

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 | Tilak Thapamagar |
| Project title | Community Stewardship for Sustainable Conservation of Himalayan Musk Deer (<i>Moschus chrysogaster</i>) in Khaptad National Park, Nepal |
| RSG reference | 25100-1 |
| Amount of grant | 5000 |
| Your email address | tilakphatamagar10@gmail.com |
| Date of this report | August 2019 |

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 assess the habitat of Himalayan Musk Deer in Khaptad National Park (KNP) | | | | The study revealed on musk deer mostly used to prefer the canopy cover(40%), slope (34°) and water distance (300m) for defecation site in and around of the Khaptad National Park. |
| To identify the conservation threats and map out the potential sites of the species | | | | The potential habitat of musk deer and their threats were identified in the KNP. We found poaching of musk deer, shifting of cowshed inside the park, firewood collections and overgrazing livestock were noticeable threats to the species. The distribution map of musk deer was prepared and distributed to the local people. |
| To Establish the Musk Deer Information Centre (MDIC) | | | | We established the two MDIC in the villages nearby the Khaptad National Park. The team of MDIC collected the information and used to deliver the National Park, Buffer zone user committee, Himalayan Biodiversity Network Nepal and local government of Bajhang district. The MDIC are still monitoring the species with collaboration of buffer zone user committee. |
| To conduct the conservation awareness program and distribute the outreach materials | | | | The conservation awareness programme was conducted to the local people, Park staff, tourist guide and members of buffer zone user committee. The anti-poaching message containing t-shirt and notebooks were distributed to the participants. And, we also provided the stationary materials to the students of Chhanna Village of Bajhang district which were participated in the conservation rally. |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| To conduct the Conservation radio program | | | | We produced the three episodes of Musk Deer Conservation radio programme. The programme was broadcast from Radio Himalaya, Kathmandu, Nepal. |
|---|--|--|--|--|

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

The unforeseen difficulties Arose during the project period are as follows:

- i. The getting of real information from local hunters (few people hunted to the musk deer) was very difficult.
- ii. The hesitation of local people during questionnaire survey.

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

- The establishment of MDIC is one of the most important outcomes of this project. The MDIC played a great role to collect the data from the field. It helped to identify the potential sites and threat status of the species in Khaptad National Park. Moreover, the team of MDIC is still monitoring the species in collaboration with Buffer Zone User Committee.
- The conservation and awareness programme was highly effective to raise the level of conservation knowledge of the local people. We assessed the pre- and post-level of understanding of the people. The level of understanding about musk deer and wildlife conservation was found increased.
- The conservation and habitat status of musk deer was determined through the questionnaire survey (local people, park staff) and field observation. On the basis of field observation, we assessed the threats, poaching sites and potential sites to the species. Using this information we prepared the map and distributed to the Buffer Zone User Committee and National Park Office.

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

The involvement of local communities is the key step in the field of wildlife conservation. The active participation of local people indicate the success of the project. The local people from Chhanna Village of Bajhang district actively participated in the conservation awareness programme, such as farmers, students, teachers, herders, trekking guide, and park staff. They got the knowledge about wildlife conservation, their legal status, punishment involving in wildlife crime, and their values in ecosystem and people's livelihood improvement. Local people involved as local guide during the field visit and provided them daily allowances. In addition, they know about ecotourism promotion by conserving the charismatic species i.e. musk deer, red panda etc. Therefore, the people were seems to be dedicated for the musk deer conservation in KNP.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, I have planned to continue this work in Khaptad National Park and its surrounding area. The further work will fulfil the lacking of this project and help for the long term conservation of the musk deer in Nepal Himalayas.

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

The information and results of the project was shared through national daily newspaper, online newspaper, social media (Facebook and twitter) and radio programme and interaction programme. Additionally, the results of the project will be shared through scientific journal. The manuscript is preparing and will be produced in a peer reviewed journal.

