

Final Evaluation Report

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.

Your Details	
Full Name	
Project Title	Inventory of Butterfly Biodiversity for Conservation in Gashaka Gumti National Park
Application ID	43935-1
Date of this Report	8 January 2026.

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
(1) Produce a comprehensive report on biodiversity, conservation status, and ecology of butterflies in Gashaka Gumti National Park (GGNP).			✓	<p>A comprehensive report on the biodiversity and conservation status of butterflies in Gashaka Gumti National Park (GGNP) has been successfully produced. The project incorporated both dry season (February) and wet season (July) surveys, enabling the documentation of seasonal variation in species richness and abundance. The report provides essential baseline data on butterfly diversity and conservation status, filling a critical knowledge gap and supporting future monitoring and conservation planning in GGNP.</p> <p>Although we had initially secured permission to carry out the fieldwork prior to the awarding of the funding, we later discovered that additional permits were required, which we had not previously been aware of. Obtaining these further permissions delayed the start of the project, meaning that field activities could not begin in 2024 as originally planned. In addition, the grant funds were only received in November 2024, which further limited the time available for fieldwork within the originally proposed schedule. As a result, the project began in February 2025, and we conducted two field surveys of three weeks each instead of the three surveys initially planned. These surveys</p>

				<p>were carried out in February (dry season) and July (wet season) to capture potential seasonal variation in butterfly communities.</p> <p>The third survey was originally intended to evaluate differences in butterfly community composition before and after the conservation education activities. However, during the course of the project, we realised that the time interval between the education programme and the proposed follow-up survey would be too short to detect meaningful ecological changes. We therefore decided not to conduct this third survey and instead plan to investigate the potential impacts of conservation education on butterfly communities when the project continues in the future under the second phase of this grant.</p> <p>A total of 60 butterfly species were recorded during the surveys. Based on preliminary descriptive statistics, we did not observe any clear or noticeable differences in butterfly community composition between the dry and wet seasons, as we recorded mostly similar species across both seasons. However, a few specimens have not yet been identified to species level, and we are currently working to resolve their identification. We hope to complete this process by the time the manuscript is finalised and subsequently submitted for publication.</p>
(2) Identify critical habitats and			✓	Butterfly surveys were conducted across key habitat types within GGNP,

<p>sites within the park that are essential for butterfly conservation</p>				<p>including grassland savannah, rainforest, and woodland savannah. These habitats were identified as critical for butterfly conservation due to their distinct species assemblages and levels of butterfly richness. The results highlight the importance of maintaining habitat heterogeneity within the park to support butterfly diversity and inform habitat-specific conservation and management actions.</p>
<p>(3) Train local people in butterfly identification and monitoring protocols.</p>			<p>✓</p>	<p>Local community members were trained in butterfly identification and standardised monitoring protocols. The training covered practical field techniques, including the use of sweep nets, butterfly traps, and the Pollard walk method for butterfly surveys. This capacity-building activity has strengthened local involvement and laid the foundation for continued butterfly monitoring and community participation in conservation activities within GGNP.</p> <p>A total of 20 participants attended the training sessions. The majority were park staff, several were interns, and a few were rangers who joined to gain practical experience.</p>
<p>(4) Carry out an effective conservation education programme for host communities.</p>		<p>✓</p>		<p>This programme aimed to raise awareness of butterfly biodiversity and promote positive attitudes toward butterfly conservation. Activities included interactive lectures and discussions supported by culturally relevant educational materials, such as posters and pamphlets, which highlighted the importance of</p>

		<p>butterflies and their conservation. Key topics covered included butterfly biology, identification of common Nigerian species, participation in citizen science, and the benefits of butterfly conservation to humans and the environment.</p> <p>All sessions were delivered in both Hausa and English to ensure inclusivity and effective communication. In addition, T-shirts and exercise books bearing butterfly images and conservation messages were distributed to participants. The programme was well received, with strong interest and enthusiasm expressed by schools and community members, indicating a positive impact on conservation awareness.</p> <p>We were able to visit 7 schools. Access to other schools in surrounding communities was limited due to difficult terrain and security concerns. In addition, fluctuations in the conversion rate into the local currency reduced our available budget, so we had to carefully manage funds to ensure that we could reach a sufficient audience.</p> <p>We reached more than 500 people through the awareness campaigns. In addition to school and community events, we also engaged with members of the public we encountered on the road who were willing to listen and learn about butterfly conservation.</p> <p>We distributed a total of 5 posters, 300</p>
--	--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

				pamphlets, 500 exercise books, and 250 T-shirts.
--	--	--	--	--------------------------------------------------

