

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	Anna Barashkova
Project title	Pallas's Cat in Kazakhstan: From Investigation to Conservation
RSG reference	13199-B
Reporting period	April 2013 - June 2014
Amount of grant	£11,940
Your email address	anna@sibecocenter.ru, yazula@yandex.ru
Date of this report	01.07.2014

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
- to obtain camera trap data on Pallas' cat distribution in Eastern Kazakhstan			X	Camera traps were set firstly in May 2013 on the transect from north to south in the Eastern Kazakhstan. They were checked two times - in September 2013 and May-June 2014
- to obtain interview data from target local people groups			X	Interview data was obtained in 80 settlements (cattle-breeding farms and summer camps and villages) mainly in May-June 2013 and also in September 2013 and May-June 2014.
- to update the database and GIS on Pallas's cat locations, habitats and densities in Kazakhstan			X	New data was entered to our database in ArcView GIS 3.2 and ArcGIS 9.3 (ESRI, CA, USA) and added to online database "Small Wild Cats of Eurasia" http://wildlifemonitoring.ru
- to assess more carefully threats to Pallas's cat			X	New data on Pallas's cat deaths cases were added to database
- to prepare recommendations with grounds for establishing new protected areas for Pallas's cat conservation and present it to conservation bodies			X	Recommendations were given to the local conservation body which is corresponding for developing protected area network in Kazakhstan till 2020-2030 years for their consideration.
- to start monitoring of the species density in one or more existent protected areas	X	X		We planned to initiate conducting permanent census of Pallas's cat in existent protected areas in Karaganda province, made necessary agreements with local authorities but census didn't take place because of bad weather conditions. It was carried over next year.
- to inform on and educate in Pallas's cat protection			X	Posters and leaflets on Pallas' cats were distributed while interviewing locals and through local conservation bodies. The art contest was organised among schoolchildren. Articles were published in local press media.
- to attract new wildlife researchers to			X	The student of Karaganda State University (Kazakhstan) who specializes

Pallas's cat study and conservation and train in camera trapping				on Pallas' cat participated in setting camera traps and interviewing local people (as native Kazakh speaker) in May 2013. The wildlife researcher from Uzbekistan (NGO "Turan") was trained in camera trapping in September 2013.
- to transfer our experience in Pallas's cat investigation to other countries			X	Investigations of Pallas' cat were initiated in Uzbekistan. The project leader trained Uzbekistan team to set camera traps in March 2014 (work was supported from funds raised by Uzbekistan team).

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

We didn't have essential difficulties during this project - there were only some routine things which were successfully solved in the course of work (such as breakage of vehicle, etc.).

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

- 1) It was confirmed that Pallas' cat inhabits the Eastern Kazakhstan notably the east of Central-Kazakhstan Upland which was supposed to be the main part of Pallas' cat range in Kazakhstan. Pictures of the species using camera trapping were obtained. Other data (interviewing, skins, skull, and dead animal) were found also. But it was found that Pallas' cat is much more rare species in the Eastern Kazakhstan than in the middle of Central Asia (in Mongolia and in the Russian part of a range - in Altai and Tyva Republics).
- 2) Local people were informed on Pallas' cat and the necessity of its conservation. It was made via interviewing local people, distributing educational materials (posters and leaflets), art contest for schoolchildren, publications in press. The educational materials were distributed also through local non-profit and governmental organisations.
- 3) The contacts with local stakeholders were made. They were informed on our work and our suggestions on creation of protected areas which have high conservation priority for Pallas' cat and other endangered species. Particularly our grounds were presented to conservation bodies which are responsible for PA network plans till 2020-2030. Also we made contact with the administration of the Eastern-Kazakhstan province (notably department of wildlife conservation), we hope to collaborate in Pallas' cat study and protection.

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

It was relevant to involve local communities but they were not supposed to have benefit except knowledge.

We made the educational campaign among local communities. During interview surveys local people were informed about Pallas's cat and given with poster and/or leaflets about this species. Also the posters and leaflets were distributed via our Kazakhstan partner, Association for Conservation of

Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK), local administrations and regional branches of the Wildlife and Forestry Committee of the Ministry of Environment and Water Resources of Republic of Kazakhstan. The schoolchildren of the East-Kazakhstan province took part in the art contest devoted to Pallas' cat and its conservation.

Local student and specialist from the local NGO were trained in data obtaining and camera trapping. We employed local driver.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We plan to continue camera trap research in Kazakhstan involving new areas. Ten camera traps were set on the way back in another part of Eastern Kazakhstan not investigated before - northern part of Tarbagatai mountains. At least we need to check these cameras and enlarge camera trapping activity to other sites.

Being from other country and having small team we realise that we couldn't cover the whole Kazakhstan and should create new initiatives firstly from locals. Fortunately our work and success inspires local persons and institutions to make its own steps in Pallas' cat (and on the whole small wild cats) study. We need to promote such initiatives and at the same time to organise united database. One of our next steps is to make alive our online database on sightings of small wild cats which includes also Pallas' cat. Database was developed by Siberian Environmental Center and has the web address http://wildlifemonitoring.ru/sgpa/index.php?species_type_id=wild_cats&lang=en We plan to continue the promotion of our propositions on new protected areas which will allow conserve habitats of Pallas' cat and other endangered species.

