

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 | Gordana Grbic |
| Project title | Spiders and sands - research and conservation of spiders living in the Deliblato Sands: the largest European continental sands |
| RSG reference | 13666-1 |
| Reporting period | June 2013 / June 2014 |
| Amount of grant | £5986 |
| Your email address | gordana_grbicns@yahoo.com |
| Date of this report | 28.7.2014. |

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 |
|--|--------------|--------------------|----------------|--|
| First list of species at this locality | | | x | From intensive fieldwork, based on collecting material using pitfall traps, beating and sweeping techniques, we created a first inventory list of spider species and propose a future monitoring plan. Now this initial study could become an example for other protected areas. |
| Introducing spiders as bio-indicators | | x | | After the first excitement of new approach in conservation strategy, Management team of the protected area was not very excited with new future legal obligation. They accept our recommendation but it will be consider somewhere in the future. The unstable political situation in Serbia have great influence on this, because the funding resources are questionable. |
| Sharing knowledge with students | | x | | Spiders are difficult group to work with. They are very mystic and interesting, but time consuming (especially in laboratory during the determination) so student were partially interesting to work with them. More interest they showed in the field activities then afterwards. Only one student stayed till the end of the project, and got the idea what he will do for his future diploma thesis. |
| Sharing knowledge with schoolchildren | | | x | Children are the best group to work with when the facts on biodiversity are involved. They were very cooperative, and active. We got an open invitation to come again from all school we visited during this project. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| Sharing knowledge with the general public | x | | | It is challenging to create a positive atmosphere for this 'unpopular' group of animals. We had a problem to get an intention from the media. That is something that could be the focus in the future projects. This 2014 was also unexpected election year in Serbia so the biodiversity was not in the focus. All invitations from media were prolonged till further notice. |
| Promotion and publication of the results | | | x | Lectures and workshops were very well accepted. Discussions were also very good and creative, so I think we made a good impression. The results of this research are accepted by the organizers committee of the 28 th European Congress of Arachnology and it will be presented in Torino in August 2014. Our results contribute wider appreciation of biodiversity in the Serbia and Europe. |

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

Car: during the realisation of the field work it become clear that we could not use our personal car but the rental, so the budget cost change a lot. We have to reorganise our expenses, but the goals were achieved.

Media collaboration: we had a problem to get an intention from the media. The early elections that happened, and that we could not predict, influenced our promotion phase a lot. Serbia becomes, again, a politically unstable country where biodiversity is forgotten subject. All invitations from media were prolonged till further notice.

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

The three most important outcomes of this project were: (1) a comprehensive inventory list of species, (2) promotion of spiders to children and students and (3) publication of the results.

Data gathering is the crucial element in developing a conservation and/or management strategy in any protected area. First we have to see what we have, than to decide what to protect. The primary list of detected species should underlie future research and conservation measures. Based on this species inventory we made, we proposed an initial recommendation of monitoring plan, the first such plan in Serbia.

Education and application are very important things in science. To create interesting and friendly surroundings for not so popular group of animals needs a lot of time and effort. Our presentation in school and training activities with students were very well accepted, so that moves us slowly to our goal: to increase interest in spider.

The results of this research will be presented in Torino in August at the 28th European Congress of Arachnology. This acceptance by European arachnology community means that we did a great job, and that our work is important not only for Serbia, but also for Europe.

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

N/A

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Of course! One year and few habitats are a good starting point but not enough to make a final list of species at some locality. During our fieldwork we noticed several more habitats that could be interesting for inventory work. This project was organised in the heart of the Deliblato sands, but in some future investigations should be consider the edges of the locality, where the great influences of Danube is and where the loess hills are unique. Also, if we consider that pitfall traps only collect ground spider fauna, in some future research could be consider some other technique too so arboreal fauna could also be analysed.

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

The first step will be a poster presentation at The 28th European Congress of Arachnology in Torino (Italy) this August 2014 in the session of biogeography. The second will be manuscript in some previewed arachnological journal. Third will be input of the results in the Serbian biodiversity database, as well as to other trans-national databases such as 'Fauna Europea'.

The final list of species will be also provided to the management of The Special Nature Reserve "Deliblato Sands". In that way they will be inform what treasure they have, so they can conduct their legal obligation of protecting and monitoring some species.

And of course, the collection will be deposited at Educons University that everyone who show some interest in spider could see what we found.

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

The RSG was used from June 2013 to June 2014. This corresponds to the anticipated length of the project.

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 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|---|
| Wages for fieldwork | 1200 | 1200 | | |
| Wages for laboratory work | 360 | 360 | | |
| Wages for the presentation work | 480 | 0 | +480 | These resource had to be redirected in the budget for the car rental so presentational work was volunteering type |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------|--|
| Fuel | 900 | 576 | -324 | There was a unintentional error in fuel calculation at the very beginning, luckily that covered unexpected rental cost |
| Car rental | 420 | 1500 | +1080 | We couldn't use our car for the field work, because of the terrain conditions. |
| Lunch | 276 | 0 | +276 | These resource had to be redirected in the budget for the car rental |
| Material for pitfall traps | 100 | 100 | | |
| Expended laboratory | 100 | 150 | +50 | |
| Stereomicroscope | 1400 | 1400 | | We bought different type of stereomicroscope, and for the price differences we took ring light, camera, micrometer and some spare parts. |
| Laptop computer | 400 | 350 | | With the lower price of the computer we were able to buy a printer |
| Multifunction printer | 0 | 50 | | |
| Printing costs | 50 | 50 | | |
| Printing posters and | 300 | 250 | -50 | |
| Total | 5986 | 5986 | | |

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

In my opinion, inventory field work in Serbia should be the most important in the future. My country is poorly explored so this kind of research should be organised every year all over the country. We had to establish what we have, and then to calculate what should be wise to protect.

Lectures and workshops on spider subject are also very important, so I think that beside more field work, it would be very important to organise one pure educational project where such things will be in focus. Maybe, it should to be considering a book publication too, because there is no common Serbian book on spiders' local fauna for a wider audience, only for scientists.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation 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 RF Logo in all oral presentations I gave, and on printing material we made. It will be also used at the poster presentation of the results that we are preparing for Torino Congress.

11. Any other comments?

I would like to express my gratitude to The Rufford Foundation, for give me an opportunity to conduct this project. It was my pleasure, and satisfaction to work under your sponsorship. Biodiversity researches in my country are neglected, so importance of this project is even bigger than it looks like at first glance. The Balkans is one of the most important centres of the European biodiversity and still not explored properly.