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	Yehor Yatsiuk
Project title	Conservation of sensitive forest-dwelling animals in Oak forests of Eastern Ukraine
RSG reference	21376-1
Reporting period	July 2017 – December 2018
Amount of grant	£4779
Your email address	yatsjuk.e@gmail.com
Date of this report	11.01.2019

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
Control of territories surveyed within previous project ("International Year of Forests", 2011-12).				Before 2018 we submitted to forest taxation organisations and forestry districts information about localities of 53 protected forest species in 443 forest compartments in the region. The aim was to restrict logging on these territories, and total area covered was more than 6000 ha. We checked 45% of all territories with attention to plots outside existing national parks. It appeared that about 9% of plots surveyed by us have been cut but this figure is higher if only old-growth mature stands are taken into account. Only sites where high-level protected areas were subsequently established, or territories receiving constant public attention remained protected. Control of these forest plots was made in full according to our initial plan, but we consider achievement of this task as partially achieved because our previous actions hasn't guaranteed 100% conservation of these plots.
Surveying of forest plots and searching of rare animal species.				During our fieldwork we surveyed 16 woodlands, with total area covered within each massif varying from 80 to 8000 ha. The actual list of surveyed woodlands somewhat differed from the initial proposal because of new data and corrections throughout the work, but in general we managed to cover more territory than planned initially. Field surveys included searching for raptor nests and breeding pairs, localities of protected reptile, insect and plant species. Field works were performed in three main periods: September-November 2017, May-July 2018 and

				September-October 2018. Some field excursions were made in winter. In total, we carried out 22 expeditions/excursions with 48 field days in total. We have found 33 new localities of protected species, mostly plants, located in old-growth oak-dominated tree stands.
Investigation of importance of some species as old-growth forest indicators.				We have concentrated on three main topics. **Bats at landscape level.** In addition to seven plots surveyed in previous years, we've made inventory of bat fauna on three more territories in July 2018. Now we are preparing publication, dealing with dependence of bat fauna composition on landscape composition and availability of old growth forest. Preliminary results showed that availability of three species (*N. leisleri, M. brandtii* and *P. pygmaeus*) was connected with share of old growth forest, and higher bat species diversity was in more forest-rich plots. **Land snails at forest compartment level.** In addition to 70 previously studied sites, we collected samples in 24 new points. Data are under processing now. There is a preliminary list of eight potential indicators of well-preserved forests in the region with *Bulgarica cana* and *Ruthenica filograna* being associated with better preserved remains of big forests that existed in the 19th century. Also these species are big and conspicuous enough to be used as indicators. **Insects at tree level.** In June-July 2018 we sampled imago in eight forest territories using series of scent traps. Field activities were made in full, now we are at a stage of processing the data and preparing publications.
Informing forest taxation organizations.				We prepared three lists of red-listed species localities and important territories to be submitted to different organisations involved in decision making for forest management and logging.

				The list of 18 most important forest territories with localities of all known protected species was submitted to the Department of Protected Territories in the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine. The list of nests of protected raptor species has been submitted to regional forest taxation organisation and forest districts for creation of protected zones around them. Considering that some species are vulnerable and can have commercial value, only information about well-known nests and relatively common species in the region has been included. A list of localities of red-listed species (mainly plants) in 29 territories was submitted to regional forest taxation organisation with copies to forest districts.
Grounding of recommendations for Emerald/NATURA 2000 network in the region.				We applied 14 new territories as proposed Emerald sites in Ukraine with total area of forest about 192,000 ha. The Emerald network in Ukraine is still under development. Official project was claimed by public as incomplete and tied to existing network of protected territories. There is a public campaign to add there new important territories.
Education stage.				We gave one popular lecture in science communication project "15x4", called "15 minutes about forest". Two more lectures were presented to schoolchildren in Kharkiv. The popular book about forests is under preparation. Presentation is anticipated in spring 2019.

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

We haven't encountered any difficulties which were really unforeseen. Field activities of the project have been performed in full and within planned terms. The results of scientific part of the project are going to be processed and published soon. Fulfillment of education part of the project took more time than expected, namely preparation of book, which is expected to be published in spring.

