

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.

Thank you for your help.

Josh Cole, Grants Director

Grant Recipient Details	
Your name	Sayam U. Chowdhury
Project title	Ecology, breeding behaviour and conservation of the Endangered Masked Finfoot in Bangladesh
RSG reference	9938-1
Reporting period	2011-2012
Amount of grant	£5950
Your email address	sayam_uc@yahoo.com
Date of this report	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
Breeding biology		X		It was not possible to determine the incubation period, but several other important data were collected for the first time using camera trap for 19 days.
Population estimate			X	Analysis is in progress.
Threat			X	The project determined the magnitude of masked finfoot hunting by human, which appears to be a substantial one.
Capacity Building			X	At least 12 students, conservation volunteers and forest guards were trained to conduct breeding survey of the masked finfoot.
Awareness Campaign			X	Conservation messages were spread during the study period; a project video with conservation recommendations was produced and was uploaded on youtube. Moreover, several talks were presented in local bird club meetings and international conferences.
Conservation implications			X	After identifying direct threat to the masked finfoot, conservation and management recommendations were prepared. In addition, methods were developed for future monitoring.

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

It was difficult to cover large areas with limited fund, logistical support and time. Moreover, there were several field issues that were difficult to tackle, especially dealing with changing tide condition. However, the field work was done with a satisfactory level in the end by compromising the budget with other components of the project.

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

The study acquired new data on the breeding biology of the species. Estimating breeding pairs in the Sundarbans and observing a possible shift of their range were important finding. Moreover, the project identified hunting of the masked finfoot by human as a significant threat to the species.

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

Several locals were largely involved to conduct the survey, motivated and trained. The project hired boats and received other logistical supports from the local community. Moreover, they were also informed about the global significance of the species with aims to promote birdwatching based tourism.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

Yes, future work is needed to understand the breeding biology with a larger sample size. Future monitoring is important to further ascertain current population estimate and understand population trend especially in response to climate change. Future work is needed to educate locals about the significance of the Masked Finfoot and discourage opportunistic hunting of the species.

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

A detailed final report will be submitted to the Rufford Small Grant Foundation and will be shared through RSG website within December 2012. A project video has been uploaded on youtube and already viewed by almost 1000 individuals. A scientific paper with results of the study including conservation and management recommendations will be published in an international journal.

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

Timescale was fine, although the breeding season had already started before the fund was received.

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
Personnel costs	780	800	-20	
Transportation	2820	3500	-680	Increased as large areas were covered than planned and rise of fuel price
Food	750	700	+50	
Camera-traps	400	450	-50	
Binoculars	400	000	+400	
Spotting Scope	300	000	+300	
Data Collection Supplies	100	150	-50	
Awareness campaign materials	400	400	000	
TOTAL	5950	6000	50	

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

It is important to follow up this work to better understand the ecology of the secretive bird. Future monitoring is needed to observe population trend. More work is needed with the local fishermen and forest guards to reduce hunting.

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?

Yes, RSGF logo was used in the poster. The logo was also embedded in the project video (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EUn-FilJP_Q&feature=plcp). Certainly RSGF received publicity as it was acknowledgement in the presentations, video and posters.

11. Any other comments?

It is important to continue this work to have a significant impact on the recovery and conservation of the Masked Finfoot in the Sundarbans, which is the one of the last strongholds of this species.