

The Rufford Foundation Final Report

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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Gyem Tshewang
Project title	Bats of Royal Manas National Park – Its Diversity, Ecology and Social Perspective
RSG reference	20197-1
Reporting period	24 months
Amount of grant	£ 4970
Your email address	gyem2020@gmail.com
Date of this report	25/Sept/2018

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
To document the Diversity of Bats in RMNP				<p>Although we have completed our study successfully, chances of encountering new species with different methods can't be ruled out.</p> <p>Conservation study being a value laden nature and with rapid climate changes and other ecological factors, species drift and increase/decrease in diversity can occur.</p>
To study the distribution of Bats in RMNP				<p>We have properly recorded the data on every roosting site and had also encountered many foraging sites.</p> <p>Worshipping many roosting sites as holy places by local communities is little challenges to convince them about our study</p>
To learn the Social perception on Bats by communities				<p>Interviewed 50 communities from 10 villages and received different views towards Bats.</p> <p>Communities easily gives their views on Bats</p>

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

It is much difficult to study bats in Bhutanese society, where communities have orthodox beliefs. Convincing communities to give helping hand during the execution of works were much difficult. However, with numerous awareness and education, the project managed to receive support from communities.

Identifying specimens of bats till species level is one of the toughest assignments particularly in the country where there are no single papers or studied carried out about it and it is main reason contributing for delay in the project. Nevertheless, with the support of expertise from India, Harrison institute, Nepal and friends from Southeast Asian Bat Conservation Research Unit (SEABCRU), our project could manage to accomplish.

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

1. Since it is first kind of study undertaken in Bhutan, enormous challenges were faced, yet the project could manage to encourage many youth towards conservation effort and studies on bats. Recently, we have formed a small group to explore and take forward about study and conservation of Bats in Bhutan.
2. While communities residing inside the Royal Manas National Park knows where the bat roosts and have some societal perceptions but knowledge and information on the ecological roles played by Bats were never heard. Hereafter, with the effort of this project, more than 70% of communities residing inside the park at least know that bats play a vital role as insectivorous and seed dispersal agent. Therefore need to conserve bats were now understand as important as other wildlife and birds
3. Some institutions such as parks, research centers and universities in Bhutan have shown keen interest on studying Bats. We contact on regular basis. For Instance, Mr. Tempa, has initiated studying Bats in Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary, Mr. Sangay Tshering, College of Natural Resources is proposing to study Bats in Western Region of country, Mr. Kuenzang Dorji, UWICER is interested on studying the Bats. We can together make a difference.

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

Local communities have been involved right from the inception of this project till completion in different ways and situation. Followings were the fields, in which the involvements of communities were greater.

1. They contributed as a guide during data collection time since they have good knowledge about roosting homes of bats.
2. Communities were involved while interviewing on social perception towards bats and its conservation threats.
3. Participated on outreach programme on importance of bats and its roles played in ecosystem.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, we are interest to expand the study area across the nation over the period of time. This will not only educate the communities about bats, but can able to come up with check list of bats in the country, distribution patterns, permanent roosting places and other information. I am regularly in contact with few colleagues from various intuitions, who are interested in studying bats. We look forward to enhance the study of bats.

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

Sharing and disseminating the results is my priority at this moment. Since the study on bats is minimal in the country, to garner the support and importance of my study, the

only means is to share my study results as much as I can in personal level. Other way is to publish in Journal, since majority of Bhutanese have excess with Threatened Taxa Journal, we are writing a paper on their format and will be submitting to get publish. We will be also presenting my findings this December in Bhutan Ecological Society.

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

Around 92% of Funding has been used as per the plan. However around 8% fund has been used during the last period since we have to extent our project timing.

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 survey payment for the field staff	1896	1912	16 (-)	Paid to 5 field staff for 125 days
Safety kits for staff during field survey	135	135		Includes Gloves, Head torch, Gum boots, rain coat
Equipment – Petterson M500 and its accessories and mist nets	661	661		Includes micro phone and battery and also transportation charge to reach at my station from Thimphu
Transportation charge during field survey	105	105		
Laboratory fee	16	0	16 (+)	Not used
Group catering during educational outreach	630	630		
Materials during awareness campaign	105	105		Includes banners and other training materials
Distribution of educational materials	948	1001	53(-)	Included placards, shirt and cap
Fees for media program	53	0	53(-)	Not conducted media outreach program
Sign board	316	316		
Vehicle charge	105	105		
Total	4970	4970		

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

In the quest of making availability of information nationwide on bats, we feel it is crucial for us to multiply similar studies over the nation. To have successful

multiplications on studies, it is crucial to seek more support from government and other institutions. Therefore, followings are few steps that we will continue hereafter

1. Encourage younger generation and conservationist to study on bat diversity and distribution around the nation
2. Conduct the nationwide study on bat distribution and diversity through forming a larger group
3. Formulate the checklist of bats in the country, Identify permanent roosting sites
4. Share, disseminate and educate cross section of societies on Bats and its ecological roles played and conserve the bats – roosting sites

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 have used Rufford Foundation logo in several materials – such as banners, signboard and others. Rufford is known in our country by many individuals, organisation and institution since Rufford Foundation has supported many studies in the field of conservation. In any gathering and education programme, we have acknowledged Rufford Foundation for its generosity to support us in financial assistance. We will be using hereafter during our paper publication also.

11. Any other comments?

Without financial support from Rufford Foundation, this study wouldn't have been successful one. We sincerely thank for it. Despite unable to complete on time as afore mentioned, we are absolutely satisfied that we could able to complete with good result. We hope that our work in nation would have created a pervasive impact on educating communities and others about Bats. During the entire period of studies, we have many other individuals and organisation to acknowledge, we thank all. The detail acknowledgement will be provided in our article which we are aiming to publish in Threatened Taxa Journal.