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

1. Possibility to control forest territories important for biodiversity maintenance. We've got up-to-date information about their state, new localities of rare species. Attention to important territories and using different ways to disseminate information about biodiversity of important forest patches, meaning supplying it to different decision making organisations, can increase the probability of their preservation.
2. Within this project we've got data for two animal groups as indicators of valuable old-growth forest patches in oak forests in the region. The results can be used for more standardised assessments of forest territories in the future.
3. Our planned popular book about forests can fill an empty niche of popular scientific up-to-date literature easily available for people. We plan to send a number of copies to nature protected areas throughout Ukraine and for rural schools in Kharkiv region.

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

Though forest and biodiversity conservation is of importance for the whole society, we didn't focus on involvement of local societies in the project.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We are going to continue our work in three main directions stated in application: survey, conservation, and education. First direction means searching for forest territories, important for biodiversity and studies focused on conservation value and indicator role of certain species. Conservation involves controlling the state of important patches, interaction with forestry bodies, other decision makers and NGOs in preventing logging. Education means publishing literature, making presentations and involving volunteers in our work.

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

The main way of sharing information is by conference presentations, publications, and distribution of educational materials and by submitting data to biodiversity databases. Some results we presented in two Rufford Small Grants recipients 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?

Proposed duration of our project was from July 2017 to December 2018. All field and conservation activities were performed within the determined period. The main delay is with education part of the project. Preparation of popular book took more time than expected. This delay has no influence on the scope of the project, and all tasks remained the same. Presentation of book is expected in May 2019.

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.

We had to change our plans in the last section, concerning publishing the book. More people joined to the idea, and initial plan of publishing small concise book has grown to the idea of more developed book about natural history of Ukrainian forests. Expenses for preparing and printing will be covered from publishers and our funds, and Rufford funds will be used to buy 200 copies and to sell them in rural schools with poor access to new literature and to protected territories (national parks, Nature reserves) who involved in education activities for local people.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Fuel for car	593	560	-33	
Car maintenance	207	700	493	Expenses for this item abruptly increased on the beginning of the project, and the excess was covered mainly at the cost of field equipment.
Food during expeditions	1037	1042	5	
Accommodation	90	35	-55	
Equipment for bat research (mist nets, rod for them etc.)	237	230	-7	
Equipment for snail research (ethanol, plastic tubes)	24	20	-4	
Equipment for insect research (material for traps and baits)	60	35	-25	
Equipment for dead wood assessment (tree calliper, 50 m tape)	96	12	-84	We used older version of the equipment, but still useable
Other minor items (bags for small items, field notebooks etc.)	23	0	-23	
Field equipment (2 backpacks, gas stove, medicine)	783	775	-8	
Publishing of book	1629	1365	-264	Exchanges here differed from initial plan. Actual expenses include buying of 200 copies (890£), sending them to rural schools and protected territories (355£) and for

				presentation of this book/project in Kharkiv (120£)
Totals	**4779**	**4774**	**-6**	Total expenses appeared higher, but were covered from our own funds.

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

At first, there is a need to process and publish the results of scientific part of the project. In this direction, we are going to search for another indicator species, especially plants and insects.

A promising scheme was used by another applicant, Andrii Plyha (https://www.rufford.org/projects/andrii_plyha): protocoling registrations of all rare species together with representatives of local forestry organisations. This scheme provides more possibilities for data about localities of rare species to be included in forest taxation data and, consequently, excluded from logging plans.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did The Rufford Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

We are going to put Rufford Foundation logo on books which will be sent to nature reserves and local schools.

11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

In total, 26 people were involved in this project, mainly in its field part, 6 of them were specialists, 14 – students and 6 were volunteers. Main participants are:

Yehor Yatsiuk, PhD, National Park "Homilsha forests". General coordination, field work, data processing.

Stanislav Viter, PhD, National Park "Homilsha forests". Field work, interaction with official bodies (forestry's, Ministry of environmental protection) and NGOs.

Anton Vlaschenko, PhD, Bat rehabilitation center of Feldman Ecopark. Organization of field work on bats, expert support.

Tatiana Zhebina MSc**, Viktoriia Terekhova** MSc – field works, studies of insects.

Vitalii Hukov MSc, **Viktor Kovalov** MSc – field works, studies of bats.