

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	Priti Hebbar
Project title	Ecological assessment and Conservation Education on amphibians from Kodagu region of Western Ghats, India
RSG reference	22412-1
Reporting period	1-6-2017 to 31-5-2018
Amount of grant	5000£
Your email address	priti.gururaj@atree.org , priti.hebbar@gmail.com
Date of this report	23-08-2018

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
Determine species composition of frogs in two private forests and understand habitat use of each species.				A total of 30 species and 238 individuals were found in both the private forests. Seven species from Kaloor and 23 species from Honey Valley were recorded. In Kaloor the endemic <i>Nyctibatrachus kempholeyensis</i> was the most frequent species encountered in the streams while <i>Micrixalus elegans</i> and <i>Minervarya mudduraja</i> were the most frequently encountered stream amphibians in Honey Valley.
Undertake Amphibian trails in Private forests				Amphibian trail was organised in Honey Valley. There were a total of five trails and 42 participants. We could not carry out amphibian trails in Kaloor as mentioned in objective as the landscape was challenging and difficult to access.
Build Batracharium in Honey valley Homestay and develop frog handouts from both private forests.				We had proposed to build a batracharium (watching frogs in situ) at Honey Valley field site by putting up frog poster in the field site. After consulting with the owner of Honey Valley, we decided to modify the batracharium in the form of a guide that explains where to watch frogs, how to identify the frogs, the different kinds of the frogs and toads to watch for and ethical issues to consider while going out in the field. We have developed an interactive handout for frog watching for school kids and plan to distribute them in nearby schools of Kaloor and Honey Valley. We have also designed frog stickers, which have been named as Think frog. This is to motivate people to overcome their inhibition about amphibians and appreciate their diversity and beauty.

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

Fieldwork in Kaloor was challenging as the place is close to Pushpagiri Wildlife Sanctuary and is frequented by elephants mostly during dusk. Hence few times fieldwork was carried out in the day. Also the field site had to bypass a forest security check-post where sometimes we had to wait for hours to gain entry as the forest guards used to go for rounds and the check-post remained closed in their absence.

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

1. We determined the composition of frogs in two private forests (Kaloor and Honey Valley) and also encountered potentially new species, which we are in a process of description.
2. We carried out amphibian trails in Honey Valley private forest where participants were shown the diversity of amphibians. They were taught how to identify, ethically handle and document amphibians.
3. We made a batracharium of Honey Valley private forest in the form of a guide where there are details on how to watch frogs, where to watch, the different kinds of frogs and toads to watch in Honey Valley and ethical guidelines to follow while going out in the field. An interactive handout for frog watching and stickers (think frog logo) has also been designed.

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

At Kaloor, local people who were familiar with the landscape were hired for field work. They helped in sampling amphibians. We showed them how to identify and handle frogs. In Honey Valley, the owner and the staff were briefed about the amphibian diversity in honey valley through short walks in the field. They were very much excited about the diversity of amphibians in their homestay. One of the staff at Honey Valley actively participates in frog watch and also accompanies the visitors to show amphibians. The batracharium guide of Honey Valley was well received by the owner and the staff of Honey Valley and is used by visitors of the home stay for exploring the amphibian diversity of Honey Valley

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes. We are planning a long term monitoring in Honey Valley and Kaloor. We aim to study community ecology and behaviour of some of the amphibians in the both field sites.

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

The ecological assessment study will be published in peer review journals. I am also writing a popular article on my field experiences in Coorg.

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 money was used from June 2017 to June 2018.

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.

