

Final Evaluation Report

Your Details							
Full Name	Josiah Ibrahim						
Project Title	Conserving Critically Endangered Vultures in Nigeria: A Study on Vegetation Structure, Tree Species, and Community Engagement in the Hadejia Nguru Wetland Complex						
Application ID	40237-2						
Date of this Report	July 24, 2024						



1. Indicate the level of achievement of the project's original objectives and include any relevant comments on factors affecting this.

Objective	Not achieve	Partially achieve	Fully achieve	Comments
To conduct an observational survey to gather comprehensive data on vulture species, focusing on sightings, identification, roosting and breeding sites, and breeding success.	a.	<u>a</u>	0.	During our survey, we located four breeding sites within the Chad Basin National Park and two in the surrounding villages, all occupied by hooded vultures. Only hooded vultures and Egyptian vultures were sighted soaring, and no roosting sites were discovered within or outside the reserve. Of the six breeding sites identified, only three were successful. The others failed due to egg predation, and one fledgling fell from the tree immediately after hatching.
To examine the characteristics of vegetation, specifically identifying the tree species preferred by vultures for roosting and nesting				Hooded vultures were found to be nesting on tall trees with strong, wide branches, on species of acacia and baobab. They favour trees in undisturbed areas with moderate to dense canopy cover, near open spaces.
To conduct social surveys to gather information on public perceptions of vultures and their awareness of the ecosystem services these birds provide.				Residents of the communities surrounding Chad Basin National Park often hold negative perceptions of vultures, viewing them as symbols of evil and bad luck. They lack awareness of the important ecosystem services that vultures provide to the environment. Through this aspect of the
To provide				Through this aspect of the



conservation		project, participants developed
education to primary		a greater understanding of the
and secondary school		importance of conserving
students and teachers,		biodiversity and the environment,
and to engage		with a particular focus on
surrounding		vultures. As a result, seven primary
communities in		and secondary schools around
biodiversity		the wetland complex established
conservation		conservation clubs.
awareness and		
practices.		

2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.

a). Six breeding sites of hooded vultures have been identified and monitored, with three of these sites successfully producing and fledging young. During the survey period, both hooded vultures and Egyptian vultures were observed soaring. The study site has proven to be a valuable stopover and foraging location for the Near Threatened pallid harrier and other Palearctic migrant species.

b). The perception and attitudes of community members towards vulture conservation have been positively transformed through a series of well organised education programmes. They now recognise the valuable ecosystem services vultures provide. Additionally, primary and secondary school students have become effective ambassadors for conservation.

c). Hooded vultures were found to be nesting on tall trees with strong, wide branches, on species of acacia and baobab trees

3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.

It was initially challenging for the community members to understand our motive for monitoring the breeding hooded vultures. Additionally, accessing the trees where the hooded vultures were breeding proved to be difficult.



4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefitted from the project.

At the onset of the project, a meeting was held with community leaders to introduce the project's first phase. The village heads and community leaders were very excited upon hearing about the initiative.

The local community, including students, farmers, and teachers, actively participated in the project and benefited through knowledge and skill acquisition, as well as material gains. For example, conservation club members among the students took part in observational surveys of vulture breeding sites and ecological studies.

Additionally, the involvement of two local field guides in the fieldwork provided some green income for the community. These guides were trained in field methods and now act as forest conservation guards.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, having identified the breeding sites for the six hooded vultures, which are endangered species within the Chad Basin National Park, we plan to continue monitoring these birds in the next season. Constant monitoring will help protect these breeding sites from human disturbance, as observed during the initial survey. This protection will enable the species to consistently use the site for breeding.

This monitoring will provide essential support for the juveniles. If a fledgling falls from the tree, it can be promptly retrieved and treated before being returned to the nest.

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

The knowledge and skills developed through this project can be applied to other areas facing similar challenges in vulture conservation. We will share our experiences with other local communities, educational institutions, and conservation agencies in Nigeria.

We plan to achieve this through various channels, including poster development, seminars, workshops, and media outlets such as scientific journals, popular science articles, blog sites, and even the National Park Service Facebook page. Given the need to conserve wetlands in African countries, this project will inspire similar research efforts in Nigeria and potentially across Africa.



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

The project has highlighted the importance of Chad Basin National Park in Nigeria as a refuge for biodiversity and a critical conservation area in the degraded Sahel region of northeast Nigeria. The next steps will be:

Given the biodiversity potential of Chad Basin National Park, the most crucial step is to influence policy regarding biodiversity conservation in remnant habitats.

Establishing observational surveys of vulture breeding sites and monitoring avian species in Chad Basin National Park.

Patas monkeys (*Erythrocebus patas*) and olive baboons (*Papio anubis*) were observed during the survey. Although these species are of minor concern on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, they appear to be declining in this part of the country due to human activities and poaching. There is a need to conduct comprehensive surveys of primates in Chad Basin National Park and raise conservation awareness to prevent the hunting of these primates.

We will continue developing our manuscript for publication and prepare another proposal to The Rufford Foundation to continue our work on the breeding ecology and movement of the hooded vulture.

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

Yes, we used the logo on the introduction letters and in all correspondence with district officials. The Rufford Foundation received publicity during the project period through seminars and school presentations.

9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.

Josiah Ibrahim, the project coordinator, is an expert in water bird monitoring and conservation education. He has been actively involved in every project activity and has led the team.

Israel Adedeji Bolade is a team member and wildlife ecology expert who has participated in all project activities.

Rahila Meribah Yilangai, a team member and wildlife ecology expert, serves as the team lead for vegetation measurement. She has been actively involved in every project activity



10. Any other comments?

We acknowledge The Rufford Foundation for providing the funds that made the execution of this crucial and timely project possible. Special thanks to the district authorities, local leaders, educators, and the entire Hadejia-Nguru community surrounding Chad Basin National Park for your excellent cooperation.















