

## 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. 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. 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](mailto:jane@rufford.org).

Thank you for your help.

**Josh Cole, Grants Director**

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Grant Recipient Details	
<b>Your name</b>	Nicholas Bayly
<b>Project title</b>	Crossing the Caribbean: working towards effective protection of critical stopover sites for migratory birds in northern Colombia
<b>RSG reference</b>	9261-B
<b>Reporting period</b>	January 2011 – March 2012
<b>Amount of grant</b>	£11,828
<b>Your email address</b>	<a href="mailto:nick.bayly@selva.org.co">nick.bayly@selva.org.co</a>
<b>Date of this report</b>	23 March 2011

**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
<b>RESEARCH OBJECTIVES</b>				
Characterisation of migration in the Darién during spring migration			Yes	A successful monitoring of spring migration in the Darién of Colombia was carried out during two months between March and May. Our results went against our expectations, showing that this region is not used by large numbers of migrants during spring.
Characterisation of migration in the Darién during autumn migration			Yes	In contrast to the spring, the Darién was used by a diverse community of migrants during the autumn and with over 450,000 individuals recorded, our results highlight the critical importance of this region as an entry point to South America.
Consolidation of research results in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta during spring migration			Yes	A second year of spring data from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta (SNSM) confirmed our previous findings on the importance of this region but also lead to new discoveries and generated vital information for the 'hotspot' plan (see below).
Consolidation of research results in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta during autumn migration			Yes	
Dissemination of research findings through published papers		Yes		Two papers have been published based on our findings and although two further papers have been submitted, the speed of the publication process has meant that they have not been published at the time of writing.
Dissemination of research findings through technical reports			Yes	Four technical reports have been published on the project website and SELVA's website.
<b>EDUCATION OBJECTIVES</b>				
Design an education curriculum based around migratory birds			Yes	
Implement curriculum in three schools			Yes	The curriculum was carried out in two schools in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and one school in the Darién

Training course for 4 individuals			Yes	
Training internship for one month			Yes	We were able to have one additional internship, resulting in two internships in total.
Training course for wildlife guides			Yes	This was not an objective in the original proposal, but the opportunity arose to carry a training course with a community in the Darién and formed part of the spring research activities.
<b>CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES</b>				
Complete pre-montane forest hotspot plan			Yes	
Create conservation alliance for hotspots		Yes		This objective is still being consolidated due to the difficulties of arranging meetings with some key stakeholders. Nevertheless, through an alliance with Conservation International Colombia, we have made a major first step and we have meetings programmed with the SNSM National Park and Corpamag (the regional environment authority) at the end of March. We also have developed a key relationship with FIAT who are working to protect one of the hotspots.

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

Several of the research activities laid out in our original proposal were based on receiving matching funds from other donors. Unfortunately, one of the three donors listed in our original proposal did not approve funding and we had to operate the project on considerably reduced budget. While we were able to carry out all our research activities and meet our research objectives, certain activities had to be reduced. In particular, the verification of hotspots and community consultation was only carried out in part. These activities were only reduced after careful consideration when taking into account that verification could be done adequately by speaking to individuals with good local knowledge of key areas and using available maps/images.

Another difficulty was encountered in one of the three schools where we implemented the education curriculum. The education curriculum and associated materials was designed such that after initial implementation and training of teachers by SELVA staff, the teachers could continue to use the curriculum and the materials provided in the long term. In two of the schools we had high teacher participation and we do not doubt that the curriculum will be used in the long-term. Indeed, a teacher from one of the schools has been sending us images of its continued use after the initial implementation. In the third school, the teachers were largely unable to participate during the initial implementation of the curriculum due staffing limitations. While there was little, we could do to overcome this difficulty, we learnt an important lesson regarding working with underfunded and understaffed rural schools.

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

**Research success:** The consolidation of research in the SNSM has strengthened our convictions regarding the relative importance of this region and the habitats therein to migratory birds. A solid research base is essential for both convincing conservation actors and also for ensuring that conservation actions are deployed where they are most needed. The findings from the Darién also represent a major step forward in our understanding of the needs of migratory birds in northern Colombia. These findings in combination with a wide-reaching dissemination campaign (two published papers, 7000 hits on our project website, four presentations at international conferences) mean that there is an increasing focus on migratory birds in northern Colombia.

**Education curriculum:** The design and implementation of an education curriculum represents an important advance in the education activities of this project and for SELVA in general. The curriculum will form the basis of many future education activities and the fact that it was a great success in two of the three schools visited, means that it will continue to create an environment for conservation far into the future in the communities where it was introduced.