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

The results of the work will be published at our web site of Pallas's Cat Study and Conservation Program <http://www.savemanul.org>

Preliminary results of first part of project were published in local popular magazine "Wind of Travels" (<http://veters.kz/pogladit-manula/>). News of investigations were published in some local mass media. The article about project's results will be published in the Steppe Bulletin – a 4-monthly edition on conservation of steppe ecosystems and sustainable use of steppes publishing by the NGO "Siberian Environmental Center". We also plan to publish our findings in CatNews and present it at some workshops and conferences.

The intermediate (technical) report on field work results of 2013 (in Russian) was made for local conservation bodies. It was given to the regional departments of the Wildlife and Forestry Committee of the Kazakhstan Ministry of Agriculture, department of administration of the Eastern-Kazakhstan province, Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan (ACBK) and other interested institutions and persons. Report is available on our website <http://www.savemanul.org/projects/project12.php>

The intermediate results of our investigations as well as our propositions on creation protected areas which include key habitats of Pallas' cat (status and location, boundaries, grounds for protecting) were given to conservation bodies in Kazakhstan which are responsible for development

of PA network till 2020-2030 (UNDP/Committee of Forestry and Hunting Project " National Biodiversity Planning to Support the implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Republic of Kazakhstan").

Final report and corresponding articles will be given also to same conservation institutions (above) and interested persons.

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 April 2013 till June 2014 (15 months). The anticipated length of the project was 12 months but after first half of the project and obtaining first results we realised that we need some more time. The reasons were: 1) necessity to leave camera traps for more time to obtain more data, and 2) climate conditions and as a consequences the accessibility of locations where camera traps were set (no roads in winter period and spring wet season when roads are impassable). By plan we wanted to take off camera traps in October-November, but decided to move this term to early summer in order to prolong camera traps work and avoid unfavorable seasons. This prolongation gave benefit in obtaining pictures of Pallas' cat - we obtained some pictures of manual only in April-May 2014.

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
Salary: PI, £220*14 months	1130	1130	0	
Salary: Field assistants/guide, £150*3 persons*3 months	450	450	0	
Salary: Driver, £350*3 months	1050	1150	100	The salary was increased a little bit in 2014
Per diem costs: £6,3/day*4 persons*95 days	2394	2394	0	
Fuel: £0,61/litre*20 litres/100 km*12000 km	1464	1440	-24	
Transportation (train/bus): way to study site for some members	540	490	-50	A part of funds remained in some positions were spent for purchase of batteries and added to salary of driver in 2014
Vehicle repair and some spares	500	500	0	Actually vehicle repair demanded much more funds but on the whole the preparation of it to field season was made from other sources of organisation

Camera traps Bushnell with SD-cards: £280*10 pcs.	2800	2720	-80	We found cheaper models with the same functionality and bought one more camera
Batteries for cameras: £1,5*8 AA lithium batteries*2 (for changing)*18 cameras (summing with 8 cameras we have)	432	554	122	Batteries cost increased since the proposal was written
GPS: £270*2 pcs.	540	475	-65	The GPS models were cheaper than planned ones
Binocular: £150*1 pcs.	150	147	-3	
Field equipment (tents, sleeping-bags, field kitchen, etc.)	0	0	0	Additionally two sleeping bags and a tent were purchased for new team members from other sources (private donations)
Consumables (paper, pens, notebooks, etc.)	40	40	0	
Art contest organising and prizes for winners	250	250	0	
Report and grounds for new protected area preparing and publishing	50	50	0	
Organising workshop on Pallas's cat in Almaty	0	0	0	Workshop was fully paid from other sources
Communication (telephone, internet, post expenses)	150	150	0	
Total	11940	11940		

Local exchange rate was sufficiently changing since May 2013. In the beginning £1=47,7 roubles and in May 2014 £1=almost 60 roubles. We accepted the grant in dollars having received total 17879 USD in April 2013. From May 2013 till May 2014 the exchange rate of dollar was changed from 31 till 35, 5 roubles. As the funds were used (converted) step-by-step during the project period the account of funds spent was made on the assumption of current exchange rate in day of currency selling. Some currency was sold in Kazakhstan to national tenges - KZT (fuel, food, accommodation in the field).

We used posters remained from the previous RSG project. Leaflets on Pallas' cats were made on additional funds (private donations our organization received in 2013-2014 for Pallas' Cat Study and Conservation Program).

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

Next important steps should be: 1) continuation of camera trapping in the eastern Kazakhstan particularly involvement new areas - Tarbagatai and Kalba mountains, South Altai, and others; 2) continuation of educational work with local people including hunters; 3) taking protective measures in order to conserve Pallas' cat and its habitats particularly the collaboration with local

administrations which perform conservation duties such as patrolling, anti-poaching work, etc.; 4) preparing ground documents for protected areas creation; and 5) promotion local initiatives directed to Pallas' cat study and conservation in Kazakhstan (working with local zoologists and other specialists, conservation organizations).

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?

RSGF logo was used at our web site and on the poster we distributed among local people. We suppose to use the logo in the publication of final project's results in the Steppe Bulletin.

11. Any other comments?

Some funds were raised after the project start - almost all private donations which were used also for new educational materials publishing, vehicle repair etc.

Additional camera trapping was organized in South Kazakhstan by the strength of two interested people (zoologists). Now they use seven camera traps supported by their own and partly in the frames of some collaborative projects - RSG and Uzbekistan's team project on wild cats.