

## 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Jonathan Fiely
<b>Project title</b>	Teaching and Leading through Science Research Education in Andasibe, Madagascar
<b>RSG reference</b>	
<b>Reporting period</b>	2009
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£4,377
<b>Your email address</b>	<u><a href="mailto:JLfiely@gmail.com">JLfiely@gmail.com</a></u>
<b>Date of this report</b>	16 June 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
Teaching Pitfall Trapping / Mark-Recapture methodologies			x	Four members of Association Mitsinjo involved. Over 23 species observed, with weekly classes of school children taught by Mitsinjo staff on forest micro-mammal ecology.
Spool and Line trapping - capture and release of any members of subfamily Tenrecinae (the spiny tenrecs) to observe habit and associated species present in burrows.			x	Conducted in concert with pitfall trapping, with one member of Mitsinjo involved. This person taught and led local children through the forest, following where small mammals go throughout the night by following the line. Valuable scientific data was collected on micro-habitat use of these endemic mammals.
Micro-Project: Forest mushroom ecology self-project			x	Self proposed and executed project, resulting in a poster of edible mushroom species that are found in the Mitsinjo-administered forest. Proposal, methodologies, and final report all completed by Nasuavina after a series of three meetings on research design and report writing.
Micro-Project: Density of trees in areas with <i>Prolemur simus</i> (greater bamboo lemur) to determine habitat preference			x	Youssef completed this project in its entirety, adding to his already comprehensive understanding of the forest species by learning critical techniques such as summation in Excel, and proposal writing. Valuable scientific data were collected, to be published in 2011 in a peer-reviewed article on the species in Andasibe.
Micro-Project: Forage preference of Avahi and Lepilemur lemurs in the Andasibe reserve			x	Three members of Association Mitsinjo involved. Also an incredible project, with proposal and report entirely self-written by the all-female staff. These three Association members have created a special team for nocturnal visitors to the forest, taking them on a custom 'science walk' to observe the species in-depth.
Micro-Projects: Frog species diversity, local livelihood surveys		x		Although proposals for each of these projects were completed, no results were fully archived. This was due to difficulties in seeing projects through by the members, although valuable lessons in time-management and budgeting were learned during the course of the work.

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

The biggest difficulty was maintaining a balance between micro-managing these primarily education-oriented projects and letting association members find their own path - through successes and mistakes - to complete their respective projects. However, we managed to strike a good balance by being free and available to help when asked, while letting members learn on their own. This path was longer, but the project was far more sustainable as participants truly felt they learned the subjects of their research, and therefore better communicated their knowledge and enthusiasm to the school children.

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

First, this project established an incredible rapport with the local school children and the Association. It allowed local kids to see and enjoy the forest 'in their back yard', learning from real experts in their own language. Second, it created five posters on the Micro-Project results, also in the local language of Malagasy, which were distributed to local schools. Finally, I felt the project had an incredible educational value to the Association Member's themselves - elevating them from 'Guides' to true para-scientists, experts in their respective fields and better able to communicate forest ecology to their community peers and tourists.

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

As was written in question 3, this project was entirely based on creating a grassroots initiative to learn and lead through science education. This resulted in a direct and tangible connection between the local schools and this local association, bettering the community's perception of conservation activities in the area.

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

The members of this micro-project have continued to work full time on a related project on *Prolemur simus*, the Critically Endangered greater bamboo lemur. They are all working in their respective fields of botany, ecology, and behaviour to collect real data on this species' home range and habitat use throughout the forests of Andasibe. This project was funded outside of Rufford, through the Margot Marsh Biodiversity fund, Conservation International, and the Primate Action Fund.

The Association continues to run free tours of the forest to the local community's school - taking out classes of the Scouts and Environment Club into the forest to learn about the animals. This continues without financial incentive, and is a direct indicator that the project's grassroots focus was a success.

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

This project has resulted in two pieces of extremely valuable data which will be published as part of a larger project in the coming year. Further, the posters should be viewable in the Association's office to tourists and visiting researchers, as well as in the local schools.

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

Money was dispersed January 2008 - November 2008. Guide per-diems were given in two lump sums, one at project conception and one at the completion of the final report. Major purchases of equipment were completed in January 2008.

**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
Computer	550	650	-100	I fronted my own money to make up the difference. Purchased by a friend in the UK, and left at Association Mitsinjo on project completion.
Garmin GPS	200	180	20	Did not have to ship; was brought over by a friend. Also left at with the Association, and currently being used to map <i>Prolemur simus</i> locations.
Miscellaneous equipment purchased locally	1128	1450	-323	Difference was made up with personal funds to purchase more buckets, batteries, sampling equipment, and more pens and notebooks than budgeted for to be distributed to school children in attendance.
Guide per-diem	2500	2500	0	All guide projects were assessed for difficulty at project start, and the money broken up evenly between projects who completed proposals.
<b>Total</b>	<b>4377</b>	<b>4780</b>		

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

Micro-projects were self-initiated, but continuity is difficult without someone present to help continue fund this research. Successful proposal writing is challenging, and language barriers are still a nearly insurmountable difficulty in seeking funding for projects.

If in the future a new Peace Corps volunteer is stationed with the Association I will inform them of your programme as a possible source of future funding.

**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. Posters for micro-projects, as listed above. RSGF received considerable publicity as the source of our funding to all visiting tourists, as well as future acknowledgement in published articles as a result of this educational research.