basis to start their own conservation efforts, pioneering conservation methodologies for the rest of the African range.</i>				This should be completed by April 2014. We have a base document but are awaiting Dr Carl Jones to visit the project and advise on how best to proceed with such a complex species.
<i>The fine-tuning of custodianship agreements will ensure the released groups are looked after by the land-owners that assisted with the release and that if the habitat deteriorates for any reason (mining etc) the birds can be moved to a safer site and new custodians.</i>				We will start to initiate this programme in the coming breeding season as we begin the nest monitoring. We have the reintroduction custodianship document completed and the land-owner pledge document completed with the signage for farm gates etc being designed.

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

The greatest difficulty that arose was our inability to catch the wild sub-adult males needed to lead the birds. The population that was chosen was one that has been intensively monitored and has an ongoing research programme through the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology. This population was chosen as the groups could be monitored after the removal of the individuals for any signs of effect in the pending breeding season. The intensive monitoring, with call-ups and capture for ringing and satellite tags, has proven to make the groups exceptionally wary of the call-ups and the trap. We tried a number of different ways to make the trap novel again and tried across all seasons for a total of 39 field days. We are currently in the midst of our last attempt but will probably for now need to use birds of the right age that have already been introduced until we can source a new population.

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

- a) We are meeting all our objectives (five of the six) of the Single Species Recovery Plan and the completion of our education programme (<http://www.ground-hornbill.org.za/education.html>) and hiring of a full-time environmental educator is one of

our greatest achievements in the last year. Nthabiseng Monama is fluent in English, Afrikaans, Sepedi and Setswana). The material is available in three languages so far.

- b) We have got to a stage where the harvest of chicks and hand-rearing is now working like clockwork with many collaborations (conservation and corporate) making it run smoothly. We have reached a number of important milestones in the release programme but are still not at a stage where we have the 'recipe' yet (we need the wild sub-adult males to fully test this). With a full analysis of past releases we should have a final reintroduction document for circulation (and approval by the IUCN) by mid-2014 and will continue to trial techniques.
- c) We are primarily focused on hornbills existing outside of protected areas and so threat mitigation is taking an increasing role in our work, especially as the release programme continues to shed light on new or previously underestimated threats. We are hosting workshops on artificial nest and poisoning in the coming months to guide how we proceed with this multi-pronged and multi-disciplinary approach to the conservation of the species.

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

At present our community influence is limited to our craft initiative (we have two crafters now earning a constant income) and the hiring of the shepherds from the communities surrounding the release sites. As the education and custodianship programme grows we can expand this potential and as the craft initiative develops there is scope for expanding this to many more areas where the birds occur.

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

Most definitely. The aviaries are built, the birds are ready to go and then the monitoring can further advise on how we proceed with the reintroductions. Due to the slow breeding (one chick successfully fledged every 8 years, sexual maturity at around 8 years of age, extended parental care) this project will need to keep expanding for several years to be able to put the right actions at the right scales in place to ensure the sustainability of the species.

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

We are hosting a science colloquium in April 2014 (we plan to host this every second year and this will be the second) to formally share scientific results and then publish the release plan, my PhD on the genetics and we are working on a paper on safe marking techniques of the species. We presented a paper on the potential of the methodologies we developed being of use to other large hornbill species at the International hornbill Conference in Manila, Philippines this year.

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

This was used over one calendar year. The Project is ongoing.

**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
Fuel	4050	10800	-6750	The fuel price increased by 12.5% during the year but we managed with careful use to make this fuel do all field work that was required – capture attempts, education, ground-truthing – with other sponsorship covering fuel to meetings, monitoring and new sites.
Shepherd Uniforms	477	150	+ 327	We provided uniforms for the shepherds and had sponsorship assistance from a clothing company Khaki Fever.
Binoculars	239	0	+239	We managed to find a sponsor for two pairs of binoculars from Draco Publishing in Singapore.
Building material boma	1200	0	1200	Still pending – the other aviary costs were covered by land-owners
<b>Total</b>	5966	<b>10950</b>	4984	

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

The next most important step is to finalise our Reintroduction Plan to present at the Colloquium in April 2014. Dr Carl Jones has agreed to come out to the project and advise on our current plans and make suggestions for improvement. One of the most important steps will be making progress with the genetics work as this will be required for advising the meta-population management of both further releases and the captive population. The other primary focus will be working on poison mitigation. We are hosting a workshop in October to try and assess the best course of action and can then start implementing.

**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 was used on our newsletters, biannual reports, website (as a major sponsor), on our sponsor page which is at the end of every presentation we give about our work and on our new educational pamphlets designed for distribution in areas where the birds still occur outside of protected areas.

**11. Any other comments?**

We are extremely grateful to Rufford for sponsoring costs such as fuel which are usually very difficult to find funding for but is the key to our work in getting out to the areas where the birds are being persecuted so we can start to put mitigations in place. We are very proud to have been associated