

## Final Evaluation Report

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Your Details	
<b>Full Name</b>	Trinh Thi Mai
<b>Project Title</b>	Poachers, patrols and protection: An integrative solution to Owston's Civet conservation in Vietnam
<b>Application ID</b>	37323-1
<b>Date of this Report</b>	30 August 2022

**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
Links between snaring and Owston's Civet detections in Vietnam is obtained.				Knowledge of Owston's civets and hunting practices around the areas where Owston's civet occur indicate that the species is not necessarily targeted, but the primary form of hunting is snare trapping. Since there was only one detection of the Owston's Civet, it is hard to refer the link between snaring and Owston's Civet detections.
Understandings of ecological knowledge and habitat characteristics of the species is improved.				Knowledge and insights gained on local knowledge of Owston's civets and general hunting practices of the communities. Interestingly enough, locals indicated that Owston's civet may occur more commonly outside of the protected area than inside. While the intended analysis for this project was an occupancy model that may reveal more ecological insights into Owston's civet in Pu Mat National Park, unfortunately since there was only a single detection, the detection rate and occupancy estimates would be low and insignificant in inferring anything.
Expand the species sub-population strongholds inside Pu Mat NP				Owston's civet detected and other rare species such as binturong and sun bear were detected, indicating the high value of Tam Hop area for increase patrols and protection activities. Patrols were conducted with coverage spanning the entire protected area, removing wildlife traps, illegal encampments, and arrested offenders. The result of this research will continue be disseminated to the park management board to increase the patrolling effort in this area.
Raise awareness of local communities and government in order to improve the conservation of the				The project could not achieve this objective due to limitation of resources and time. The awareness of Owston's civet protection of local people was partially increased during the survey. This project

species			was the premise for further awareness raising activities.
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**2. Describe the three most important outcomes of your project.**

**a)** Knowledge of Owston's civets and hunting practices around the areas where Owston's civet occur indicate that the species is not necessarily targeted, but the primary form of hunting is snare trapping. So, the animals are likely a product of bycatch, but naturally exist in low enough densities compared to other species that they are the easy to become locally extirpated when threatened by large-scale hunting practices.

**b)** While camera trapping efforts only produced one detection of Owston's civet. The detections of other biodiversity in the area proved to be extremely impressive, several species, such as binturong and black bear that have not been detected in Vietnam for several years to a decade were all found in the Tam Hop area.

**c)** Anti-poaching patrol activity has been steadily improving the poaching situation in Pu Mat over the last 4 years. In the core zone (Khe Choang) our teams have decreased snaring levels to zero by 2022. The effects of this have caused an area-wide avoidance behaviour of poachers, which is now pushing all activity toward the periphery of the protected area (as locals now fear law enforcement action if they enter to deep into the forest). Unfortunately, the area where rare wildlife was detected in our camera trapping systems were also near the periphery of the park, and if local reports are correct about the Owston's civet occurring more often outside of the protected area than inside then our protection strategies must: 1) increase patrols in the PA boundary areas; and 2) conduct education and outreach campaigns in the local communities regarding the extinction potential of the Owston's civet, and informing local people to protect the species instead of posing more threats to its survival.

**3. Explain any unforeseen difficulties that arose during the project and how these were tackled.**

- Interviews were collected with recorder, and transcription takes a very long time, especially because some of the local people spoke in an unfamiliar dialect. A coding system was developed to support the interpretation, transcription, and coding the data into the database.
- Camera trapping activities were delayed due to delayed of in-kind support of camera traps from Save Vietnam's Wildlife. This was unexpected; however, the camera-trap was set up eventually.
- While the intended analysis for this project was an occupancy model that may reveal more ecological insights into Owston's civet in Pu Mat National Park, unfortunately since there was only a single detection, the detection rate and occupancy estimates would be low and insignificant in inferring anything.

**4. Describe the involvement of local communities and how they have benefited from the project.**

- Local communities were directly engaged throughout the process of the surveys and asked about their inputs and knowledge. A conservation campaign in these areas to promote the value of threatened species as the natural heritage of their area is planned to be conducted in the future. This will help the local community to avoid committing in wildlife crimes.
- Local people also benefitted by being hired for camera trap setup and retrieval for this project.

**5. Are there any plans to continue this work?**

With this new information on rare biodiversity in the Tam Hop area, and also the local knowledge of Owston's civets occurring more often outside of the protected area, we plan to engage communities further with conservation campaigns (targeted toward the Tam Hop communities), and possibly do target follow up camera trap surveys in attempts to detect the Owston's civet outside of the protected areas.

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

The results of our work will be shared with the Pu Mat NP managers, Save Vietnam's Wildlife anti-poaching teams, and other NGOs working in Pu Mat National Park e.g., Fauna & Flora International (FFI) to provide more evidence or support their work.

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

The immediate next steps are to inform Pu Mat National Park management and rangers of our findings and organise focused anti-poaching patrols along the border zones of Pu Mat National Park, and in the periphery areas where rare and threatened wildlife still occurs, but also where poaching activity has been concentrated as a result of the avoidance effect of significantly protecting the core zone.

**8. 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?**

A recent photo of the binturong caught in the camera traps in Tam Hop set as part of this project and mentioned the name of The Rufford Foundation as a sponsor was posted:

<https://www.facebook.com/svw.vn/posts/pfbid0Z9BiQRDqWg53pLNvvqfM8GYDQxzKBBW6BAAns9SvAy1iY8p4Uk5xGposGBFQhacnI>

**9. Provide a full list of all the members of your team and their role in the project.**

**Trinh Thi Mai:** project design and overseeing implementation.

**Ha Van Ngoan:** camera trap implementation.

**Nguyen Kieu Anh, Lo Tien Bieu, Cao Nhat Long:** Social research surveyors.

**Russell J Gray:** Project advisor.

#### **10. Any other comments?**

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to The Rufford Foundation for your generous funding and support, which made this study possible and contribute to the conservation efforts in Tam Hop area specifically, and Pu Mat National Park.