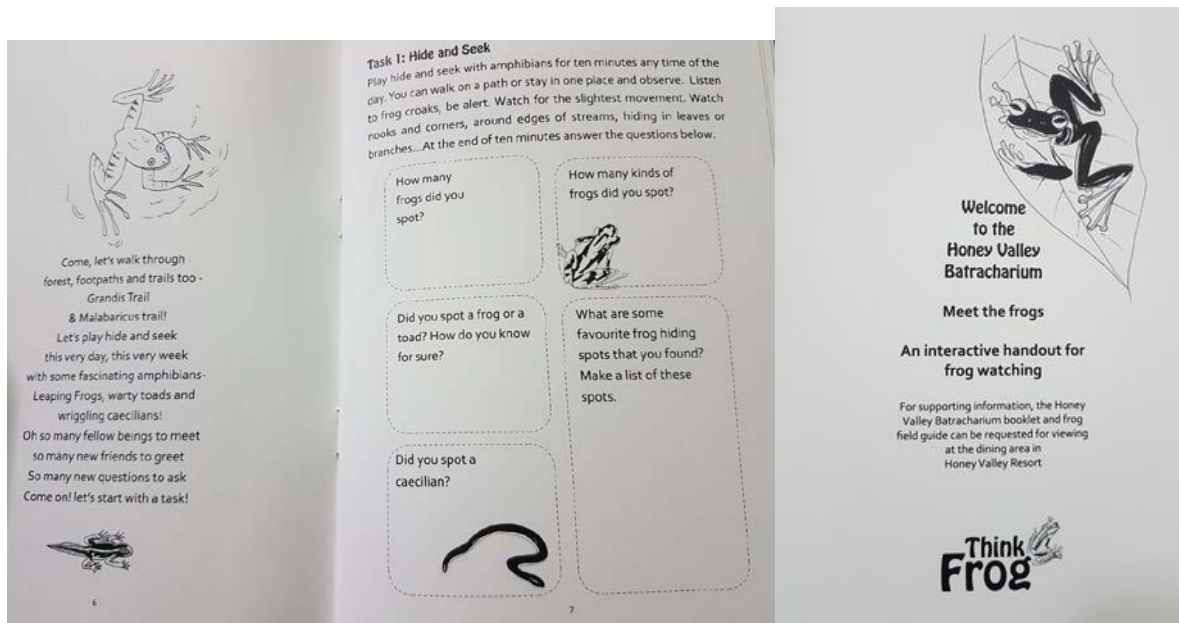
Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Transport	886	273	+613	The cost of transport was lower than the budgeted cost
Food	960	162	+798	For two field visits, food was arranged for free.
Accommodation	1440	142	+1298	For two field visits, accommodation was not charged.
Equipment: Camera	370	409	-39	The cost included camera, waterproof bag and additional batteries
Field Assistant charges	280	240	+40	
Camping equipment(rainwear, torches, bags)	40	40	0	Fully spent
Lab consumables	100	100	0	Fully spent
Outsourcing	200	200	0	Fully spent
Printing charges	650	688	-38	The money was used for printing batrachium guide, frog handouts and stickers.

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

There is tremendous diversity of amphibians in the two private forests. It will be important to have long term ecological research initiatives in these forests to gain better understanding about their diversity and distribution. As Coorg region is under threat due to developmental activities, more studies on rich biodiversity of Coorg and conservation efforts are needed from this region. Just this August, one of the field sites (Kaloor) was devastated due to heavy rain and landslides. It will have repercussions on the ecology and landscape of Coorg. We will continue with our amphibian work in both the field sites by focusing on the species diversity, community ecology and behavioural studies.

10. Did you use The Rufford Foundation logo in any materials produced in relation to this project? Did The Rufford Foundation receive any publicity during the course of your work?

Yes the logo was used in the Batracharium guide and frog activity handouts.





11. Please provide a full list of all the members of your team and briefly what was their role in the project.

Dr Gururaja: He helped in the field in identifying and sampling amphibians. He also helped in undertaking the amphibian trails in Honey valley and took part in designing the batracharium.

Madhushree Mudke: She helped in the field in sampling amphibians. She also helped in interacting with the local staff in Honey valley and Kaloorestate.

12. Any other comments?

We are grateful to the Rufford Foundation for this grant. Through this grant we were able to explore the rich amphibian diversity of Coorg and communicate the amphibian richness with local staff of the two private forests. We hope that through the batracharium guide, frog activity handouts and stickers more people are inspired to appreciate amphibians and conserve them.