

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	Barna Krisztian
Project title	Active conservation and study of the endangered European Roller (<i>Coracias garrulus</i>) population in Serbia
RSG reference	13117-1
Reporting period	14 March 2013 – 31 May 2014
Amount of grant	£5910
Your email address	barnakrisz2@gmail.com
Date of this report	2014.06.20.

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 and list precisely the present day population			+	In 2013 the weather substantially hindered our work nonetheless we think that we acquired a precise picture of the species' current state. In 2013 115-120 pairs of European roller were nesting in Serbia.
To enlarge the nesting possibilities of the European roller by placing nest boxes			+	In two turns 150 nest boxes were built and most of them (80) placed out in 2013, while the rest in the beginning of 2014.
To increase the number of nesting pairs			+	Compared to the known situation in 2010, we managed to increase the number of nesting pairs by 10%. This was achieved primarily through the nesting boxes placed out.
Listing the dangerous uninsulated power line pylons			+	During our field activities we managed to check more than 800 km of power line pylon strip and assess those which may be dangerous for rollers (and for birds in general).
To increase the number of people who are interested in the protection of nature and birds			+	Many new helpers joined the protection effort due to our propagative lectures who are deeply interested in birds and bird protection.
Marking birds with colour rings and following them with a geolocator			+	We managed to ring 172 rollers in 2013, most of which receives a colour mark. Due to the late delivery of geolocators, the equipment was only mounted on the birds in 2014. The delay has one advantage, we managed to procure devices with the latest technology.

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

In 2013 the weather fooled us, which substantially hindered our field activity. Nesting dragged on, and thus we could not arrive on time to mark the young and to size up the number of those which have already flown the nest.

Unfortunately, geolocators were not set up in 2013. One reason for this is that the project itself started in March, and financial support was available only following this. Ordering the equipment was thus overdue, especially so, if one wanted to fit them on the birds that year. Subsequently the fitting was delayed to 2014. We expect resulting data from them only next year. The manufacturers managed to create equipment that will yield more precise data by this year and we managed to acquire from these novel ones.

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

One of the most prominent results of the project are the new nesting sites that we created for the rollers on account of the nest boxes placed out, even at sites where they have long disappeared from. This way the number of nesting couples has increased by 10%, which is higher than anticipated. In two turns and with the help of volunteers 150 nest boxes were created and most of them placed out in 2013, while the rest in 2014. In 2013, 115-120 pairs of European rollers were nesting in Serbia.

Due to greater field activity and the marking of birds with colour rings we achieved a more accurate understanding of the species, the exact number of nesting couples and their habits. Geolocators allow us to acquire new information about their feeding areas and grounds, use of habitat and hopefully about their migration path as well. We managed to ring 172 rollers in 2013, while 4-5 previously marked birds turned up during check-ups.

A number of land- and stock-farmers, hunters and locals (all of the target groups) attended lectures held in the settlements involved in the project. Thus we are confident that our main message – to choose more nature friendly ways of agriculture and to pay attention to our environment – has been successfully delivered. This seems to be confirmed by positive feedback and good word of mouth. Another gratifying experience, which also derives from our lectures, is that our group of helpers has widened by new members, young and old, who would gladly join us in our work of protection.

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

At our propagative lectures the audience, which consisted of locals, school children, land- and stock-farmers, could hear about the rollers and the importance of their protection as well as bird and nature protection in general, they were also informed about the need for and advantages of more nature friendly ways of agriculture. We were reassured of the necessity of such gatherings to deliver our message by much positive feedback. Local schools showed great interest in our lectures. We were welcomed by students and especially teachers because they found that our lectures were not only useful in themselves, but also could be adopted in the course of nature education. Many locals have joined in the fieldwork. We managed to form good relationships with the local administrations, many land- and stock-farmers and locals interested in nature protection. This will help us continue our work in bird protection and it will further nature friendly education.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We would like to continue the work as profound results will only show in the long term. Right now we are still at the beginning. We hope for the future, since we believe that our work contributed to

the increase in the number of roller pairs. A number of new volunteers have joined the protection efforts which results from the lecturing we have been doing. This activity apparently will secure a new generation aware and involved in nature and bird protection

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

The completed tasks and results of the project have been released to the local press and media. Thus the wider audience was informed through articles about both results achieved and plans for the future. During our lectures we have emphasised the importance of the protection of species. In a more academic level, our results are to be published in the form of a summarized study in CICONIA, the journal of the Bird Study and Protection Society of Serbia.

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 started in March 2013 as previous plans have indicated. Most of the planned activities were carried out in time with one exception. There was a delay in the acquisition of geolocators/geoleggers, which could consequently be installed only in 2014. Therefore any results on migration paths can only be expected from the following breeding season. The project has ended in May 2014 on paper, however the work is continued with the beginning of a new breeding season, as a large number of nest boxes await returning European rollers.

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
Brochures (500) and posters (100)	1100	1030	+70	We managed to print materials cheaper owing to the large scale order.
Promotional t-shirts (300)	700	700	0	
Wood material for nest boxes (150)	700	650	+50	
Colour rings for European Roller	140	140	0	
Geolocators (5)	500	1140	-640 ((+300) = -340)	Devices were more expensive than anticipated, so we spent all the savings on these which we managed to save on other items. From external supporters we received +300 GBP for the project which we also invested in these devices.
Projector (1)	250	250	0	We managed to procure a much cheaper, yet premium quality projector. The remaining amount we turned toward buying the

				geolocators.
Travelling cost during the media campaign	420	350	+70	We organised lectures on the field activity days, this was useful as we did not need to spend much solely on media campaign. The remaining amount we turned toward buying the geolocators.
Travelling and food cost for the conference	700	550	+150	The gathering was held on a much smaller scale. Meals were covered by donations, thus we could save a considerable amount of money. The remaining amount we turned toward buying the geolocators.
Fuel cost for field work	1100	1100	0	The pre-calculated amount was entirely used up during field activities.
Cost of lectures and catering for farmers, local residents and students	300	300	0	
Total	5910	6210	-300 (+300) = 0	1 British pound (GBP) = 140, 4045 Serbian dinars (RSD)

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

In the future the most important step is to create and sustain favourable habitat for the species as well as keeping the existing habitat in the long term. Placing out nest boxes is a partial solution. We also need to protect the habitat where conditions are favourable to them. Moreover planting lone trees and orchards should be started, which – in time – can serve as natural nesting places (tree holes) for the species. This way we could assure a long term solution.

Furthermore a long term monitoring system should be designed. The accumulated and assessed data can serve as base for such a system. It could help us form a picture about changes and endangering factors in any moment.

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, throughout the project we emphasised the RSGF and its support, without which this project could not have been realised. We used the RSGF logo on printed material (brochures, posters) as well as on promotional T-shirts. The RSGF was mentioned in every media appearance, thus in all newspaper materials, articles, presentations and lectures.

11. Any other comments?

I would like to express our gratitude to the RSGF for its support, which allowed this project to be completed. This project is proof that jointly we are able to be effective and carry out great things. We believe that we managed to start a process that will contribute to the foundation and upbringing of a more nature friendly generation. We also think that we contributed to the creation of a strong-based and effective bird protecting team with suitable capacity which will be able to solve the problems in connection with bird protection.