

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	Louis Nkembu
Project title	Community-based Management and Conservation of the endangered birds of the Lebialem Highlands/Western Mt Bamboutos, SW Cameroon
RSG reference	08 02 09
Reporting period	
Amount of grant	£5000 [Comment: Though a £5000 was approved and sent to me, I finally received only an equivalent of £3588 due to foreign currency failures. In this regard, I agreed with Rufford to remodify my project to focus more on the resurvey of rare/endangered birds.]
Your email address	lnkembu@yahoo.com or erudef@yahoo.com
Date of this report	18 January 2011

1. Please indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objective and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieved	Partially achieved	Fully achieved	Comments
Establishment of an ecological reserve over Mt Bamboutos	√			Though a £5000 was approved and sent an equivalent of £3588 was finally received due to foreign currency failures. In this regard, I agreed with Rufford to remodify my project to focus more on the resurvey of rare/ endangered birds. I was a winner of the Whitley Awards in 2010. Part of this Award (£7000) is being used to prepare the base documents for this creation of this ecological reserve
To produce a geo-referenced database for birds			√	An updated checklist of rare and threatened birds is produced A geo-referenced bio-monitoring database and geo-spatial map of birds of Lebialem Highlands produced.
To support a forest protection fund		√		This objective was not cancelled out due to shortage of funds. However with support from Whitley and Prince Bernhard Fund, four forest protection funds chapters are being created across the Lebialem Highlands (Mmock, Bamumbu, Menji, and Lewoh).
Resurvey of rare birds			✓	A geo reference data base of 400 species of birds is produced, involving 13 threatened birds species, 20 restricted range, 46 afro-montane, six birds of the savannah and a wide range of Guineo/Congolian birds' species (300) with a few range extensions. Some of the communities of the highlands are not yet surveyed given that they are difficult to access but are thought to have good species of birds.
To support beekeeping project			√	This objective is being supported with partial funding from Whitley and Prince Bernhard Fund. Ten communities in Lebialem Highlands are benefiting from this.

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

- The cloudy and slippery nature of the highlands could not permit the identification of some of the bird species during the rainy season. This was solved by programming some of the surveys in the period of dry season.
- Resistance of some communities for birds surveys in their forest, since they used birds as a source of protein intake and income generation. This issue was solved through the organisation of several bird conservation education programmes and community meetings in all the communities and schools all over the highlands. Sensitization and wildlife law was also reinforced in the communities.
- Lack of bird nets to conduct mist netting in order to capture shy birds. The equipment could not be purchased in Cameroon.
- No sound tape to record bird sounds to confirm after observation. This equipment could not be purchased in Cameroon.
- The reduction in the actual amount of funds requested due to currency exchange rate fluctuation, caused part of the project not to be executed.

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

1. Community education and sensitization meetings

A total of 80 community meetings and sensitization workshops were held in all the communities visited during the project period. These meetings brought together 4000 men and 3000 women. The meetings were aimed at building the community commitment and education of the local people toward bird conservation and the protection of their ecosystem. These meetings also helped in the sensitization of the importance of bird species and other wildlife species as listed by the IUCN status

The major outcome of these meetings was the formation of a network of forest management committees across Lebialem Highlands and the reorganization of the Lebialem Birds Conservation Association

2. Surveys and bio-monitoring

A geo-referenced database map showing all the endangered birds species has been produced with a checklist of all the bird registered in the highlands. Surveys conducted in the highlands shows 400 birds species of which 13 threatened species as stated by the IUCN status (Bannerman's towaco *Turaco Bannermani*(CR), banded wattled-eye *Platysteira laticincta* (EN),white throated mountain babbler *Kupeornis gilberti* (EN),white tail warbler *Poliolais lopezi* (NT),Monterio bush-shrike *Malacontus monterein* (DD),white-napped Pigeon *Clumba albinucha* (NT),Hartlaub's duck *Pteronetta harlaubii*(NT),red headed picathartes *Picathertes oreas*(VU),green breasted bush-shrike *Malacontus cruentus* (VU),Bangwa forest warbler *Bradyterus bangweasis* (NT), Crossley's ground thrush *Zoothera princei* (NT),Cameroon montane greenbul *Andropadus montanus* (NT),Bannerman's weaver *Ploceus*

bannermani (VU), Ursula's sun bird *Cinnyris ursulae* (NT)) were threatened 20 restricted range species, 46 Afro-montane species, six birds of the savannah and a large number of the Guinea-Congolian forest bird species(300) with a few number of range extension species.

