

The Rufford Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford 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	Jigme Tshelthrim Wangyal
Project title	A Photographic Guide to the Common Amphibians and Reptiles of Northeast India- a tool to enhance awareness, knowledge and skill for conservation of herpetofauna.
RSG reference	14983-2
Reporting period	Final Report
Amount of grant	£ 6000
Your email address	jigmewangyal@gmail.com
Date of this report	10 th May 2016

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
Production of a colour field guide of amphibians and Reptiles of Northeast India		X		The primary objective of this project is to publish a photographic colour field guide of the common amphibians and reptiles of Bhutan. The guide will be released at least by the end of October 2016. The field guide is considered as a significant addition towards herpetological research and conservation in the region as requested by a number of experts and users. All the field data collection, photography works have been completed. However, the text is under review with the proposed co-author, Dr Indraneil Das, UNIMAS. Once the edition is complete, the book will be officially released and RSG informed accordingly.

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

This project perhaps could be the one which have taken longest time to complete amongst those funded by RSGF. Please take our apologies. We did a lot of field work for the last 2 years and collected as many pictures and data as possible. We never thought we will have such problems of not completing the project in time. First problem we have faced is getting pictures worth publishing and since the primary objective of the project is a photographic guide, the work could not be compromised. Therefore, we could not complete the work in time. Now that we have got good enough collection, we will be publishing the book as soon as the edition is complete.

The second part of the problem is editing the manuscript. Editing has taken longer time than expected because our data got changed as we got new information every now and then. We wrote a few papers on the herpetofauna by using the data collected during the field phase of this project in the first issue of Bhutan Ecological Society Journal in 2014, and presented a poster in the same year for the Society's Annual Research Symposium. Now that we are in the final phase, we expect to finish the job at least by the end of October 2016.

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

Our main outcomes actually are (which will of course be achieved) are:

1. This is going to be the first ever regional colour guide of the amphibians and reptiles in India.

2. This guide will be assisting the forest managers and guards, students and teachers and interested people to enhance their knowledge about amphibians and reptiles and also skill to identify common species.
3. This work has been the first step for the authors towards an enhanced production and edition of field guide to the herpetofauna of the country in near future. The experiences gathered by the authors will be of immense help to writing, producing and distributing a field guide.

However, our main objectives based achievements of the project have been:

- a. Creation of awareness about the species through posters and presentations in workshops and seminars and through the face book page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bhutanherps/> assessable any time. A lot of information about the herpetofauna has been collected through this page and there has been a tremendous awareness created through this page on species identity, venomous or non-venomous species, rare, endangered or least concerned species. Also we presented a poster in the annual seminar of Bhutan Ecological Society in August 2014 where many people gained insight of the taxa. We also presented a status report of the project to the forest officers and the national park managers of Bhutan in 2014 in their National Park Conference on how many species we have, which species are found where and which are venomous. Thus, creating awareness has been achieved more than planned.
- b. We wrote a paper on the status of Herpetofauna of Bhutan for the journal of Bhutan Ecological Society (BES) ensuring the publicity and the promoting the help of RSGF.
- c. A paper titled "The Terpetofauna of Bhutan – An annotated list including list of expected species" has been submitted to the AHR (Asian Herpetological Research Journal), based in China. This is expected to help the professionals and the interested conservationists understand the herpetofauna of Bhutan better.

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

Many people have been involved for this project as planned. Field foresters, nature enthusiasts, students have contributed as well as benefitted from this project.

The field managers are constantly asking for the guide book since it has been made known to them through face book that we are working on such a project. Any new species people see are immediately reported on our face page for identification and to know whether they are venomous or not, whether the species are rare or abundant, etc.. The Facebook web page in fact has done more job than the proposed guide book itself. As of 6th May 2016, the page had 667 using members besides many users sending lots of pictures to know the species they see in the field practically.

More responses are to be seen once the book is published and distributed.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We are the pioneers of Bhutanese herpetology and we have through the support of RSGF produced many herp enthusiasts as the foundation might know as you must have received so many grant applicants to continue work related to herpetology. We know a couple of applicants who wanted

our references and we did that very gladly. It is indeed through RSGF support and because of our web pages, papers and other media that people got motivated and we keep doing that. Today we have many field naturalists, foresters and college students asking many doubts to us through so many media. We thank RSGF for such a great job of funding our small but very important studies. Therefore, there is no question of stopping this work at any point of our life. We might apply for further grants to RSGF at appropriate time and we are hopeful of your support. We assure you that your funds are used in the best possible ways and for the intended purposes. We will continue our work.

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

We keep sharing our work on daily basis through our face book page. Besides that we write papers in local and international journals. Therefore, there are no problems in sharing our information. As the objective of this project is to publish guide book and distribute, we will doing that exactly the way we have planned when we proposed for this project to RSGF.

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

We were supposed to close the project by February 2015 as we were granted a yearlong project period starting March 2014. Unfortunately, the project had to be extended since we could not get good pictures. So, the expenditure time period has to be extended. We still have to spend some grant as we are yet to publish and finalize the proposed pictorial guide. Actually, we have taken more time than the given period by more than a year. However, we are hopeful that we will have the project done by the end of October 2016.

We would like to request RSGF to bear with us at least up to the end of October 2016 so that we are in position to release a simple but peer reviewed pictorial guide book on the common herpetofauna of Bhutan.

