

Strengthening People for Pangolin Conservation in the human-dominated landscapes of Nepal



Rescued Chinese Pangolin. Photo@ Ananda Shrestha

Progress Report

Submitted To

The Rufford Foundation
UK

Submitted By

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Activities undertaken on the ground

Acquisition of study permission

Since Pangolins are protected species of the country, we filed up necessary documents and took permission for the study from the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation and Department of Forest, Kathmandu.

Community consultation programs & Field visit

Community consultation meetings were conducted with multidisciplinary people to collect primary data, adopting a participatory approach, along with field visits. We presented some field trip glimpses as follows:



Fig: 1. Survey team during field-based survey



Fig: 2. Cattle shed and cattle manure deposition to use as organic fertilizer for farming



Fig: 3. Life with livestock and a dried mushroom found around the new pangolin burrow

Habitat Survey & Sign surveys

Point transects survey and opportunistic observation were conducted to assess the distribution of the species through the direct observation and indirect methods such as burrows, footprints, scratches, droppings etc. GPS location of each of the signs was recorded including habitat characteristics.



Fig: 4. Survey in progress and a fresh burrow of pangolin with tail and footprints markings

Camera Trapping

We conducted a rapid assessment of pangolins by placing 4 camera traps in our study forest for a total of 15 days. Pangolins are nocturnal mammals, hardly seen in daytime. Therefore, we selected camera trap locations based on sign abundance indicative of fresh burrow activities to maximize the capture probability and confirm the presence of pangolins.



Fig: 5. Interested members helping with camera traps

Results

During the rapid assessment of camera trap images, we identified several species including the Chinese Pangolin.



Fig: 6.A camera trapped Chinese Pangolin getting out from its burrow



Fig: 7. A Jackal around the pangolin fresh burrow



Fig: 8. A Deer crossing nearby the pangolin burrow



Fig: 9. A bird foraging on the heap of soil excavated by pangolin

Pangolin Conservation Threats

We observed some prominent threats to the pangolin such as keeping stones to block pangolin burrows and collecting fodder in the forest can threaten the critically endangered pangolins by disrupting their shelter and nesting sites, leading to stress and further vulnerability. Additionally, these activities can disturb the pangolin's habitat and food sources, leading to habitat degradation further endangering their survival, one of the major threats to ground dwelling pangolins.



Fig: 10. Blockage in the pangolin burrow by placing stones inside & women with fodder collections

Pangolin Conservation Education Programs

A. Local community and stakeholders

We are implementing various educational initiatives, including presentations, publication of educational materials to raise awareness among local communities and other diverse groups. Our goal is to promote a deeper understanding of the importance of conservation and the need for legal measures to protect wildlife.



Fig: 11. Pangolin Conservation class with local communities

A. School Education Programs

We are specifically targeting school students because they are often more receptive to new ideas and can effectively transmit them to their parents and neighbors. Our programs aim to educate students about the importance of the Chinese Pangolin, its status, and the causes of its population decline. Our goal is to deliver conservation awareness programs to at least 100 students in each of the 20 schools targeted, reaching a total of more than 2,000 individuals. By focusing on students, we hope to create a ripple effect of awareness and conservation action within their communities.



Fig: 12. With students of Crescent Academy and Gyanudaya Bal Batika School during conservation classes

Letter of Honor for the pangolin conservation work in Nepal

During the 40th School Day of Om Secondary School, The entire school family and the Principal, Mrs Sanu Ghimire, presented a Letter of Honor to the project leader, who was a former student of Om Secondary School in recognition of her decade-long dedication, hard work, and empathy towards the conservation of the critically endangered pangolin in Nepal. In that occasion, we talked about the Nepal's pangolins, their status, conservation issues and opportunities. There were a total of around 700 students teachers, parents and media personnel.



Fig: 13. Four awarded former students from various categories of achievement

Rescue of Chinese Pangolin in Makwanpur district

On the early morning of February 5th, 2024, we received news of the rescue of a live pangolin from Makwanpur Gadhi. It was then transported to the Pangolin Park of Chuchekkhola community forest. Due to the lack of proper veterinary services and medicinal facilities for rescued pangolins in Nepal, we decided to release it inside the pangolin park of Chuchekkhola community forest without further delay and stress, with assistance from our team members.



Fig: 14. Kedar Gautam, Secretary of the Chuchekkhola Community Forest with the rescued Chinese Pangolin Photo @Ananda Shrestha



Fig: 15. A rescued Chinese Pangolin on the ground. Photo @Ananda Shrestha

Celebration of World Pangolin Day 2024

To mark the day, the thirteenth annual World Pangolin Day, we are carrying out an interaction and awareness program in collaboration with community forest user groups, government officials and school teachers and students.

Moreover, the principal investigator was invited for the interview by the television program named Good Mood, a live program. It was a program about an hour in which various queries on pangolin

ecology, behavior conservation challenges and conservation measures were discussed in local Nepali dialect. The interview was taken to mark the 13 th World Pangolin Day to reach a large audience and inspire action to protect these unique and threatened animals.

The program can be visited through the links below. Kindly please click the following links for details. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_yc1WBV4Zg

<https://www.facebook.com/7star4ktv/videos/410986827986463>

https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=pfbid0Cxgbh8jxxSyrvMiCvmS7W5AgUjrhPVh6Ew82KUSJeVU72G5W3UiYQYo6bn1X5uz4l&id=100008826605353¬if_id=1708151330445948¬if_t=feedback_reaction_generic&ref=notif



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Fig: 16. Project leader in talk program with the program host

The project leader is serving as the vice-president of the Nepal National Committee of IUCN Nepal and she highlighted the different conservation challenges to the globally threatened pangolins conservation through communities based programs. She emphasized the need for collaborative efforts to address these wildlife and people in Nepal with Dr. Maud Lelievre, President of the IUCN French Committee and International Councilor of IUCN during her visit to Nepal.



Fig: 17. Discussion with Dr. Maud Lelievre, President of the IUCN French Committee & International Councilor of IUCN in IUCN Nepal Office, Kupondole



Fig: 18. Pangolin art presented by Naomi Kato & plight of pangolin text insertion by project leader

Thank you very much!!