

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	Maria Camila Estrada-Flórez
Project title	Functional traits of birds: An approach to understand the effects of fragmentation in the Colombian Andes
RSG reference	16128-2
Reporting period	Final report
Amount of grant	4.000
Your email address	steinacleit@gmail.com
Date of this report	11/2015

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
Identify the bird community in fragments of different sizes			X	All the field trips were completed and the species were fully identified.
Compilation of the ecological traits of the identify bird species		X		With more than 200 bird species, the compilation of these traits is time consuming and therefore is not finish yet.
Compilation of the morphological traits (measurements) of the identified bird species		X		As mentioned above, the compilation is time consuming. Right now I'm visiting a bird collection in a local museum, but the need to visit other collection is evident since there are many species that have no specimens in this particular collection.
Data analysis	x			This objective can only be fulfil once the functional traits are complete and the database is ready to be analysed.

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

I had to change my study area, due to security reasons. This held my schedule back and the start of the project was delayed a couple of months until I found another study area that fitted the criteria. I finally chose a municipality in Antioquia, with fragments of Andean forest and no security issues.

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

Even though this project is not finished yet, I think one of the most important outcomes is everything I've learn about what truly means to lead a project, not only to collect data in the field, but all the logistic and planning that it entails. Dealing with different people, from undergraduate students to farmers, keep calm and solving problems that arise in the way, and have everything under control are things that we don't learn in classrooms, but when we are face with the reality. And these are life teachings that will stay with me.

Another relevant outcome is the fact that this project is helping to fill existing voids in the knowledge of avifauna in Antioquia. The new study area is located in a region where little had been done in the past decade due to serious security problems until recently, so this is one of the first projects to evaluate and update the avifauna of the region, as part of a research programme and not as an environmental impact studies to develop infrastructure work.

Finally, it was a great accomplishment that this project helped some undergraduate students to strengthen their field abilities, such as mist netting, manipulation of living birds and observation skills. This training is not easy to get, in terms of availability and costs.

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

The community was present in the project as guides, but were not involved directly in the development of the project. However, we are planning to present the results of the project to the inhabitants of the study area in various community centres, so they can fully understand what I did and be aware of possible changes that fragmentation can inflict in the bird community.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Currently I'm focused in finish my thesis project, but with other colleagues we've been discussing the possibility of turn it into a long-term project. It would be of great interest to broaden the study area to other forest fragments in the Andes, to better explain the patterns found in this project and also to identify which processes are underlying the responses of bird communities to fragmentation of forests in the Neotropical region.

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

The results of this project will be published in a specialised journal, and will be presented in congresses and other scientific meetings. As mentioned above, this project will also be socialised with the community of the study area.

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 supposed to begin in January 2015 with the RSG fund, but I started in April 2015, after I found another study area and everything was organized with the community and the local authorities. The RSG fund covered the entire field season, and there was no need for more funding for that activity.

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
Travel fees	750	967	-217	The new study area is far from the urban part of the municipality, and different means of transport had to be used (Truck, mules), so the travel fees were more expensive
Accommodation in the study area	1500	1423	77	
Feed costs	1250	1139	111	

Guide in the study area	500	500	0	The daily stipend of a guide is the same across the country, since is the value of a working day
TOTAL	4000	4029	29	<i>The conversion rate where the fund was received was 1 sterling = 3.739,65 Colombian pesos</i>

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

After this project is finished, I would like to add to the functional diversity analysis the phylogenetical component, since many of the functional traits could have a phylogenetical signal and this could give us more information about the changes in the bird community.

I would like to collaborate with a postdoctoral fellow, who worked in the study area several years ago, and that has a large database of species found in different fragments. With his information we could compare both field seasons in order to determine how or if the community has change over time.

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 attended the Neotropical Ornithological Congress in Manaus, Brazil, with a poster. Also, I have given some oral presentations in my university, to different audience and in all of them the RSGF logo has been present.

11. Any other comments?

I will always be grateful with the RSG Foundation that believed in me and in my project and allowed me to accomplish all the goals I had.

