

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. 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. 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	Miloš Popović
Project title	Endangered Serbian Butterflies - setting up the tools for conservation
RSG reference	14884-2
Reporting period	May 2014 – May 2015
Amount of grant	£5550
Your email address	gpopac@gmail.com
Date of this report	17 May 2015

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
Butterfly species database			+	Although only an input form was planned we completed a whole website! It allows input, browsing data and insights into species biology and distribution: http://www.habiprot.org.rs/Alciphron In 2014 we broke all the records for the number of records into a database. 2015 started even better with more than 40 persons contributing. A huge success for Serbia! Also, a new species (<i>Pyrgus cinarae</i>) was recorded in the south of the country increasing the number of Serbian butterflies to 199.
Study camp for new members			+	Instead of one study camp, two camps were organised and we agreed to make spring field camp a traditional event.
Grants for surveys of local butterfly fauna			+	This is proved as the best part of the project as the most of people are recruited and trained through the granting system! In total we received 43 written reports from one to five field trips and many additional reports were sent directly into the database. Eight persons used the most of the grants and six of them continued to contribute their data in 2015. In general, more grants were given than we planned but the amount of money requested was lower. People usually asked for grants to cover bus tickets for local travelling. We must note that the quantity of the data gathered this way is very significant and it is quite cheap compared to the targeted field surveys.
Draft on the IUCN Red List		+		We chose not to write the draft of the Red List. Instead we are preparing scientific paper describing methodology and giving preliminary RL status for butterflies on a national level. It is expected to be published by the end of the year.
Monitoring of the threatened butterflies of Serbia			+	This part of the project was a huge success due to good cooperation with the managers of the protected areas that we established since my previous Rufford project. The difficulties arise only due to heavy rains in the spring, thus we were unable to make planned population study on <i>Zerynthia cerisy</i> and map all potential habitats for

				<p><i>Lycaena helle</i>.</p> <p>The monitoring of butterflies on Stara planina resulted in discovery of a new population of <i>Boloria eunomia</i> just under the highest mountain peak in Serbia. In joint effort with the managers of this protected area we prepared a book on butterflies and planned a monitoring scheme to start in 2015-2016.</p> <p>With the help of Butterfly Conservation Europe we completed a large study on the population ecology of <i>Phengaris teleius</i>. Our team marked almost 6000 butterfly individuals in order to get insight in butterfly movements and population size. We are working with the managers of the protected area to establish mowing regimes and long term survival of this species.</p>
Promotion and popularisation			+	<p>All of our members contribute part of their time to project promotion. The most of activities were summarised on our project web page, so take a look at www.habiprot.org.rs/rsg2014</p>

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

The only major difficulty that arose during the project was an unplanned bad weather; thus in the spring we spent more time in the field and achieved almost no results - two expeditions for mapping of *Lycaena helle* population on Stara planina were cancelled after a few days of non-stop rain in the mountains. However, this activities will be achieved in the next seasons and are not something to be worried about.

Another small obstacle was video editing. After a few unsuccessful attempts finding someone to help us we did it ourselves.

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

The most important outcome is the **growing internet database**. It is the most crucial tool that helps us in gathering data for important documents such as red list of butterflies and action plans for threatened species. And we all love it, as it makes our work flow easier! The next important outcome is the **network of people** established in the project period. With all the people included, we are now ready for much bigger tasks and what is more important we made a nice and friendly community involved in insect studies and conservation. The third important outcome is **scientific data gathered** through population studies and targeted field surveys that helps us understand the distribution, ecology and threats of few important species and propose conservation measures.

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

We involved the managers of the protected areas in all project activities and shared our knowledge and data with them. It opened a new possibilities to better conserve and monitor protected areas, but also to present butterflies as important part of their offer for the tourists.

By giving a small grants we encouraged young people to get better insight into their local butterfly fauna and some of them got very enthusiastic! With good promotion and coordination, this can be a good working model for inclusion of local people and we highly recommend it to any similar project.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

The database on itself is never ending project! Tens of moderators are working as volunteers each day to improve it and to confirm data gathered all over Serbia. At the same time we are working on promotion and recruiting more people and hope this project to become self-sustainable soon.

