

Final Project Evaluation Report

We ask all grant recipients to complete a project evaluation that helps us to gauge the success of your project. This must be sent in **MS Word and not PDF 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 – remember that negative experiences are just as valuable as positive ones if they help others to learn from them.

Complete the form in English and be as concise as you can. Note that the information may be edited before posting on our website.

Please email this report to jane@rufford.org.

Your Details	
Full Name	Nika Paposhvili
Project Title	Conservation of Velvet Scoter on Tabatskuri Lake in Georgia
Application ID	22452-1
Grant Amount	£5000
Email Address	Birder_nik@yahoo.com nika.paposhvili.1@iliauni.edu.ge
Date of this Report	27.12.2017

1. 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 exact population size of Velvet Scoter and assessment of threats.				<p>After extensive search, no velvet scoter was detected out of Tabatskuri Lake. Based on our observation there are no more than 15 pairs of velvet scoter on Tabatskuri Lake. The main threats to the population of velvet scoter in Tabatskuri Lake based on interviewing locals (See Table 1) and field observations were determined as: 1. Loss of breeding habitat; 2. Disturbance and destroying the nests; 3. Pollution; 4. Drowning in fishing nets; 5. Hunting. In addition, Armenian gull represents strong competitor in breeding sites which is one of the limiting factors of increase of velvet scoter population.</p>
Determine and map the population range and range size variation within a year.				<p>We conducted regular monitoring (every week) on Tabatskuri lake and collected data. Based on our observations, velvet scoters' distribution covers the northern part of the lake near the small island, which is used for breeding (See Map 1). We assumed that the high number of velvet scoters (See Table N2 and Diagram N1) in the beginning of the project could be caused by following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is possible that they were part of the Tabatskuri population, but because of the unsuccessful nesting, which could be caused by high competition with the gulls and destruction of the nests (locals collect the eggs on the island), they left the lake in order to look for another place. 2. It is also possible that they belonged to the Turkish population, which stopped on Tabatskuri lake before

				returning to Turkey.
Determine the exact location and characteristics of breeding sites and assess breeding success.				We detected breeding place – the island. We started counting after hatching period (in order to avoid factors such as: disturbance or nestlings damage) and we found six nests of velvet scoter and counted hatched/rooted eggs (See Table 3) and determined breeding success which is low - fledging maximum two ducklings per nest (See Table 4).
Deliver the information on The Velvet Scoter to the community/stakeholders.				During the project we have actively worked with the local community, non-governmental and governmental organisations in order to raise knowledge on the velvet scoter and the threats facing its population. We prepared and printed informational booklets, posters, stickers, t-shirts, clocks, caps and notebooks with the logo of velvet scoter and distributed it in local communities, students and administration of protected area. Also, we set up three informational poster boards near Tabatskuri Lake.

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

At the beginning it was difficult to conduct a survey among the local communities, because they avoided answering the questions. Then we asked the local resident (who became one of our volunteers) to help us conduct the survey and it solved our problem.

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

The important outcomes of the project are:

- a) For the first time, the population size, distribution, breeding place and threats to velvet scoter population is known for Georgian population.
- b) The representatives of governmental structures and protected area supported the project. Additional ranger was appointed in Ktsia-Tabatskuri Managed Reserve to control the illegal activities and reduce the threats to velvet scoter.

- c) The locals and students have been actively involved in various activities of the project. Out of five volunteers, two were locals – a ranger from protected area and fisherman from village Tabatskuri. Both of them have been very helpful during collaborating with locals/fishermen and promoting the reduction of existing threats velvet scoter.

4. Briefly describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.

The locals have been actively involved in various activities of the project. Out of five volunteers, two were locals. They have participated in monitoring and data collecting. Now, one of them became ranger of Ktsia-Tabatskuri Managed Reserve and we hope he will control the illegal activities and reduce the threats to velvet scoter. Except volunteers, seven locals were involved to set up banners and were rewarded by us for their services. In local schools we distributed brochures, notebooks and pens (with velvet scoter logo) for schoolchildren. School students were able to get acquainted with the methods of monitoring and participated in bird counting. In addition, we also handed the school a clock (with velvet scoter logo) for the teacher's common room.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

We are planning to write a new project proposal in order to continue monitoring of velvet scoter on Tabatskuri Lake and cooperation with stakeholders to reduce the threats.