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
Subsistence and remuneration to authors	1600	0	1600	Yet to be paid to the authors as the book is not finalised
Travel, Food and Lodging for project staff during production, distribution	800	1200	400	The project extension cost us dearly as our survey and data collection period increased.
Printing	1800	00	1800	Yet to be spent for printing
Photography	700	900		Photographs all obtained but had to spend a bit higher
Book Release Programme and Media Publicity	600	500	100	Publicity already completed. Only book release left
Communication and postage	500	500	00	All communication expenses covered
Total	GBP 6000	3100	3900	

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

Being one of the poorly studied groups, the herpetofauna are least documented in Bhutan. There are good prospects of finding new species of amphibians and reptiles from Bhutan. During the last decade, quite a number of species has been recorded in Bhutan. Therefore, we look forward to learn report and document more of this taxa. However, an immediate step is to ensure that all the edition, printing and publication are complete by October 2016 without fail.

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, on several occasion we used the Rufford Foundation logo. The first time it was used was for the poster presentation competition held by Bhutan Ecological Society an NGO based in Thimphu of which we are members (Figure 1). Publicity of the foundation was also ensured when presentations were made at various institutes like College of Natural Resources, Bhutan, National Park Conference (Figure 2), face book (Figure 3), etc..



Figure 1: Poster presented at the annual BES seminar, Thimphu.

Source of fund



Annual Park Conference 2014, Thimphu for DoFPS

Figure 2. A slide of a presentation showing the grantee for the studies

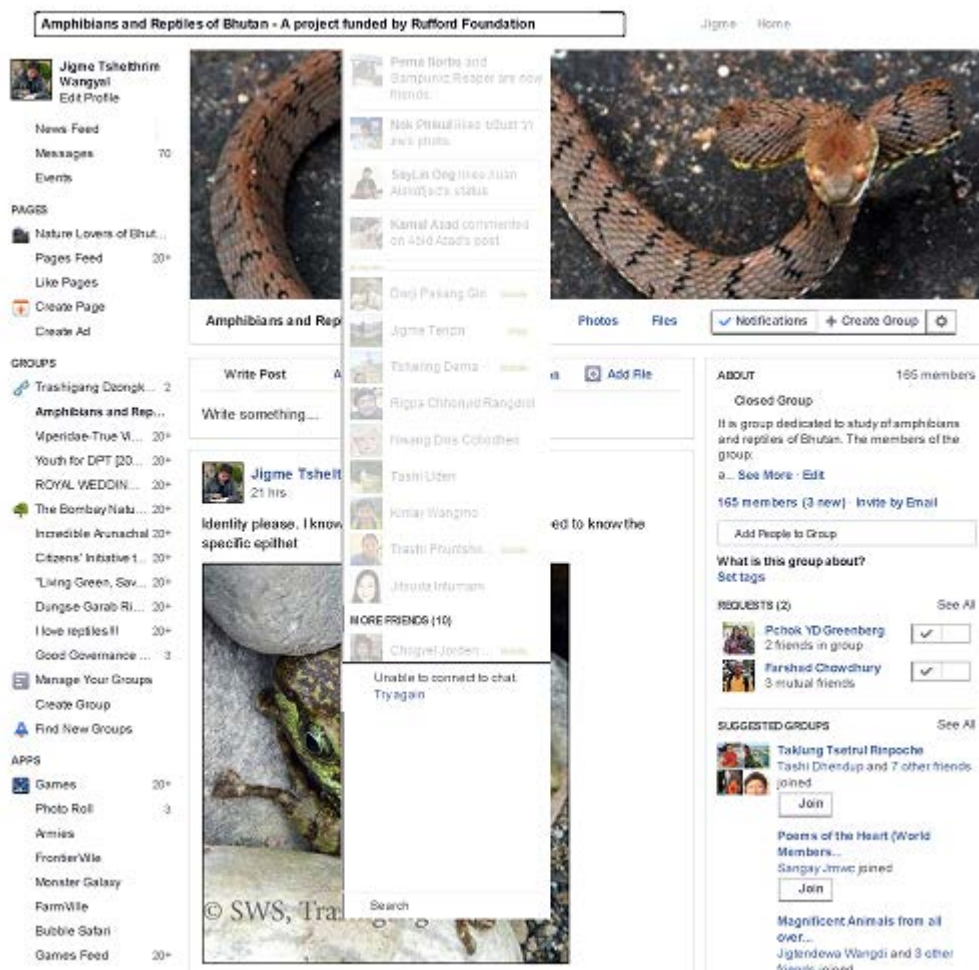


Figure 3. A shot of face book page of the amphibians and reptile project

The logo will be prominently used in the guide book that is to be produced by October 2016.

11. Any other comments?

We don't think we could have collected so much data without the support of the RSGF and we are sure we have written no papers without the funds. Likewise, we believe that RSGF is doing more than many other famous funding agents like WWF, Nature Conservation Society, etc. are doing. We really appreciate the role the Rufford Small Gants Foundation is playing in nature conservation around the world. The support provided to us has helped in establishing herpetological diversity data in the country by assisting publication of the field guide. We believe it is a big step forward towards awareness and long term conservation of herpetofauna in Bhutan.

