

# The Rufford Foundation

## Final Report

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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**

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Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Gordana Grbic
Project title	Subotica spiders - research and conservation of spiders living in the Subotica Sandlands
RSG reference	Dr László Barsi (Serbia); Dr Peter Jäger (Germany); MSc Christoph Hörweg (Austria)
Reporting period	April 2015 / April 2014
Amount of grant	£5000
Your email address	gordana_grbicns@yahoo.com
Date of this report	12.05.2016.

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
First inventory list of species for the area			x	Pure faunistic researches in Serbia have very important significance. The investigated area was a totally unexplored so this was very important first inventory list of species. And of course, with every little project total number of Serbian recorded species increases. In this project we recorded 14 spider species new for Serbia.
Proposal of a future monitoring plan			x	The management of the area actively participated in all our activities. They even accepted few suggestions from our monitoring plan that could be covered by their current budget. We also made an arrangement to expand our collaboration and research on another habitat. They saw some benefits of our work and attend to support future research in this area.
Training of young researchers		x		As it was in previous Rufford project, students were partially interesting to work with spiders. More interest they showed in the field activities than in laboratory. They highlighted one big problem as a reason for withdrawal from research: lack of literature in Serbian language. Again, only one student stayed till the end of the project, and got the idea what he will do for his future diploma thesis.
Promotion of spiders through schoolchildren workshops			x	Children are the best group to work with. They were very cooperative, and active. In one school they made three posters about spiders, so this is a special record. We got an open invitation to come again.
Promotion spiders through media (television broadcasting)			x	We successfully overcome the problem to get an intention from the media. We manage to get an interview of 50 minutes duration. It was first broadcast

				on local TV station, and then uploaded on YouTube. This was the first TV issue dedicated only to spiders. Till this day this link was seen by 316 people.
Spider website in Serbian language			x	Nothing defines or builds some brand like a website does. The Spiders of Serbia as a brand needs to be built, so we made first website about spiders on Serbian language. <a href="http://www.paukovisrbije.com">www.paukovisrbije.com</a> It is for children, amateurs and professionals. First impressions are positive but it will develop in future and stay alive.
Publication of the results		x		The results of this research were presented at the 29 <sup>th</sup> European Congress of Arachnology in Brno, Czech Republic in September 2015. They were accepted very well. Our results contribute wider appreciation of biodiversity in the Serbia and Europe.

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

This time we didn't have any difficulties that influenced our work.

**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) sharing knowledge with children and students and (3) design and develop a first website about spiders on Serbian language.

**Inventory list:** the Subotica Sandland protected area is situated close to Hungarian border and it is rich in biodiversity but unexplored when we talk about spiders. Beside the first result for the investigated area we recorded 14 spider species new for Serbia. Our work contributes biodiversity knowledge in Serbia and in Europe. Furthermore, based on inventory list, we also made initial recommendations towards a monitoring plan and this represent another example of the link between scientific information and its practical usages.

**Sharing knowledge:** sharing knowledge with students in the field and enabling them to become independent is crucial; this is a very slow process but we expect that over the years number of people involved in arachnology will raise; sharing knowledge with schoolchildren was the most successful sharing; we certainly create interesting and friendly surroundings for not so popular group of animals;

**Website:** is created to overcome the lack of literature about spiders in Serbian language and to create a friendly surroundings for unpopular animal group to wide audience; at this media you could find information about species, activities and

people that work with spiders in Serbia; it contains scientific facts and popular stories from our country that was not possible to see before. There are a lot of original photos of species, fieldwork and laboratory work. First feedback is good so we will keep it alive and active. See [www.paukovisrbije.com](http://www.paukovisrbije.com).

**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?**

Yes, based on the two main reasons: the Subotica Sandlands is still unexplored and the management of protected area The Public Company "Palić-Ludaš" is open to new idea in environmental protection.

Our inventory list of species in this project covered just a small part of very untypical wetland in the heart of the sandlands. So it is our duty to continue at some typical habitats so we could give a comprehensive list of species and get insight what is going on with spider biodiversity at this area.

The Public Company "Palić-Ludaš" wants to be up to date with innovations, so our monitoring plan based on spider fauna, as innovation here, was very well accepted. At the moment, few suggestions will be applied, ones that could be covered by their current budget. They actively participated in all our activities. They saw some benefits of our work and attend to support our future research in this area.

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

Preliminary results were presented as poster at The 29<sup>th</sup> European Congress of Arachnology in Brno, Czech Republic in September 2015. They were very well accepted and that was also a scientific verification of our findings. We also deliver that list of species to the management of the protected area and that is The Public Company "Palić-Ludaš". Now they have an insight what species lives at Subotica Sandlands. We also send a copy of the list to the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection of Serbia, so it could be officially added to a national database.

The manuscript will be submitted next year in some previewed arachnological journal, because more results will be added then. After the manuscript publication the result will be input in the Serbian biodiversity database, as well as to other trans-national databases such as 'Fauna Europea'.

And of course, the reference collection are deposited at Educons University and in Nature Museum in Basel (Switzerland) so everyone who will shows 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 April 2015 to April 2016. 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	560	560	0	
Wages for laboratory work	560	560	0	
Car rental	1450	1450	0	
Fuel	640	640	0	
Material for pitfall traps	150	200	-50	We decided not to print posters since we will continue our research, and because we choose untypical habitat for this preliminary research. The species for the poster will not be the best choice to present the Subotica Sandlands. Money was invested in laboratory material, traps and website.
Expended laboratory material	250	300	-50	
Printing posters	250	0	+250	
Website	1140	1290	-150	
<b>Total</b>	5000	5000	0	

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

In my opinion, inventory field work and intensive promotion of spiders are equally important steps for the future. Serbia is unexplored properly and spiders are still unpopular group of animal. Faster progress we have in our inventory work than in education and promotion. The list of Serbian spider species grows fast with every project, but our team grows slowly. Equally, in first and second Rufford Small Grant projects, we had several students interested in fieldwork but only one stayed till the end of the project.

During our conversations with students we establish two potential problems of that slow growth: lack of students' literatures on Serbian language and working collections of spiders. So if we want to attract some more people in our team, we have to make/translate some book about spider in Serbian language, then perhaps

to publish some field guide and to deposit some work spider collection at the museum or institute of Nature Protection that could be used in future as teaching tools. Perhaps, it would be useful to organise some training course of determination, training camps ones or twice a year.

Promotion of spiders in previous project was organised though workshops and lectures, but it has to be expended to perhaps art competitions, or clay models exhibitions on the biodiversity day, costume ball, and other not specific way of promotion so it could be create more friendly surroundings for not so popular group of animals.

**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 workshop presentations. It was also used at the poster presentation at Arachnology Congress in Czech Republic.

On the spiders site [www.paukovisrbije.com](http://www.paukovisrbije.com) there is a logo of RSGF and links to my project, and RSGF home page.

**11. Any other comments?**

I would like to express my gratitude to The Rufford Foundation, which gives me an opportunity to conduct a project. It was my pleasure, and satisfaction to work under your sponsorship again. Biodiversity research in my country is 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 but still not explored properly and spiders are discriminated group of animals that need a special attention.





