

The Rufford Small Grants Foundation

Final Report

Congratulations on the completion of your project that was supported by The Rufford Small Grants 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	Evans Ewald Nkrumah
Project title	Conservation of the critically endangered <i>Conraua derooi</i> in Ghana
RSG reference	53.12.09
Reporting period	June 2012
Amount of grant	£5937
Your email address	evansnkrumah412@yahoo.com
Date of this report	11 th June 2012

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
Habitat survey and Population estimates of <i>Conraua derooi</i>			x	Streams within suitable habitats of The target species (<i>Conraua derooi</i>) were surveyed over a 1-year period. A total of 153 individuals were successfully marked and released. Eighty individuals already marked were later recaptured. Based on these data we estimate a total of 240 and 500 individuals for a closed and opened population respectively to occur in the study site. This present estimate far exceeds our initial expectation and is very good news for the long term conservation of this species and further emphasises the conservation value of the study site (the Atewa Hills Forest Reserve).
Assessing of threats to species			x	A total of 150 individuals comprising the target species and other amphibian species occurring in syntopy with the target species were successfully swapped to investigate the possible occurrence of the chytridiomycosis fungus in the study site. This was done in collaboration with the Burke Museums of the University of Washington. Fortunately the presence of the chytrid fungus could not be confirmed in the study site. The target species however faces escalating threat from an increased illegal gold mining and commercial illegal timber exploitation of the Atewa hills. Urgent and sustained conservation action is needed in this regard to curb these illegality and safe the species from extirpation.
Enacting of Conservation Action Plans		X		Results of this project and a recently awarded RSG project on the target species in the Togo-Volta hills is currently being used to formulate a Conservation Action Plan for this species. The plan will be finalised and outdoor later this year.

Conservation Education and Stakeholder Involvement			x	Our conservation activities were geared towards three main fringing communities significantly involved in activities that are perceived to negatively affect this Critically Endangered frog (<i>Conraua derooi</i>). Our education efforts mainly focused on house-hold dialogues and community level campaigns such as video shows and distribution of T-shirts. In total we were able to reach about 500 people with our conservation education message.
--	--	--	---	---

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

The development of this project was incentivised by the idea that the main cause of decline of *Conraua derooi* is human consumption and habitat destruction. As we began to execute the project however, it was evident that this species also faces severe threat from gold and bauxite exploitation. We therefore had to focus some of our efforts to target government officials, wildlife divisions and the forestry authorities as the reserve is currently managed by the forestry commission in Ghana. This has achieved some considerable effects as Atewa Forest Reserve has played host to a lot of top management officers of Ghana's Forestry Commission to verify some of these illegalities.

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

Perhaps the most important output is the discovery of two new populations of this Critically Endangered frog species (*Conraua derooi*) in the Atewa hills. This discovery springs new hope for the long term survival of this species and places even higher premium on the conservation value of the project site. Although the individual numbers of this species caught in the entire duration of the project was not in the several hundred, the data collected throughout this study makes the project site an ideal candidate as is an Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE). This AZE proposal if approved will contribute immeasurably to halting ongoing pervasive human activities that is destroying primary forest cover and attract more funding for conservation initiatives.

Another important output of this project is an observed behaviour change among local people. Through our conservation education campaigns, local communities realised and accepted it as a great privilege to be associated with the protection of the last remaining population of a species that is globally Critically Endangered. This enthusiasm of the local community was expressed when they decided to form watch dog committees to protect this species.

Also, this project has directly increased public awareness of the conservation threats of the study site. Media reportage of illegalities in and around the study site for instance has increased tremendously over the project period. Also joint military and police operations to control illegal gold mining are ongoing.

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

Local communities have been significantly involved and benefited in various ways from this conservation effort. As mentioned earlier they benefited from conservation education efforts including video and photo campaigns and received educational T-shirts. In response to these awareness campaigns, members of the communities showed genuine interest in being with us in the field during field surveys and had the opportunity to learn onsite about amphibians. Some local community members are also key persons in a voluntary local watch dog committee formed to protect the project site from illegal logging.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

In the short interim, we seek to continue to support local communities in efforts at halting illegal activities including logging through our amphibian and reptile conservation organisation (Herp-Ghana) by providing both local and international voice to their concerns. We hope to also provide alternate livelihood options to locals that have been identified throughout this project with optimism that such intervention will reduce their dependence on the forest resources.

In the long term our plan is to increase the protection status of the project site for example from a Forest Reserve to a National Park status where no mining and logging will be allowed. This will require targeted awareness creation and advocacy at both the national and international scale.

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

A manuscript has been prepared reporting on the first population study of the target species. The manuscript will be submitted to the Journal of International Conservation (*Oryx*) later this year and will hopefully draw the attention of the scientific community to the conservation of this frog species.

Nationally, a copy of our report will be delivered to the Wildlife Division in Ghana, the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. A detailed soft copy will also be available for download online at <http://www.herpghana.org>.

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

The stipulated time of this project was 12 months but to the surprise of the team, we realised we needed more time in executing this work. This was mainly due to illegalities occurring in the study site which initially hindered to some extent our community entry. Also this was due to our reliance on external collaborators for the confirmation of chytridiomycosis from our study site which was also a major objective of the work.

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
Reconnaissance survey	250	350	-100	We had to hire a vehicle which initially Herp-Ghana had pledge to provide free for the project during the reconnaissance survey. They kept to their promise and took care of the difference.
Field Surveys	2,904.58	3,581	-676.42	Although capacity building was not a prime focus of the study; the team was overwhelmed with the number of student volunteers that joined the field work to learn about herpetofauna and also assist with field work which the team needed to acquire more tents, headlamps, torches and food at the cost of the project.
Conservation Education and Stakeholder Involvement in Species Protection	2,750	2,073	+394	We cut cost from conservation education to support the field work.
Contingency	282.4	283	0	Contingency money also went to support the field work.
Total	6186.98	6545		The amount received; GBP 5937 was therefore enough for the successful execution of the project.

Exchange rate at time of expenditure was 1 GPB to 2.6 GHS

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

It appears that the project site harbours about 95% of the remaining population of this Critically Endangered species. Consequently reducing human induced habitat loss and degradation to this site should be the highest conservation priority. It is also important to develop a national monitoring scheme to monitor the identified populations over the coming years.

This could be achieved by initiating a very well targeted awareness program to key national stakeholders including politicians, traditional authorities and multinational corporate organisations with interest in the study site.

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

The Rufford Small Grant has been conspicuous throughout our outreach program for instance on our T-shirts, PowerPoint presentations, video shows in communities and also in our manuscript in preparation.

11. Any other comments?

First, we would like to thank Rufford Small Grant for choosing to support our work in helping discover and save the very last remaining populations of this Critically Endangered frog species (*Conraua derooi*).

We are extremely joyful that we were able to find new populations of this rare frog species and hope that the information we have gathered through your support will help the Wildlife Division in Ghana adopt an Endangered Species Act which will be critical for the long term survival of this and many rare species occurring in the study site.