

## The Rufford Foundation

### Final Report

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Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford 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>	Eric Djomo Nana
<b>Project title</b>	Selection pressure on avian life history traits along an altitudinal gradient in Sub-Saharan African
<b>RSG reference</b>	14002-1
<b>Reporting period</b>	November 1 <sup>st</sup> 2013 – November 1 <sup>st</sup> 2014
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£5000
<b>Your email address</b>	ericnana2000@yahoo.com
<b>Date of this report</b>	April 4 <sup>th</sup> 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
Determining avian nest predation risk which reflects the level of selection pressure on their life histories.			√	There was a clear pattern in the predation rate of arboreal artificial avian nest which tended to increase with elevation. For the ground artificial nests, there wasn't any clear pattern but predation was highest at the lowest elevation.
Designation of key sites for the permanent protection and conservation of montane birds			√	Key sites were identified in the montane forest at elevations; 1800 m, 2000 m and 2200m a.s.l. The forest at these sites is still pristine and the level of human impact is quite low
Reaching at least 300 students and youths			√	We reached more than 300 students and youths in schools and during community meetings in the different villages where we carried out sensitisation campaigns
Reaching at least 200 adults			√	Adults were reached during sensitisation campaigns and workshops on alternative means to bushmeat
Identification of areas where birds and wildlife face the highest pressure			√	We identified elevations at which poachers had their traps and also searched for cartridges

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

The unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project were: (i) the non-collaboration of members of some village communities because they thought we were part of government and were out to identify hunters. We explained the situation to the local chiefs who assured the villagers that we were out to work for their interests and had nothing to do with the government; (ii) the time frame we set for the project as well as the very physically demanding field work for our artificial nest predation experiment along the entire gradient did not permit us to sample birds through mist netting in order to determine the parasitic load which reflects the level of adult mortality. We postponed that part of the work for November 2014.

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

i) We observed that predation rate was highest for arboreal nesting birds in the montane forest compared to the lowland forest. This has serious implications for conservation as it means that there are more ground nesting birds (e.g. endemic and endangered ground nesters like *Francoelinus camerunensis*) in the montane forest than in the lowland forest and that the nest predator

community in the montane forest is mostly visually oriented. More efforts should be directed to the protection of species living in the montane forest.

ii) We identified key sites for the permanent protection of birds and wildlife in general at elevations with a continuous forest cover which seemed still pristine. These elevations are quite difficult to access even for poachers because of the difficulty of the terrain. The montane birds and wildlife (monkeys, chimpanzees and duikers) at these elevations are quite abundant.

iii) We reached more than 300 students and youths as well as adults during our sensitisation campaigns and workshops on alternatives to bushmeat. The students were very enthusiastic about the project and asked many interesting questions. Some of the adults also asked quite difficult questions. For example in the village of Bwassa, one farmer asked the following; “what should I do when confronted to a situation where antelopes and cane rats from the National park enter my farm quite often and eat up my harvest? Should I put up traps in my farm to kill these animals? Why can’t the government build a fence around the National park?” We advised that farmer not to put up any traps as these animals from the park are protected and we promised to transmit the information to the park authorities but the farmer told us that the park authorities are already aware of this problem but provide no compensation for crops lost this way.

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

The local communities were very much involved after their chiefs had explained the reason of our presence to them and they learned many new techniques on cane rat, pig and snail farming. In some villages, the local people including those who were courageous enough to identify themselves as hunters preferred snail farming while in others they preferred pig farming. In all the villages, the local people were sceptical about cane rat farming. They said the demand for cane rats on the local markets was very low. They all promised to try and stop hunting animals in the national park if we could provide them with enough materials for starting this alternative livelihood measures to bushmeat.

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

Yes. We plan to continue monitoring the forest for traps and hunter trails to find out if there will be any reduction of hunter traps which will be proof of success in a change of attitude of the local people. We also intent to get more funding to provide the required materials these local people need to actually get fully involved in these alternative means of livelihood. In the different villages, we formed common initiative groups (CIGs) which were made of hunters, farmers harvesting products in the national park. These CIGs will focus on animal farming (pig, cane rat and snail farming) and should produce enough of these animals for the market in order to get some money for a decent live and to stop exerting pressure on the fragile biodiversity in the park.

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

We intend to share the results of our findings in workshops, publications and conferences.

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

We respected the time frame of the project as earlier planned. The grant was used during the actual length of the project.

**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
Air tickets for two; project applicant and project supervisor.	£1000	£1448	£448	increase in flight cost
Local transportation: hiring of truck	£284	£284	none	as expected
Fuel + driver	£216	£216	none	as expected
Field gear +nest material for artificial nests	£2000	£2000	none	as expected
Porters + guides + refreshments during meetings	£600	£600	none	as expected
Expendables	£1500	£1500	none	as expected
Education campaign	£500	£500	none	as expected
<b>Total</b>	<b>£6100</b>	<b>£6548</b>	<b>£448</b>	<b>unexpected difference in flight cost</b>

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

Monitoring the activities of the local stakeholders in the area like the setting up of traps in the park. The last most important step will be to get more funding in order to provide materials to the local CIGs for alternative livelihood projects.

**10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation 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 Rufford Foundation logo on leaflets and posters used during the project in the different village schools and meetings. As such we made publicity of Rufford Foundation and explained to the different stakeholders during our meetings the goals of the Rufford foundation and the level of support it provided to us.

**11. Any other comments?**

We are grateful to the Rufford Foundation for its support to our project and do hope it continues to support the conservation of biodiversity in Cameroon by helping to improve livelihood schemes of local populations. Also it is important to note that tropical ecosystems like Mount Cameroon are hotspots of biodiversity and are highly endangered by a growing population with its increasing demand for food and energy. Efforts to protect this high biodiversity and to sustain ecosystem functions have to take into account the needs of people living in this environment. On the other hand, establishing protected areas on local people's ancestral hunting grounds threaten those local

needs and necessities. Balancing protection of tropical ecosystems and necessities of local people is a difficult task which must be based on a sound scientific knowledge of ecological, economic and social processes. Understanding these processes is crucial to allow for prediction and mitigation of adverse effects.