The major outcome of this component of the project is the planned development of the proposed Lebialem Highlands Important Birds Area.

Another outcome of the component is also the development of Lebialem Highlands as an important birding destination for eco-tourism

3. Training

Four training workshops were organized, two for the youths and two for the field assistants on involvement of the locals in September and December 2010 .These two workshops were aimed at training youths and creating more awareness amongst them on the importance of bird conservation and ecosystem protection in the Lebialem Highlands. The other two were to train the local field assistants on the methods of bird's surveys, identification and banding. A total of 400 youths attended the workshops and five field assistants were trained on birding. The main outcome is the formation of an association of community eco-guards for birds watching across the Lebialem Highlands. This association of eco-guards will champion the activities of the Lebialem Birds Conservation Association.

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

The local people were involved through mobilization and education. Furthermore, selected community representatives were trained to become eco-guards who will be involved in the implementation of the Birding Project across Lebialem Highlands. In each of the 10 key communities, a forest management committee was formed. The communities are also benefitting through the process of livelihood development we are currently implementing.

Finally, field guides and porters were always taken from the communities.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. In our next plan, we have earmarked the following;

- I. ecological study of the migratory and globally threatened birds of the highlands;
- II. a detailed botanical study;
- III. creation of an IBA;
- IV. promoting eco-tourism focused on birds;
- V. Creation of two important reserves, Mt Bamboutos Integral Ecological Reserve and a Botanical Sanctuary in the LAQUE forest area.

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

The results of this project shall be spread through the Rufford Foundation and ERuDeF websites, publication in national newspapers, peer reviewed papers, report writing and media communication (TV and Radio)

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

The funds were used from June 2009 to August 2010. The planned project was 18 months. The project implementation period was shorter than expected due to the reduced funding.

8 .Budget: Please provide a breakdown budget versus actual expenditure and the reasons for any differences. All figure should be in sterling, indicating the local exchange rate used.

item	Budget amount	Actual Amount from RSGF	Difference	Comments
Birds surveys	3341.1	2430	911	Fall of currency exchange reduced the amount of funds available for field work
Awareness and education	616	412		Same as above
Capacity building	539	212		Same as above
Tree nurseries establishment	880	0		Same as above
Creation of ecological reserve	3182	0		Same as above
Livelihoods development	378	0		Same as above
Project administration	3570	534		Same as above
Total	12506.1	3588		1GBP = 745CFA

* the area not surveyed was finally surveyed with funds from the Whitley Fund for Nature. At the time of writing the proposal the exchange rate was 1GBP to 1000CFA

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

Important next steps of the project include:

- Initiate of the creation of an IBA across the Lebialem highlands/Mt Bamboutos.
- The creation of the proposed Mt Bamboutos Integral Ecological Reserve.
- The complete study of the status and distribution of Bannerman's turaco and Banded wattle-eye through the use of mist nets.

- Reinforce conservation education programmes.
- Support the alternative livelihood of the local communities.
- Start bio-monitoring of endangered species.
- Study the ecology/banding of migratory birds.
- Build management capacity of the communities.
- Launch the restoration of the Lebialem Highlands montane forest.
- Continue the study on the creation of a Botanical Sanctuary in the LAQUE forest area.
- Making Lebialem Highlands to become an important birding destination for ecotourism.

10. Did you use the RSGF logo in any material produced in relation to this project? Did the RSGF receive any publicity during the course of your work?

We are working on series of publications both local (popular newspapers) and scientific publications that will bear the RSGF logo. The final report to the government of Cameroon is also bearing the logo of RSGF.

Yes. In local Radio and TV.

11. Any other comment.

The RSGF funding was capital in the resurvey of the rare/endangered birds of the Lebialem Highlands/Mt Bamboutos. This support has helped us also to complete the gap we left in 2005 surveys and make the way to advance to the next phase of our project namely proposal to permanent protect these remaining montane forest ecosystems through the creation of important protected areas (Mt Bamboutos Integral Ecological Reserve, Botanical Sanctuary over LAQUE forest area, Tofala Hill Wildlife Sanctuary plus the Important Birds Area). The survey of bird's diversity has further helped to reconfirm the biodiversity importance of this once abandoned geographical unit.