

## 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

---

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Amar Kunwar
Project title	Habitat Assessment, Conflict Evaluation and Conservation Awareness of Blackbuck <i>Antelope cervicapra</i> in Blackbuck Conservation area, Bardiya, Nepal
RSG reference	15898-1
Reporting period	September 2015
Amount of grant	4722
Your email address	<a href="mailto:amar.kwr@gmail.com">amar.kwr@gmail.com</a>
Date of this report	November 28, 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
Predicting Suitable habitat for Blackbuck in Nepal			✓	Ecologically suitable habitats for increasing number of blackbuck were identified in Nepal and habitat suitability map was developed.
Blackbuck-People conflict Assessment			✓	Distribution of major conflicting zones, types of conflicts, intensity, causes and effects of conflicts were determined.
Building public support and conservation awareness programs			✓	Various activities like, strengthening Youth Conservation Groups, Conservation awareness activities, inter-school quiz, arts and essay competitions, preparation of brochures, leaflets and factsheets, Hoarding boards and banners installation and radio programme were conducted.

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

I did not find any difficulties while implementing the project. Local people and conservation area officials helped in whatever way they could.

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

The distribution probability of the species has predicted very few suitable habitats, discontinuous and only in the Tarai of Nepal. Most of the suitable habitats occurred outside the protected areas. Suitable habitat mostly occurred in and around Blackbuck Conservation Area, around Bansgadi of Bardiya and south of it towards border of India. Areas around Gulariya Municipality, Gangapur Jamun, Shivanagar and Mainapokhar to Khairi are predicted as highly suitable habitats. In Kanchanpur, grassland between Rani taal and Chaudhara river inside Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve and Chandani Dodhara VDCs on the other side of Mahakali river towards border of India are moderately favourable. Our analysis did not predict Hirapur phanta to be suitable for blackbuck, where blackbuck are translocated by the Government to be suitable for blackbuck. In Banke district, Khajura, Bhoj Bhagwanpur and floodplains of Rapti at the south of the district are predicted to be suitable for the species.

Blackbuck raid almost all the croplands inside the conservation area and to some extent around the CA boundary. Pachaskhalla, Pataha and Turantpur were most affected by the activities of

Blackbucks. While outside the CA, Bhagartaal and Nimkothia were most raided villages by this species. There was a total crop loss of 58883 kg by weight and a total economic loss of Rs. 2046779 per annum. The government has not provided any compensation for the victim till date. Increased number of blackbuck, food and water scarcity, search of palatable food by the blackbuck and fodder harvest by humans are the major causes of conflicts. Blackbuck mostly raid during the nights. Shouting and using noise making tools as clappers and drums, scaring devices like scarecrow, guarding during nights, using fire, kerosene lamps and electric lights in the fields and throwing stones are mostly used techniques by the people to minimize crop raid. Humans, on the other hand illegally graze livestock, collect firewood, grass and other forest products, and use the habitat of blackbuck as road and ride bicycles and motorcycles as means of transportation inside the CA.

Blackbuck conservation awareness through various activities increases the knowledge about the importance of this species and biodiversity and also increased interest in their involvement in conservation. The distribution of posters, brochures and leaflets to government officials, public and students was found effective in conservation. Important speech on conservation importance of blackbuck and other biodiversity from the member of constituent assembly, Chief district officer, Local development officer and other renowned persons in blackbuck festival 2015 was very effective. Awarding "Letter of Appreciation" to staff of Blackbuck Conservation Area, army officers and youth for their crucial work in conservation was of extreme importance. Installation of hoarding boards containing information about ecology of blackbuck, our role in biodiversity conservation, conservation status of blackbuck, and rules on what to do and what not to do inside conservation area, information on carrot grass *Parthenium hysterophorus* plant and complications due to its invasion in habitat of blackbuck was important step in conservation. Furthermore, 24 episodes of radio programme for conservation were very effective. Happy involvement of public in the project activities, discussion with elderly and experienced adults, youths and teachers played crucial role in successful completion of these project objectives.

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

Although people living inside the conservation area are suffering from government pressure to move away to new place for settlement, their crop is raided causing major loss in crop yield, but local people are very friendly, cooperative and have positive attitude towards blackbuck. People now understood the ecological value of this species as well as the biodiversity, how they can be benefitted through ecotourism and sustainable use of the available natural resources. Activities involving students developed their attitudes towards the conservation necessity of this species.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

We still lack detailed information on its ecology and behaviour, population genetics and diseases, which are crucial for critically endangered mammal. So it is necessary to continue the project.

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

The detailed report will be submitted to Department of National Parks and wildlife conservation of Nepal. The results will be presented in seminars and conferences. The results will be published in international peer-reviewed journals.

**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 RF grant was anticipated for 15 months. It took longer to accomplish the project than anticipated time period. Preparations and first two field visits were done in time but third visit was delayed due to earthquake in Nepal. Except installation of already prepared hoarding boards and banners in the study area, all other objectives of the projects are successfully completed. Due to strike in lowland Tarai of Nepal by “Madhesi” and blockade imposed by India, hoarding boards and banners are locked where they are prepared. They will be soon installed as planned and responsibility to install is given to Blackbuck Conservation Area, Bardiya.

**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
Team Orientation	84	84		
GPS & Projector hire + Compass purchase	260	260		
Stationary and communication + GIS layer purchase	193	193		
Travel to field from Kathmandu@3 person 4 round trip	244	244		
Lodging and food for PI and assistants	1423	1423		
Subsistence payment for local assistant, Supervisor and analysis expert.	631	631		
YCGs and Blackbuck Conservation specialist Group formation and discussions	55	55		
Workshop and Rally	310	310		The amount estimated for workshop and rally was spent in Blackbuck Festival 2015. Speech from members of house of representatives/Gon, Chief districts Officer, Local development Officer and other intellects as well as honouring people who played significant role in blackbuck conservation was found to be more effective.
Brochures, Leaflets and Posters publication	160	160		
Publication of Drawings, essays and progress reports in local Newspapers	178	0	+178	Local newspapers published drawings, essays and project progress free of cost.

Prize for winners of Drawing, Quiz and Essay competition.	123	275	-152	Local newspapers published drawings, essays and project progress free of cost. We estimated prize for nine students but 21 students were awarded with prizes. Hence £152 of £178 was spent for prizes and rest £26 for banners.
Hoarding Boards and Banners installation	464	490	-26	Local newspapers published drawings, essays and project progress report free of cost. Hence £26 of £178 was spent for banners. Banners installation was not proposed in RSG application.
Radio Program	474	513	-39	Radio programme was found costly than estimated. The £39 was managed from report preparation cost.
Report preparation and submission	123	84	+39	Report was prepared with cost of only £84.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4722</b>	<b>4722</b>	<b>00</b>	

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

More specific studies regarding its ecology, behaviour, genetics and conservation are necessary.

**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?**

I used the RSGF logo in all posters, leaflets and brochures published and distributed. Also, RSGF logo was used in hoarding boards and banners. The logo was printed in the certificates awarded to honour people dedicating their vital roles in conservation. The certificates awarded to prize winning students also contained the logo. Every material associated with this project contained RSGF logo. Furthermore, every episode of radio programme broadcasted short information about the Rufford Foundation. Every event conducted mentioned that the programmes were on behalf of the Rufford Foundation, U.K.

**11. Any other comments?**

The project was successful. I am grateful to the Rufford Foundation for aiding in conservation of critically endangered blackbuck in Nepal.