In the next few years we also plan to continue and start a new studies on population ecology of *Zerynthia cerisy*, *Phengaris teleius*, *Colias caucasica balcanica* and other important species. In parallel, the studies on butterfly distribution for an atlas on Serbian butterflies is among the top priorities and should target the areas with severe lack of data.

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

A lot was done already. First we have our forum, mailing list and two Facebook groups (one for insects and one for butterflies only) where the majority of discussion is going on. Our work was shared through t-Shirts, five information boards in the protected areas, three leaflets and a playlist on YouTube that now hosts the first episode of a short documentary on butterflies (others coming in the next few months). Also, there is a page on Serbian Wikipedia with 17 butterfly species out of 199 recorded in Serbia and we hope our members to improve this number. Again, we were on local TV stations and will have a few more radio and TV promotions in the next few weeks. We had many presentations for school children and other public presentations on a few places including one presentation in the Institute for nature Conservation of Serbia. Our research will also be presented to the scientific community and the record of a new butterfly species for Serbia was already published.

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

The grant was spent from May 2015 to May 2015 as planned, although the list of tasks has grown comparing to the original plan and some more time was spent dealing with the bad weather in 2015.

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
Printing 50 T-Shirts	280	280		
Printing 1000 brochures	350	350		Instead of one, three brochures were printed with the financial support from other funds: a planned brochure with the project summary, brochure about <i>Phengaris teleius</i> and one small brochure with common species targeting school children and general public. Shown as the budget lines "Mark-release-recapture study (<i>Phengaris teleius</i>)" and "Web software development".
Construction of two small info boards	110	110		We built additional info boards for <i>Phengaris teleius</i> funded by Butterfly Conservation Europe. Shown as the budget line "Mark-release-recapture study (<i>Phengaris teleius</i>)".
Postal costs and other expenses	300	300		
Video camera	840	840		
Video editing	200	0		In the end we did this part on our own and used the money for additional, unplanned field surveys in 2015 targeting <i>Zerynthia cerisy</i> and <i>Zerynthia polyxena</i> .
Web software development	200	1700	+1500	Difference due to the funding received from the Serbian Ministry, enabling us to create complete website and not only the input form for the data.
Fuel cost of field work (10000 km)	1140	1340		Difference explained under budget line "Video editing".
Food and accommodation	3400	3400		
Travel cost for camp	300	300		
Food for people on the camp	700	700		
50 small grants for volunteers	530	530		
10 Butterfly Field Guides	100	100		
Mark-release-recapture study (<i>Phengaris teleius</i>)	2020	1740	-280	The amount expected and received from external funding differs.
TOTAL	10470	11690	+1220	Current exchange rate is 1 GBP for 165

				RSD. At the beginning of the project 1 GBP was about 140 RSD.
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9. Looking ahead, what do you feel are the important next steps?

The top priority after this project is the completion of the red list of butterflies of Serbia and collecting data for atlas of butterfly distribution in Serbia.

We also plan to work on improving database tools developed during the project and to recruit more people.

As we grow it become important to share the tasks among the team members. We will try to split into smaller working teams in order to get things more efficiently. I see myself as the coordinator of similar projects and dedicating more of my time to pure conservation and science.

We also plan to collaborate more closely to managers of the protected areas and with governmental institution, sharing our knowledge and repairing the erroneous law on strictly protected species.

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?

The Rufford logo was used on t-shirts, videos, info tables, leaflets, presentations, project web site and in the acknowledgement section of our internet database. We always had a small part about Rufford Foundation when presenting project to the general public. Rufford was also acknowledged in scientific papers published from the data gathered during project period.

11. Any other comments?

No other comments, but I will use this few lines to thank Rufford for all the support. You are doing absolutely great job by supporting conservation activities in Serbia, and I know how much it means to me and my friends that also applied for Rufford Small Grants. Thanks to you this was the busiest and most productive year ever for me and my team. And I am sure that all the butterflies of Serbia also send their regards.