

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	Kolo Yeo
Project title	Assessing the impact of human pressure on biodiversity conservation in Banco National Park – the use of ants as bioindicators.
RSG reference	50.06.09
Reporting period	November 2009 – November 2010
Amount of grant	£5993
Your email address	koloyeo@yahoo.fr
Date of this report	January, 25th 2011

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
Undertake ant biodiversity assessment along an anthropogenic gradient within the park			x	This was the field work of the project
Provide biological and ecological information that can urge decision makers to engage efforts in reinforcing the park's protection		x		- Some ant species were characteristic of the conservation state of the areas where they were collected. - We located highly disturbed areas within the park
Introduce the use of ants in conservation biology in Côte d'Ivoire		x		- The project has shown that ant communities reflect the conservation state the park

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

As already pointed in my July feedback, I made a change in the method for sampling arboreal ants. I used leaf beating instead of baiting arboreal ants with tuna because the dominant arboreal ant species belonging to genus *Crematogaster* monopolized the tuna baits. The same species often occupied half of the baits along transect. As the objective is to capture as many species occurring in the area as possible, I preferred beating the leaves above a 1m² white cloth using a stick and collecting the ants that fall onto the cloth.

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

- The project was able to provide the list of ant species occurring in the Banco National Park. This includes species specifically occurring either in the intact zone or in the degraded areas of the park. These species are surrogate for a monitoring (designed to determine the evolution of the conservation state) by the governmental agency in charge of the park's conservation.
- The project has enabled the governmental agency in charge the park's conservation, to locate areas that are heavily disturbed (hot spot of disturbance) within the park and which need particular measures (or efforts) for their restoration.
- Two Masters student were trained to conservation research during the course of the project

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

Local people have not benefited from this project; instead the recurrent presence of our team in the park during the course of the project, was rather a brake for their incursion in search for medicinal plants, firewood or bush meat; in fact they thought we were members of the forces committed to the protection of the park (those forces rarely patrol on the ground since 2002).

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The results of this project about ant species specifically occurring in degraded areas, raise a question as where do these species come from? From this question we can hypothesise that these are anthropophilic species coming from Abidjan city and moving into the park following the human routes. The invasion of the park by these alien ants species constitute a danger for the maintenance of ant diversity in the park and reflect its degradation. A continuation of the project could address a test of this hypothesis.

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

The results of this project is to be shared with the agency in charge of the park's conservation

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

The RSG was used from November 2009 to November 2010. This corresponds to the anticipated length of the project. But I have about 2 months delay in the production the report.

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
Equipment	£2242	£2207	+£35	The field camera was £35 cheaper than anticipated
Consumables	£1491	£1526	-£35	The plastic vials were more expensive than foreseen so I had to reduce the number of collection boxes to 10 instead of 15 and this was a gain of £66.67. This gain, together with the £35, were added to the plastic vials' budget line.
Local transportation	£936	£936	0	-
Subsistence payment	£1324	£1324	0	-
Total	£5993	£5993	0	

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

I feel that two important next steps are to be started:

1. Assess the exotic and anthropophilic ant species in Abidjan city and their progression within the park (particularly along the access ways). This will enable to answer the question "where do ant species specifically occurring in degraded areas (within the park) come from?"

2. Sensitise local people (mostly women, children and young people) on behalf of Banco National Park. This will show the people how their activities threaten the park through changes in wildlife communities such as ants.

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?

Yes I used the RSGF Logo in a presentation during a talk I gave at the University of Abobo-Adjamé where I teach. My two Master students, who had the opportunity to work on the project, also used the logo in their reports and there was a publicity of the RSGF at the University when they publicly defended their reports.

11. Any other comments?

A scientific paper is being prepared for publication in an international journal.