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 throughout the project period. This period is more or less fitted with actual 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 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|---|
| Transportation | 600 | 600 | | |
| Food and Accommodation | 2580 | 2580 | | |
| Conservation awareness program | 1300 | 1385 | -85 | |
| Radio program | 200 | 150 | +50 | We only produced three episode of radio program |
| Insurance for team members | 200 | 200 | | |
| Miscellaneous and first Aid | 120 | 100 | +20 | |
| Total | 5000 | 5015 | +15 | |

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

The important next steps are as follows:

- The community conservation awareness programme is further essential to aware the particularly local people, local government, local youth clubs member, and teacher and student.
- The basic wildlife training to students and local people.
- The Musk Deer Information Centre should be established in remaining sites of Buffer Zone i. e. Doti and Bajura districts.
- Taxonomic study is need for further account of the musk deer in Nepal Himalayas.

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 used the Rufford Foundation logo in the poster, banner, t-shirt, and newspapers. The foundation was also acknowledged in radio programme, workshop and conservation awareness program. Additionally, the Rufford Foundation will be acknowledged in further scientific papers relating to this project.

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

The members involved during the project were as follows:

Tilak Thapamagar

(Principle Investigator)

Role: Project management and perform the activities, field survey data gathering, data analysis and reporting.

Kishor Ghimire

(PhD student, Central Department of Zoology)

Role: Field Assistant and data analysis

Ramesh Khadka

(Co-ordinator, MDIC, Chhanna Village)

Role: Field Assistant, Information gathering and reporting to Himalayan Biodiversity Network and Principle investigator.

Bir Bahadur Rawal

(Co-ordinator, MDIC, Khaptad)

Role: Field Assistant, Information gathering and reporting to Himalayan Biodiversity Network and Principle investigator.

Lal Bahadur Rawal

(Game scout)

Role: Technical support for field assessment.

Sahil Rawal

(BA student, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus)

Role: Field Assistant and conservation program management

Beside these team members, I got a support from **Associate Prof. Dr. Daya Ram Bhusal, Dr. Nares Subedi, Mr. Mitra Pandey** and **Mr. Shivish Bhandari**.

12. Any other comments?

I would like to thank Rufford Foundation for financial support to carry out this project. And, I am looking forward the similar kinds of invaluable support from the Foundation in the near future. The special thanks go to Himalayan Biodiversity Network Nepal for equipment support and Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) for the permission to the project. I would like thank to people of the Chhanna Village of Bajhang district.



Photo 1: Participants during conservation awareness program in KNP. Photo 2: Conservation awareness materials such as T-shirt distribution to the local people.



Photo 3: Conservation awareness materials such as T-shirt distribution to the local people. Photo 4: Researcher distribution outreach materials to the students of Chhanna Village of KNP.



Photo 5: Researcher distribution outreach materials to the students of Chhanna Village of KNP. Photo 6: Researcher with Park staff and survey team.



Photo 7: Biology students of Nepal Don Bosco College, Lalitpur, Nepal. Photo 8: Presentation on Musk Deer conservation with student of Nepal Don Bosco College, Lalitpur, Nepal.

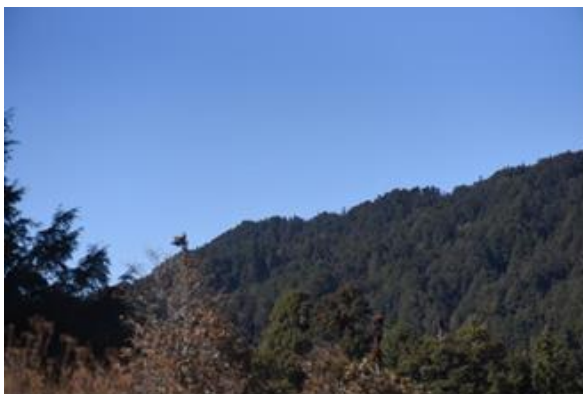


Photo 9: Habitat of Musk Deer in the KNP. Photo 10: Habitat of Musk Deer (North Phsae) at KNP.



Photo 11: Habitat of Musk Deer in KNP. Photo 12: Musk Deer defecation site in KNP.



Photo 13: Researcher showing burning wood inside the KNP. Photo 14: Cowshed (Gotha) inside the national park.



Photo 16: Researcher with MDIC co-ordinator during the field survey.