

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. 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	Anna Barashkova
Project title	Clarifying conservation status of Pallas's cat in Kazakhstan
RSG reference	29.01.09
Reporting period	May 2009 – May 2010
Amount of grant	£5,900
Your email address	yazula@yandex.ru
Date of this report	20.05.2010

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 obtain actual data on Pallas's cat number and distribution in Kazakhstan interviewing local people on Pallas's cat findings and distribution.			X	The data was obtained as fully as it was possible during project period. Evidently it's impossible to obtain all data on the species. But the database for further investigations was created.
To obtain data on actual threats to Pallas's cat.			X	The data was obtained as fully as it was possible during Project period. Evidently it's impossible to obtain all data on the species. But the database for further investigations was created
To identify the places of high conservation value for Pallas's cat (hotspots).			X	
To create the map (in GIS) of Pallas's cat distribution (past and modern) throughout Kazakhstan.			X	
To educate local people and to form friendly attitude to Pallas's cat.			X	The posters were distributed by the help of local institutions too and we are still observing the materials distribution as we are interested in that the materials reach its recipients.

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

We didn't have fundamental difficulties. We were faced only with some methodology problems. During the field work and interviewing people we understood that people didn't distinguish different small wild cat species. Sometimes they named all them as wild cat. The thing is that Pallas's cat is not the only small cat species inhabiting Kazakhstan. There are also jungle cat (*Felis chaus*), Asian wildcat (*Felis silvestris ornata*) and sand cat (*Felis margarita*). The Pallas's cat survey was somewhat embarrassed because the people often mixed up these species. On the other hand these species sometimes use the same habitats and it's important to distinguish them.

Partially we solved this problem showing the poster on Pallas's cat or Pallas's cat photos or asked to describe the cats seen in more details. We classified data obtained on almost true, possibly right and false by different signs (where it was met, when, in what situation, etc.). So we adapted the methods

we used in Russia (where Pallas's cat is the only small wild cat species in its habitats) in order to use it in Kazakhstan. We took into consideration the "true" records as a rule and made some assumptions.

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

1) Actual data on modern Pallas's cat number and distribution and threats was obtained. There was no trustworthy data on modern Pallas's cat number and distribution in Kazakhstan before the project began. The main available data dated from the period before the 1960s. As a result of the work we analysed different data including literature and survey data we obtained interviewing local people (herders, hunters, zoologists, environmentalists, etc.) during the field trip, by telephone and e-mail. We obtained more than 100 Pallas's cat records and outlined the area the species most probably inhabits in Kazakhstan. Accordingly to data obtained the range has been reduced (may be became very fragmented) since the 1960s. All data obtained was entered in the spatial database (in GIS) which is the only database on Pallas's cat in Kazakhstan nowadays. It is available for interested people and institutions and will be used for conducting further study and conservation actions.

2) The places of high conservation value for Pallas's cat (hotspots) were outlined. These are central and eastern parts of the Kazakhstan upland and south-eastern part of Almaty region. These territories are the most typical habitats of Pallas's cat in Kazakhstan and accordingly to surveyed data the species is rather numerous here.

3) Some local people were informed about Pallas's cat and the necessity of its conservation. For this we developed and published the educational posters on Pallas's cat with the call to protect this wild cat. These posters were given to local people during the field work. A part of posters was distributed among hunters, rangers, students, and others through the local NGOs and the Forest and Wildlife Committee. Additional publications were the table calendars (for 2010) we sent to offices of Forest and Wildlife Committee regional departments. At the same time talking with locals we told about the rarity of this wild cat and the necessity of its conservation. We hope that our work with local people helped to create their friendly attitude to Pallas's cat. The posters are available on our web site by the link http://www.savemanul.org/eng/projects/prj4_res.php.

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

We educated local people on Pallas's cat and gave them educational materials.

We were acting in Kazakhstan in the partnership with local conservation organization - NGO Association for Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK, Almaty and Astana). We disseminated questionnaires and took answers back etc. to local organisations through the mediation of ACBK.

