

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	Martin Odino
Project title	Modelling community-based sustainable bird monitoring and avitourism as a conservation tool against bird poaching at Bunyala Rice Scheme, Western Kenya
RSG reference	14523-2
Reporting period	February 2014 - December 2014
Amount of grant	£6000
Your email address	martinchael@gmail.com
Date of this report	17 th February 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. To train the scouting team on equipment use and educate them on the ecological and health implications of poisoning and consuming poisoned birds			?	This objective was in part addressed during the 1st Rufford Small Grant and was therefore a continuation and improvement during this phase with the 2nd RSG funding.
2. To engage locals in systematic field monitoring of birds and their threats			?	There is still need for supervision to ensure adherence to surveying protocol. Also there is still need to confirm identification of bird species especially given the significant probability of occurrence of vagrants given that Bunyala is along a migratory flyway as well as being on the border with Uganda means some accidental as well as cross border species could turn up and either be overlooked or misidentified.
3. To conduct rigorous advocacy and marketing of the site as a birdwatching and other tourism destination		?		I will be confident that this is successful once my scouts successfully engage in tour guiding at the site.

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

Kenya's security situation deteriorated and in the end the project's progression stalled just before reaching the climax that would bring about some sustainable conservation. The strategy had been that scouts would be trained on equipment use and ornithological issues (including against poisoning) as well as being coached to become birding guides; advocacy and marketing would then sale the product-birds and the site-liasing with tour companies and get tourists come visit Bunyala and be guided by the trained, local scouts. The country however experienced countless attacks with

some cases involving hauling of grenades into vehicles, bombs were planted in vehicles and buildings especially in Nairobi and yet Nairobi City is the major entry point for tourists. The nasty Al-Shabaab attacks on Kenya's coast that is a major tourist destination just crashed the tourism industry for the whole of 2014. In the end we had a ready team and the marketed tourism product (see accompanying report) but no consumer (visiting tourists), yet.

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

Trained scouting and guiding team: This project has managed to consolidate a reliable team of eight scouts that conduct monitoring surveys at Bunyala, have managed to ward significantly ward off poisoning incidences and should possibly be able to engage in tour guiding during this year should this recovering trend in our tourism sector keep on.

Checklist of birds: we were able to compile a checklist of all species seen during 2014 as well as some additional ones particularly seen in 2013 when we conducted similar surveys but on a smaller scale. Future surveys will add on or make reference to this list. This is the first bird list of the area ever.

Exposure of Bunyala: this project during 2014 was the most presented about locally and overseas to both the conservation and general public fraternities. The key illustration of this is on the presentations about the project and Bunyala in Australia. This followed my encounter in Kenya with the president of one of the Naturalists clubs in Australia-the Murrumbidgee Field Naturalists. As a result, I was invited to present to the club in Australia as well as another sister club. The presentation then generated media interest and I was interviewed for newspaper articles then followed was by a live interview on Australia's national radio, the African Broadcasting Corporation. Overall, Bunyala attained wider publicity during this project with its theme (poisoning of birds), activities (anti-poisoning vigilant surveys and monitoring) and avitourism being the selling notions.

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

The eight men that constitute the local scouting team have been enlightened against the bird poisoning and sharing it with their families and other locals has been emphasised. The scouting was of course graced by a regular stipend for the entire 2014. Still, our surveying motorcycles provide cheap taxiing services to the families of the scouts when they are not being used on the surveys.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. It is important that the scouts' potential is exploited extensively to deter deliberate poisoning and for their benefit. It would be unjust to train the locals and not help them utilise their knowledge.

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

I will continue making presentations at relevant forums: at conservation institutions; to students (during January of every year I am involved in the fieldwork course for MSc in Conservation students from UK's University of Exeter and to whom I present-including this year- about this project); possibly also to locals at other relevant sites such as Mwea Rice Scheme in Kenya -about this project. The accompanying final report will also be shared with the Ornithology Section of the National Museums of Kenya, Nature Kenya, WildlifeDirect and other peers in conservation.

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

15 months starting February 2014 to December 2014. Most requirements associated with active fieldwork and covered by RSG were attained between February and December 2014, except PI's travel and accommodation that extends till end of the project in April 2015. The period from January 2015 to April 2015 is a supervisory phase and PI will improve on methodology. This should also have been the time to assess the scouts assume the role of birding guides if we had tourist bookings.

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
Bird guidebooks	100	105	+5	Lower exchange rate on all items at time of grant receipt in Feb 2014 (£1 = Ksh134.5 not 139 as I had indicated in application)
Motorcycle	250	260	+10	Partial contribution
Computer, printer & stationery	500	518	+18	
Camera/ lens	900	900	0	Could not purchase additional lens, however with the budgeted amount.
PI Travel	1000	854	-146	Still to be used during remaining 2 months
PI Boarding	3020	2896	-124	Still to be used during remaining 2 months
Trainees Salary	230	240	+10	Partial contribution
TOTAL		6000	-227	£5773 has been spent and the remaining £227 will cover

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

I still strongly feel we should engage vigorous marketing and possibly have tourists visit the site and enjoy its birdlife and physical beauty. Given the state of insecurity that prevailed during much of last year, I feel it did not give this venture ample opportunity to be explored. I know that the scouts associate the live birds with higher financial income (their stipend during the year) and if there can be a breakthrough with tourism activities, financial returns will be higher thereby compelling the whole society to view live birds as more financially viable which will guarantee safety of the birds and humans (who must be affected from consuming the poisoned birds).

I also think a supplementary scheme needs to be thought out to involve local women and children in Bunyala who are the majority consumers of the poisoned/poached birds. This initiative should be stable and not liable to being significantly affected by insecurity or political issues. I.e., the programme should be able to run even when international markets falter. It should, if possible target the local and national market and directly or indirectly prevent bird poisoning and general

poaching.

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. I have only just used the logo on my final report that is going to be shared amongst other stakeholders. I also explicitly acknowledge RSGF in all my presentations and publications.

11. Any other comments?

I am grateful to RSGF for supporting this project at its initiation in 2009 with the 1st RSG then additionally, for this 2nd RSG in 2014. Through this facilitation we have, every time, made small steps in the positive direction, learnt from encountered difficulties and no doubt when we eventually tackle the problem of bird poisoning, the Rufford Foundation will be top on the list of our supporters. Thank you RSGF!