We are going to set up trail camera to observe the island and to use GPS tracking technology in future to detect a wintering place. 2-3 years data will give us an opportunity to determine variation of population range within the years and tendency of the population.

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

We organised workshop for stakeholders, Georgian ornithologists and scientists. We told them about our project and its results and received advices and recommendations for future activities.

We had presentation at American Academy in Tbilisi for students, where we spoke about various birds and their role in the nature.

In order to spread the information widely, we used social media:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1017103611652484/permalink/1770962679599903/>

We added information about velvet scoter on the following webpage:
<http://biodiversity-georgia.net/index.php?taxon=Melanitta%20fusca>

I plan to present the poster with the results of this project (in case I receive the funding) at 18th Conference of Goose Specialist Group, which will be held on 27-30 March 2018 in Klaipeda University, Lithuania.

Currently, I am preparing scientific paper for publication in international peer-reviewed journal.

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

Grant provided by The Rufford Small Grants Foundation was used in period of July 2017 to the end of December 2017. All activities have been implemented in accordance with the original work plan.

8. Budget: 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. It is important that you retain the management accounts and all paid invoices relating to the project for at least 2 years as these may be required for inspection at our discretion. 1 GBP = 3.15 GEL (At the time of funding)

Item	Budgeted Amount £	Actual Amount £	Difference £	Comments
3 Binoculars for team members	400	400	0	
Spotting scope with tripod	1000	575	+425	The remaining amount was shifted to the Fuel, Food and Camping equipment budget line
Photographic equipment	800	800	0	
Laptop	265	265	-0	
Car hire	1000	1000	0	
Fuel for car	555	650	-95	The price of fuel has increased due to devaluation of money and difference was added from Spotting scope budget line
Food for team members	800	1040	-240	More volunteers were involved in the project as it was planned and the remaining amount was added from Spotting scope budget line
Camping equipment	180	270	-90	We bought one extra tent for volunteers and the remaining amount was added from Spotting scope budget line
Total	5000	5000		

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

According to our results, the population of Tabatskuri Lake is very small and the nesting success is low. For these reasons, it is important to implement conservational actions in order to reduce the threats effecting the population, otherwise the population will face a serious danger of extinction.

Additionally, it is crucial to evaluate the isolated Black Sea population (which covers Georgia and Turkey) and conduct genetic analysis, to confirm the fact that Black Sea population is indeed isolated from northern population.

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

The Rufford Foundation logo was used in printed informational booklets, informational poster boards, t-shirts, notebooks and presentations.

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

Nika Paposhvili (team leader): PhD student at Ilia State University, Faculty of Life Sciences.

Duties: Field-worker, Community worker, Education expert, Data analysis and report writing.

Niko Kerdikoshvili: Master in Ecology, Ilia State University.

Duties: Field-worker, Community worker, Education expert.

Marina Piduashvili: Private (Business) Masters of Laws student at Ilia State University.

Duties: Community worker. She helps us to communicate with local ethnic Armenian communities and with relations and cooperation with Ministry and NGOs.

12. Any other comments?

I would like to thank the Rufford Fund Small Grants Foundation for the support of the project. Further gratitude goes to my team members and volunteers actively involved in conducting educational activities, monitoring and other activities. We'd like to thank CLP for funding this project and Opticron for gifting binoculars to our volunteers. Also, we highly appreciate the help, support and advices from Ilia State University scientists Levan Mumladze, Zurab Javakhishvili and Mariam Gabelaia; Georgian Non-governmental organization "Psovi" and Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia.