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

a). Comprehensive Butterfly Biodiversity Data

The project produced a detailed report on butterfly species diversity and conservation status in GGNP, covering both dry (February) and wet (July) seasons. The project highlights seasonal patterns in species richness and abundance and provides essential information to support future research, monitoring, and conservation planning. Notably, the survey recorded a unique butterfly species (Gashaka-Gumpti Ceres Forester - *Euphaedra luteolucens* Hecq, 1995) found only in Gashaka Gumti National Park, underscoring the park's unique biodiversity.

b) Identification of Key Habitats for Conservation

Surveys across grassland savannah, rainforest, and woodland savannah identified habitats that are critical for butterfly diversity. These findings can help park management and stakeholders prioritize conservation actions to protect and maintain these important habitats.

c) Enhanced Community Engagement, Capacity, and Sustainability

Local communities were trained in butterfly identification and monitoring techniques, including the use of sweep nets, butterfly traps, and Pollard walks.

A conservation education programme reached youths and adults in Gembu and Serti, raising awareness of butterfly biodiversity and promoting positive attitudes toward conservation. To ensure ongoing impact, some butterfly survey equipment was left with field assistants in GGNP, enabling periodic surveys even after the project concluded. This outcome strengthens local participation in continued butterfly monitoring and conservation initiatives.

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

Some of the proposed host communities (Chaappal Hendu, Chappal Shirgu, and Mayo Selbe) were very remote and difficult to access, which limited the conservation education programme to Gembu and Serti. To address this, the project team focused resources on the accessible communities while still ensuring a strong programme impact. Collaboration with local field assistants helped ensure the safe implementation of activities in the selected communities.

Conducting surveys in both the dry (February) and wet (July) seasons posed logistical challenges, including heavy rainfall and difficult terrain during the wet season. These were managed by careful planning of field schedules, allocating extra time for travel, and using local guides familiar with the terrain.

Certain areas of the park and surrounding communities presented potential security risks. To ensure safety, all fieldwork was coordinated with local field assistants and rangers, and activities were scheduled during safer times of the day.

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

Local communities surrounding GGNP were actively involved throughout the implementation of the butterfly inventory project. Prior to field activities, community leaders and representatives were consulted to inform them about the objectives of the study and to seek their cooperation. This engagement facilitated access to sampling sites and ensured smooth field operations.

Community members participated directly in the project as field assistants, rangers, and local guides during butterfly surveys. Their roles included guiding the research team through forest trails, assisting with the establishment of transects and baited traps, and providing information on local habitats and seasonal environmental conditions. Their knowledge of the landscape contributed significantly to efficient sampling across different habitat types.

In addition, conservation education and awareness activities were conducted in selected communities and schools. These activities introduced participants to butterfly diversity, their ecological importance, and the need for habitat conservation.

The project provided both knowledge-based and socio-economic benefits to local communities. Community members engaged as field assistants received financial compensation, which contributed to household income during the project period. The use of local services such as accommodation, food supplies, and transportation further generated indirect economic benefits within host communities.

Knowledge gained through participation and awareness sessions improved community understanding of butterflies as indicators of environmental health and their role in ecosystem functioning. Importantly, at the completion of the project, selected butterfly survey equipment (including hand nets, bait traps, and basic field materials) were left with trained field assistants in GGNP. This has strengthened local capacity by enabling continued informal monitoring, observation, and learning beyond the lifespan of the project.

Overall, the project strengthened collaboration between researchers, park management, and local communities, enhanced local capacity in basic biodiversity monitoring, and promoted positive attitudes toward conservation within and around GGNP.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, there are plans to continue this work.

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

The results will be shared through publications in scientific journals, seminar presentations in universities, and presentations to park management and local communities.

We have shared the report on butterfly biodiversity with the park management and will aim to share our findings with the IUCN SSC Butterfly Specialist Group in the near future.

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

The important next steps include expanding butterfly surveys to other areas of the park that were not covered in this study, particularly the high-elevation zones, given the large size of GGNP, Nigeria's largest national park, and identifying ways to reach more surrounding communities for conservation education while strengthening long-term monitoring and conservation planning.

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?

Yes. The Rufford Foundation logo was used on T-shirts, pamphlets, and exercise books produced for the project, and the Foundation received publicity through these materials during the work.

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

Okwu Njideka Scholastica – Data collection and conservation education facilitator.

John Aboje Onah – Data collection and analyst, involved in gathering field data and analyzing butterfly survey results.

Joseph Izang Ibrahim – Butterfly identifier, responsible for species identification and verification during surveys.

Conscience Oriade Ogunleye – Principal Investigator, responsible for butterfly data collection, conducting conservation education programmes, and overall project coordination.

10. Any other comments?

The project successfully established a baseline inventory of butterfly biodiversity in GGNP and laid the foundation for long-term monitoring and continued community engagement.

We thank the Africa Nature Investors (ANI) Foundation at GGNP for making this project run smoothly. We would not have been able to accomplish this without their support.

ANNEX – Financial Report
[Intentionally removed]

