

## Final Evaluation Report

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We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF 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 – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

**Please DO NOT fill in and submit this form until the project has been completed.**

Complete the form in English. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to [jane@rufford.org](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

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Your Details	
<b>Full Name</b>	Murthy Kantimahanti
<b>Project Title</b>	Community camera trapping for monitoring rusty-spotted cats on village lands in the eastern ghats of south India.
<b>Application ID</b>	43822-2
<b>Date of this Report</b>	November 29, 2025

**1. 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
Establish community-based camera trapping network in selected villages			Yes	<p>Camera trap stations were established in 12 locations with strong participation from local stakeholders.</p> <p>A total of 15 camera traps were deployed over a period of 7 months. There were around 105 trap nights. We engaged four different teams of 8 people each to set up the camera traps.</p>
Document presence, distribution and activity patterns of Rusty-Spotted Cat			Yes	<p>Species presence was recorded in 8 locations, including two previously undocumented areas.</p> <p>We recorded a total of 21 individual captures of rusty spotted cats. We also conducted the spoor surveys to record tracks and scat but did not obtain much data from this as the area is dry and it's very difficult to identify tracks on loose soil or dry terrain.</p>
Build local capacity for wildlife monitoring			Yes	<p>Twenty-five community volunteers were trained in camera trapping, spoor surveys, monitoring and data management. The volunteers were mostly young men in their 20s who are unemployed or had free time after returning from farming. The training lasted for a month and half. We also developed a poster.</p>

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

- a) Generation of the first systematic records of Rusty-Spotted Cat from community landscapes in the Eastern Ghats.
- b) Establishment of a trained, community-based wildlife monitoring network capable of independent field operations.
- c) Enhanced local stewardship and improved perceptions of small carnivore conservation.

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

Challenges such as the threat of camera theft, extreme heat affecting battery performance, and domestic dog interference were addressed through strategic relocation of cameras, use of lithium batteries, and adjusted camera positioning.

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

Local communities contributed to site selection, camera placement and regular monitoring activities. Capacity building enhanced their ecological awareness, provided new field skills, and strengthened cooperation with other stakeholder groups.

We found the use of a points system and prize money a successful way to motivate and involve the local community, but we also realized that its extremely important to keep the reward system going to retain the proconservation behaviours among the participants. With no sustainable financial reward system, they may go back to hunting as they used to earlier.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

Future plans include scaling the program across adjacent ranges, conducting long-term monitoring, and expanding the scope to include other endangered and threatened small carnivores.

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

Results will be shared with the Forest Department, presented at scientific forums, communicated via community meetings, and prepared for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

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

Priorities include long-term monitoring, habitat restoration, roadkill mitigation, dog population management, and development of educational materials for schools.

**8. 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?**

The logo was used on outreach posters, presentations, signages at the entrance of villages and relevant social media posts. The Foundation received visibility during community meetings and education programs.

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

Murthy Kantimahanti – Supervision of all activities including training teams in camera trapping and data analysis.

Madhu Sabbavarapu – Local coordination with village heads and identification of local teams from each village.

Prasad Gemmela – Communication and organization of local meetings and awareness programmes.

Kondamma Gemmela – Monitoring of camera traps and data collection.

Isaku Mamidi – Volunteer gathering and field assistance to other team members.

**10. Any other comments?**

This project contributed significantly to the understanding and conservation of the Rusty-Spotted Cat in the Eastern Ghats and established a strong foundation for continued community-based conservation efforts.

**ANNEX – Financial Report**

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