Local students and specialists from local conservation and other organizations took part in data obtaining. The student of the East-Kazakhstan University (Ust-Kamenogorsk city) Artem Akentiev was a field team member. He was trained in data obtaining and then interviewed the students of his University. Albert Salemgareev (ACBK) and Sagyndyk Ishangali (Institute of Archaeology, Almaty city) gathered data distributing questionnaires among their colleagues and local people. A set of data was observed through the local hunter's forum in the web.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We intend to continue Pallas's cat investigation in Kazakhstan carrying out thorough research on its number and distribution. Thus it's necessary to be precise about the northern boundary of Pallas's cat range. We need to estimate the decrease during the second half of the 20th century and the rate of the range fragmenting in the Aral Sea area as data obtained in this project is not enough to do it. It's necessary to carry out thorough research on the species number and distribution here in order to specify territories for the species protection in order to substantiate the creation of protected areas in such places. It's necessary also to study all small wild cats at once in order to understand the real situation (including study competitions and other interspecific influences). Knowing this we could conclude on real species' statuses.

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

The results of this work are available through our web site (by link <http://www.savemanul.org/eng/projects/project4.php>). We will prepare the report on projects' results for government and non-government environmental institutions (Forest and Wildlife Committee, ACBK, Kazakhstan branch of WWF; Institute of Zoology, Ministry of Education and Sciences of Kazakhstan). This report will be available on the Russian part of the website too.

We have formed the links with these institutions as well as other organizations which are subordinated to the Forest and Wildlife Committee (hunting agencies, hunters' and fishers' societies, protected areas, etc.) and now we are known as expert on Pallas's cat in Kazakhstan. The database on Pallas's cat in Kazakhstan we made is available to interested persons and organizations. We notified these organizations about it.

The results of the project will be used for further Pallas's cat investigations in Kazakhstan.

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

RSG was used for the year as the project was supposed for 1 year.

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
1. Project administration: Organization overhead 150 Communications 200	350	363.4	+13.4	The telephone negotiations were more numerous than supposed
2. Salary for PI	1200	1200	0	
3. Food and accommodation (per diem costs)	2010	2010	0	
4. Transportation /vehicle tending Fuel 540	1230	1210.9	-19.1	We needed additional vehicle repair in the field as our vehicle was broken

Train/ bus 340 Vehicle repair and some spares 350				once seriously but we used less fuel and cheaper tickets for the train so the real expenditure for this item was smaller
5. Field and scientific equipment Digital camera 320 2 GPS-s 290	610	607.1	-2.9	We bought only 1 GPS because it was enough but we needed to purchase some field equipment additionally – some kitchen-ware and field bedding
6. Materials preparing: Consumables 200 booklets preparing and publishing 300	500	569	+69	The typographical expenses increased as the paper became more expensive in spring 2009
Total	5900	5960.4	60.4	
				Additional funds were provided from the fund of private donations to Pallas's cat study and conservation program

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

We need to organize snow-tracking censuses of Pallas's cat in different habitats (including hot spots) in order to make number estimations. At the same time such research should concern other small wild cat species in order to have reliable data. Also we should continue interviewing as sometimes the only appropriate method which allows obtaining a big set of data. The most effective will be oral interviewing as it allows us to distinguish false reports to a greater extent. During the next research we need to use camera traps for the species identifying and making right conclusions on the species occurrence.

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?

We have used the RSGF logo in the posters and calendars on Pallas' cat we made for local people. The copies of images are put on the web site of Pallas Cat Study and Conservation Program (they are available by the link http://www.savemanul.org/eng/projects/prj4_res.php)

11. Any other comments?

We formed some verbal understanding with local organizations and persons (from the divisions of the Forest and Wildlife Committee firstly) to carry out joint work on Pallas's cat research. They are ready to support us at least by the local support (transport, accommodation) in a case of successful receiving necessary funds.