Appendices

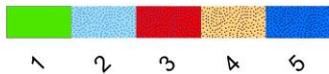
Table N1
Questionnaire with responses

N	Age	Gender	Village	Do you like hunting / fishing?	Is there hunting / fishing on Tabatskuri Lake?	Do the people collect bird eggs on the island?	Have you seen / heard trapping duck in fishing net?	Have you seen Velvet Scoter?	Do you know that Velvet Scoter is only breeding on the Tabatskuri lake in Georgia?
1	43	M	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	Rarely	Yes	No	No
2	37	F	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	Rarely	No	No	No
3	60	M	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	Rarely	Yes	No	No
4	22	M	Tabatskuri	Yes	Yes	Rarely	Yes	Yes	No
5	23	M	Tabatskuri	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
6	30	F	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
7	54	F	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	Rarely	Yes	No	No
8	49	F	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
9	29	M	Baraleti	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
10	44	M	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
11	45	M	Chikharua	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
12	16	M	Tabatskuri	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
13	15	M	Tabatskuri	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
14	23	M	Tabatskuri	No	Rarely	No	No	No	No
15	45	M	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
16	40	M	Moliti	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
17	28	M	Moliti	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
18	29	M	Moliti	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
19	29	M	Moliti	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
20	30	M	Moliti	No	Rarely	No	No	No	No
21	35	M	Chikharua	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
22	58	M	Tabatskuri	No	Rarely	Rarely	Yes	Yes	No
23	48	M	Tabatskuri	Yes	Yes	Rarely	Yes	Yes	No
24	29	M	Balanta	No	Yes	Rarely	Yes	No	No
25	31	M	Balanta	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
26	27	M	Chikharua	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No

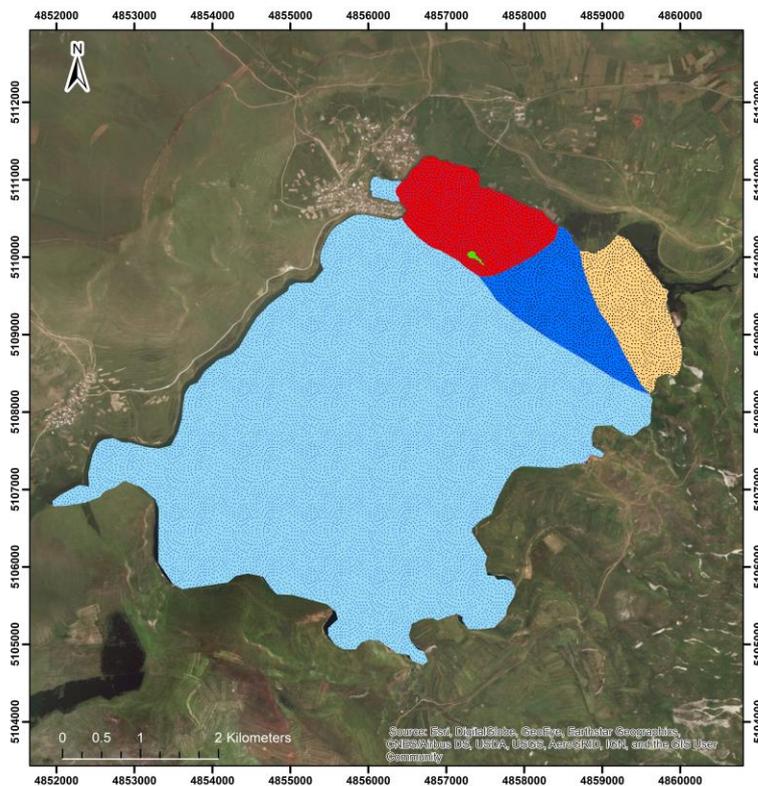
27	40	F	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
28	58	M	Tabatskuri	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
29	55	F	Tabatskuri	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
30	80	M	Moliti	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
31	56	M	Moliti	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
32	29	F	Moliti	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
33	70	F	Moliti	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
34	14	M	Tabatskuri	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
35	27	M	Tabatskuri	Yes	Yes	Rarely	Yes	Yes	No
36	-	M	-	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused
37	-	M	-	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused
38	-	M	-	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused
39	-	M	-	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused
40	-	M	-	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused
41	-	M	-	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused
42	-	F	-	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused	Refused

Map N1 Distribution of Velvet Scoter on Tabatskuri lake

Legend



1. Breeding place
2. Unused place
3. Feeding place
4. Moulting and feeding place
- 5 Corridor



Notice: During the monitoring, the Velvet Scoter has not been observed in the blue area.

