

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	Melina Alicia Velasco
Project title	Conserving the endangered Laguna-Raimunda Frog (<i>Atelognathus reverberii</i>), endemic from northern patagonian steppe, Argentina
RSG reference	15110-1
Reporting period	Final report
Amount of grant	£5,800
Your email address	mellazuli@hotmail.com
Date of this report	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
Distributional range and conservation status of the species updated		X		Distributional range: we modelled the distribution for the species, but models were not enough good as we wanted. We must keep working on this objective to get better models for the species. Conservation status: We successfully gathered the needed information to update the conservation status of the species.
Knowledge about habitat requirements increased		X		Although we successfully described the habitat used by the species, we failed to find a statistically significance between the variables studied and the occurrence of the species. We must keep working on this objective by measuring new habitat variables.
Knowledge about effect of threats increased		X		Although we successfully recorded the occurrence of several threats on the frog's habitat (including two new threats, never described before), we failed to find a statistically significance between threats and the occurrence of frogs. We must keep working on this objective.
Artificial ponds created in order to develop "natural sanctuaries" for the frogs			X	We successfully created the two sanctuaries for Somuncura frog at two key sites of the plateau.
Local community and tourist promote the conservation of this species and its habitats.			X	We have successfully spread information regarding the problematic of this species and its habitat among local community. We engaged local people and encouraged them to promote the conservation of Somuncura frog.

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

We do not face unforeseen difficulties during our work. We only failed in answering some questions formulated in the frame of this project, since we do not found statistically significance in three studies performed with the aim of better explaining the occupancy of the Somuncura Frog along the plateau.

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

- 1) New threats recorded at the area. Two new threats were recorded for the species (that were unknown in the past). Since these threats are now known, they can be considered in current conservation action plans.
- 2) Artificial ponds created in order to develop “natural sanctuaries” for the frogs. We successfully created two “sanctuaries” where frogs can use for reproduction. These habitats are free of threats and they are full of water all year around, avoiding unusual droughts (that are most common in the area since the past 10 years).
- 3) Local community and tourist promotes the conservation of this species and its habitats. We have successfully spread information about the problematic of this species among local community. We engaged lot of people and encouraged them to actively protect this species. There was a significant change in the people, who did not know the species before our project.

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

As part of the creation of the sanctuaries, we leave a water pump in hands of the local farmers. By this way, local farmers can take water from a water wells for their own use and, at the same time, they can fill the pond created for the frogs (in case of drought). This activity was aimed at creating a feeling of empathy between local farmers and frogs. Having a new habitat for reproduction, free of threats, benefited the frogs and local farmers received a water pump that helps them to acquire water for their own use. In this way, farmers and frogs were benefitted, and this action allowed the promotion of the conservation of this species and its habitats by local people.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, we plan to continue working with the aim to protect this frog and its habitat. We plan to apply for a second RSG to continue with this project.

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

We already shared lot of the results of this work through our own website <https://www.facebook.com/EstepaSalvaje?ref=bookmarks>, and by Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6YOllGelmdY>. We also have written some manuscripts that are currently reviewed. We leave some educational material at the Valcheta Museum. In the Future we plan to continue sharing educational material framed on this project by several ways, including the ones described before.

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 around a year. This was similar 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
Lodging and food	1,200	900	300	We not needed money for lodging since we spent the field time in tents. We decided to reallocate this extra money in travels (which were more expensive that we thought).
Field equipment	200	200		No comments
Educational material	400	400		No comments
Educational Campaign	600	600		No comments
Creation of water wells	3,400	3,700	300	Besides costs of materials (water pumps and accessories), we included here costs related to the trips to the area.
				We had some extra expenditures not included in this budget
TOTAL	5,800	5,800		

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

We plan to continue working in this project. The second step will include:

1. The creation of two new sanctuaries at two key sites of the Somuncura plateau.
2. The continuation of the scientific studies to assess main causes affecting occupancy of this frog.
3. The improvement and fencing of current water wells at several sites along the plateau in order to impede the higher mortality caused by them.
4. The continuation of awareness raising activities among local community and beyond.

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?

We use the RSGF logo in some posters and stickers. We also cited RSGF as one of the main supports, in the written manuscripts that were sent to publication at peer reviewed journals.

11. Any other comments?

We have written a report that was sent together with the current form.