**Conservation alliance with Conservation International Colombia (CI):** The impact of our pre-montane forest hotspot plan is dependent on the formation of a conservation alliance that works to implement the plan's recommendations. During the project, a vital alliance was formed between Crossing the Caribbean and CI, and a project being jointly run by CI and SELVA known as NaturaGuajira. Under this project, land management plans for all the major watersheds of the Guajira department will be compiled for the regional environmental authority. Among these watersheds, are several key watersheds for migrants in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. Through our alliance with CI, our recommendations for the conservation of hotspots for migratory birds will be integrated into watershed management plans, thereby ensuring that appropriate land management regimes for migratory birds become part of state policy. This represents a major contribution to our conservation objectives.

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

Local communities have benefitted from a variety of education activities associated with the project. First and foremost, the introduction of our education curriculum into three rural schools represents an important contribution in areas where environmental awareness and protection could sustain economic benefits associated with ecotourism. The schools have also benefitted by receiving durable teaching materials that are often absent in rural areas. The community of San Francisco in the Darién received a three-day workshop in nature guiding. This represents a significant input into the community-run ecotourism project in this village.

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

Under the SELVA's migratory species area, we will continue to work to identify, prioritize and seek protection for key stopover areas in northern Colombia. Given the size of the region in which we are working and the complexities of understanding migration, we consider this a long-term project which we would expect to continue for a minimum of two years. Realistically to achieve all the goals of 'Crossing the Caribbean', we would expect to work for 5 years or more. Future work will follow the same successful model thus far implemented, involving detailed case studies in strategic areas

and using these to determine conservation priorities, while simultaneously preparing the ground for conservation actions by carry out education activities and contacting local stakeholders.

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

We share out results through a variety of channels including technical reports, articles in peer-reviewed journals, the project website and presentations at conferences. This has been a successful strategy so far, especially the project website that has now received over 12,000 hits and is well known in the ornithology and conservation community in Colombia. We have also formed strategic alliances with organisations and universities that work with migratory birds such as the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Environment Canada and the University of Saskatchewan. This has enabled us to ensure that work is increasingly well known in the conservation and research community in North America, who are a major stakeholder in migratory bird conservation.

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

One year and 2 months. We completed the project in the timescale anticipated, however, strengthening our conservation alliance for hotspots in the SNSM will continue this year.

## 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.

A local exchange rate of 2800 Colombian Pesos to the pound was used.

Item	Budgeted Amount	Actual Amount	Difference	Comments
Darien – Transport to and from Bogota	882	1061	-179	Transport costs increased during the project
Darien – Food and Board	2150	2070	80	We saved on a couple of days of accommodation to cover transport shortfall
Darien – Field researcher fee	2000	2000	0	
SNSM – Transport to and from Bogota	52	287	-235	Costs increased due to a failure to secure matching funds
SNSM – Food and board Quebrada Valencia	133	277	-144	Costs increased due to a failure to secure matching funds
SNSM – Field researcher fees	500	500	0	
Hotspot Plan – analysis and report production	1503	1264	239	
Hotspot plan - socialization	267	450	-183	Cost of travel to meet with stakeholders was higher than expected
Training course in bird ringing and migration	249	254	-5	
Internship stipend	200	179	21	
Education Curriculum – design and production of materials	1300	1273	27	

Educator – Board and Lodge	1440	1303	137	Accommodation costs not as high as expected
Bird rings (5000)	360	360	0	
General equipment and communications	213	262	-49	
Research Permit	234	157	77	
SELVA administration	345	345	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11828</b>	<b>12042</b>	<b>-215</b>	

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

There is still much basic research required in order to effectively prioritise stopover sites in northern Colombia. Important research activities include working in habitats and regions that we have yet to sampled, particularly in northwest Colombia. Following through the process initiated with the hotspot plan is also a crucial next step and is vital to determine how effective this model can be in bringing about protection or restoration of migrant habitats. Increasing the impact of our education curriculum by targeting more strategically located schools is also an important future activity.

**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 logo has appeared in all our technical reports, relevant sections of SELVA’s website and the project website. We gave three presentations at the Colombian Zoology Congress in Medellin in November 2011 and three presentations at the Neotropical Ornithological Conference in Peru in November 2011. The Rufford logo appeared in all the presentations and Rufford was verbally thanked and we would estimate that over 300 individuals from the scientific community attended these presentations.

**11. Any other comments?**

I would once again like to thank Rufford for supporting our work, your contribution has been invaluable in making this project possible and ensuring that it continues in the long term. The task we have set ourselves with the overall vision of Crossing the Caribbean is enormous, but we are now starting to make real headway and the impact of the project is starting to be felt. Thank you.