Table N2
Numbers of Velvet Scoter on Tabatskuri Lake according to the monitoring

Data	Male	Female	Juvenile	Total
31.05.2017	57	31	0	88
10.06.2017	59	33	0	92
05.07.2017	18	17	0	35
14.07.2017	15	10	0	25
22.07.2017	17	11	0	28
31.07.2017	15	12	7	34
10.08.2017	17	14	9	40
15.08.2017	15	14	9	38
20.08.2017	16	15	12	43
25.08.2017	15	14	10	39
30.08.2017	17	15	9	41
05.09.2017	17	15	9	41
10.09.2017	17	14	9	40
16.09.2017	15	0	4	19
23.09.2017	17	0	4	21
01.10.2017	17	0	4	21
06.10.2017	17	0	4	21
13.10.2017	0	0	2	2
18.10.2017	0	0	2	2
25.10.2017	0	0	0	0
02.11.2017	0	0	0	0

Diagram N1

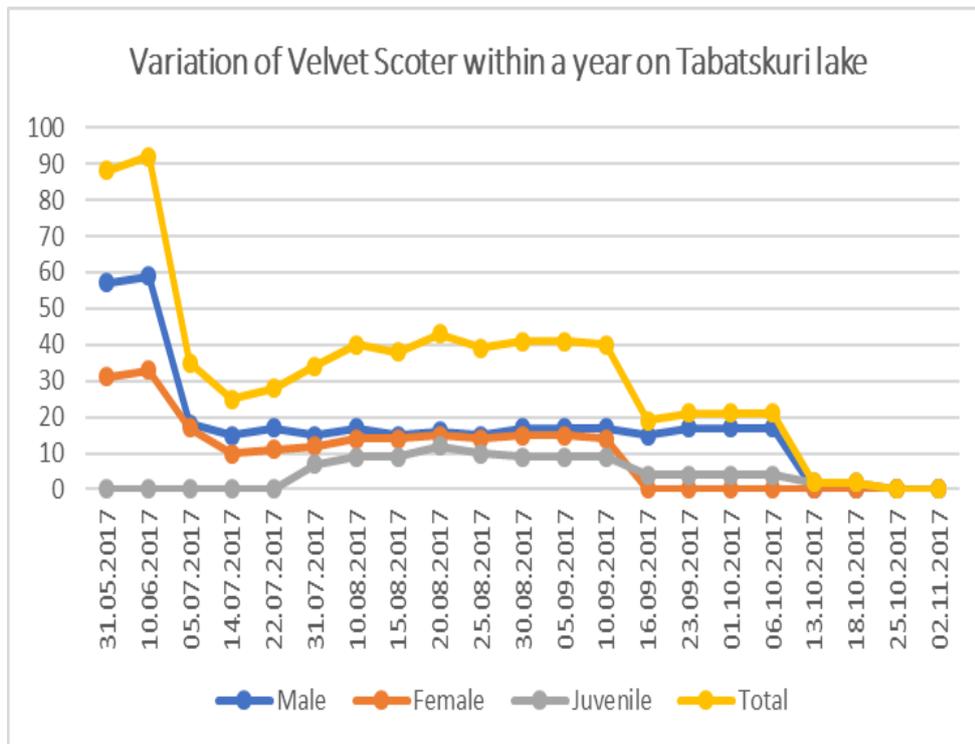


Table N3
Numbers of eggs of Velvet Scoter according of each nest

Nest N	Eggs	Hatched	Rotted	Fledged
Nest N1	10	8	2	-
Nest N2	8	5	3	-
Nest N3	8	4	4	-
Nest N4	7	4	3	-
Nest N5	7	5	2	-
Nest N6	8	5	3	-
Total	48	31	17	12

Table N4
Result of calculations done on the data to determined Velvet Scoter hatching success.

(My calculations are based on the data I observed – 6 nests. In case other nests were present but not found the result might be different).

Average hatching survival (success)	5.16
Average hatching mortality (failure)	2.83
Average fledging survival (success)	2
Total number of hatchings	31
Total number of failed hatchings	17
Total number of fledging survival	12
Total number of found/observed nests	6