

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	Dipendra Joshi
Project title	Ecological Assessment and Conservation Initiatives of Hispid hare (<i>Caprolagus hispidus</i>) in Suklaphata National Park, Nepal
RSG reference	23240-1
Reporting period	October 2017-November 2018
Amount of grant	£5,000
Your email address	dipendrajoshi101@gmail.com
Date of this report	18 Nov 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
To know the current status of hispid hare				Current situation explored.
To understand the habitat assessment and preferences				Habitat was understood.
To estimate the hispid hare population				Most of time was spend for habitat survey and conservation awareness.
To understand the conservation threats				
To promote the conservation awareness				We conducted outreach programmes in schools, and clubs.

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

N/A

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

This project was very helpful to explore current situation of hispid hare and also promote conservation awareness programmes. The major outcomes of this project are below.

A) The current information on the hispid hare was understood. We did baseline survey, pellet sampling, public interaction regarding hispid hare status in and around the national park. Local people want to protect the hispid hare.

B) Identification of prime habitat: We discussed with park persons, National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC)-Suklaphanta Program- staff, regarding habitat of the hispid hare. We also did literature sampling, and we sampled approximately 40% of the area of the park. Among all, the Hirapur Phanta was one of the best known site for hispid hare. In those areas, all grassland habitats were surveyed. In those, we figured out hispid hare prime habitat. We collected GPS location and environmental variables for further work.

C). Conservation awareness programme: We did conservation outreach programmes in schools, local club, farmers, etc. We also talked with park persons, NTNC staffs regarding hispid hare conservation status and further conservation plans. We distributed t-shirts, posters and caps (delivering conservation message)

regarding hispid hare conservation programmes. Presentation at local level (in local language) was also done.

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

The role of local community was very informative. For this project, local people were involved directly or indirectly. They helped with questionnaires, site observing, help for data collection, etc. Especially farmers, livestock herders were oriented regarding hispid hare conservation. The farmers, livestock herders were also described the threats from the local people for this species and challenges for surviving to this species in nature. Local people were participating in interaction as well.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, further conservation awareness is needed.

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

I have planned to share this data via my MSc thesis and presentation.

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

Whole project period was covered by the grant.

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
Food and accommodation	1920	2100		Food was costly
Community awareness	1100	1300		We covered wide areas
Posters, t-shirts and caps	950	700		Produced little bit less than proposed
Travel	360	450		It was expensive
Notebooks, stationary, etc	670	450		We bought this items in local area/market
	5000	5000		

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

The next step will be to work for conservation awareness in local people. Moreover, population estimation is also need.

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, I did RF logo in t-shirts, poster, banner, etc.

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

The team members are as below:

Dipendra Joshi (PI);

Rashmi Chhetri (She helped in field data collection, questionnaire);

Kasturi Gurung (She helped in field data collection, questionnaire);

Devraj Raj Joshi (he helped in the field site observation).

12. Any other comments?

I would like to thank to The Rufford Foundation for funding my study. I would like to thank to all my referees and my MSc thesis supervisor. Finally I thank to all local people, Himalayan Biodiversity Network (HBN) Nepal, and my university, Central Department of Zoology, Tribhuvan University.



Left: Interaction with local stakeholders and farmers. ©HBN-Nepal. Right: Conservation activities with school children. ©HBN-Nepal.



Left: Conservation class with herders. ©HBN-Nepal. Right: Species exploration with field assistants. ©HBN-Nepal.



Left: Field work exploring the nesting site for Hispid hare. ©HBN-Nepal. Right: Pellets of Hispid hare. ©HBN-Nepal.