

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. 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. 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	Virat Jolli
Project title	Conservation of critical habitats for montane birds through community participation in Sainj Valley, Western Himalayas
RSG reference	13882-2
Reporting period	01-09-2013 to 02-09-2014
Amount of grant	£ 6000
Your email address	jollivirat@gmail.com
Date of this report	05-09-2014

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
1) Creating environmental education awareness among local school children			Yes	Lectures were delivered in four different Government Schools of Sainj Valley. The students interacted with our team member with great enthusiasm and learnt about why we should conserve mountain biodiversity.
2) Providing training to 20 local school children in bird identification, counting and vegetation sampling.			Yes	We provided training to 22 school students. From each school following number of students participated: Government High School Raila - five Govt High School Shanghar - five Govt High School Shansher - five Govt Se Sec School Sainj - seven At the end of the training students were able to identify 25 bird species of their region.
3) Conducting spring season common bird monitoring in the Sainj Valley through trained school students.			Yes	In this project we aimed to establish a community based monitoring system. Our plan was to monitor birds of Sainj Valley in Spring season (i.e. April or May). Before monitoring bird population, we gave training to students in November 2013-January 2014 in bird identification. So that they can easily monitor bird population in Spring season. Each school students monitor bird population of their local areas.
4) Distribution of environment awareness material among selected school children.			Yes	We distributed environmental awareness material among school children which included – pamphlets, posters, e-book on “Birds of Sainj Valley”. We also distributed study material about environmental studies.
5) Publicising the project in local daily newspaper			Yes	We published an article in ‘Himvani’ a citizen science news portal to make people aware about our project. The title of article is “Conserving Himalayan Birds Through Community Participation in Sainj Valley”. Link: http://www.himvani.com/news/2014/02/12/conserving-himalayan-birds-community-participation-sainj-valley/25250

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

During the project we installed an exhibition stand at Sainj Fair to publicise the project work. The fair was due to be on for 4 days. On first day when we had just installed our exhibition stand the weather changed suddenly and high-speed wind followed by rain forced us to leave. Fortunately, it did not cause any major problem and our display material was saved. The following day and onwards with the help of my team and locals we were able to show-case our work with local people.

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

- i) Community based monitoring system is established in the Sainj Valley.
- ii) We now have a small team consisting of field assistants and volunteers (all from Sainj Valley) who will be involved in future bird monitoring programmes and conservation related activities in the valley.
- iii) We have successfully motivated local students and local youth and inculcate in their mind the concept of nature conservation.

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

In the project, local school students, and local youth were engaged. We drew our field assistants and project volunteer (school students) from Sainj Valley. The field assistants got employment through this project. The project volunteers learnt birding skills and in future they can earn money through eco-tourism and participate in citizen science programmes.

Being a remote valley, there are not many options available for science stream students. With this project, some of the participated students now want to graduate in life science and environmental studies which I believe is the best achievement of this project.

Apart from project volunteers (students) local youth club like Nageshwar Youth Club of Bhupen village, Raila helped us in connecting with local youth of Sainj.

The school principals and teaching staff of Government High School Raila and Shanghar, Government Senior Secondary School Shansher and Sainj cooperated with us and also encouraged the students to participate in the project.

Village Pradhans (leaders) from Raila, Shansher, and Shanghar have discussed with us their problems and raised the issue of unemployment of local youth.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, I have plans to continue this work. As the outcome of this project is positive therefore, I would like to extend this project out to the adjoining valleys which have also been affected by hydro-electric project development. The project field assistants and volunteers who participated in this project will further be involved in our upcoming project.

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

I have been using social networking sites like Facebook, BlogSpot and Twitter to share the project work. On Facebook, I have made a Group named "Biodiversity & Environmental Sustainability (BEST)" where I have added many local people from Sainj Valley and from time to time I share recent project activity with them.

Our team had organised an exhibition stand at famous local Sainj Fair where we showcased our project work. A number of local people especially local youth interacted and discuss with us about various environmental issues and they were keen to work for environment conservation of their region.

We organised a meeting on "conservation of avian habitats for montane birds through community participation in Sainj Valley" on 5th June 2014 at Ropa Community Complex Center, Sainj Range, and Great Himalayan National Park. In the meeting students were given participation certificates. We invited local people, village heads and Divisional Forest Officer of GHNP at the meeting. Local people used this as forum to share their issues with GHNP.

An article about the project was published by British Ornithologist Union Blog for more information please refer to this link <http://www.bou.org.uk/engaging-local-communities-in-conserving-habitats-of-himalayan-birds/>

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

The RSG Project was run from 1st September 2013 to 31st August 2014. In the project we applied for 1-year funding and hence we have completed the project within the timescale as anticipated in our project proposal.

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
Field Books of Birds 5 Pieces	50	60	-10	We purchased a latest edition of book which cost more.
Salary for 2 field assistants for 12 months (based on average monthly salary of £ 50 per person)	1200	1200	Nil	
Printing of education awareness material	200	200	Nil	We printed coloured copies of Birds of Sainj Valley, Posters, Banners etc.
Salary for 1 Research Associate for 12 Months (based on average monthly salary of £ 200)	2400	2400	Nil	

Road Transportation	500	600	-100	For field training of students I took students to different sites of Sainj Valley to make them familiar with bird's diversity of their region. So I had to arrange private transportation facility to bring them to different sites. This increased the transportation cost.
Meeting with stakeholders	200	200	Nil	
Food	500	500	Nil	
Accommodation (house rent for field work)	275	300	-25	Due to bad weather conditions our team had to stay for extended period of time in the field.
Acer X1220H Projector	375	375	Nil	
Miscellaneous	300	165	+135	Stationary material, purchase of T-shirts and caps printed with RSG logo, internet bill, postal charges etc.
TOTAL	£ 6000	£ 6000	0	

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?

T-shirts and caps printed with RSG logo were distributed among field assistants. All the printed material, for example, letters, posters, banners and the e-book of Birds of Sainj Valley carried RSG logo. Special stickers were printed and were used on vehicles, instruments and stationary materials used during the project work.

In the Sainj Valley, I displayed banners and posters at the Sainj Fair, where it drew the attention of local people and they got to know about RSG.

11. Any other comments?

I am thankful to the Rufford Foundation for supporting our conservation initiative in the Western Himalayas. There is lot of interest among local youth in preserving and the protection of their natural heritage, so in our upcoming project we will engage more local people in the conservation of critical habitats of montane birds of Western Himalayas.