

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	Xiuxiang Meng
Project title	Ecology and conservation of endangered Alpine musk deer in north western China: population, habitat, eco-tourism and integrated nature conservation
RSG reference	79.08.09
Reporting period	December 2009 to January 2011
Amount of grant	£12,000
Your email address	mengxiuxiang2006@hotmail.com
Date of this report	March 18, 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
Surveying of wild Alpine musk deer population			Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General average population density was 1.8 deer/ km², and it was 7.43 deer/ km² in core area. • In total, population of musk deer in XNNR was 600.
Determine the seasonal patterns of habitat utilisation			Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked out the seasonal patterns of habitat utilisation. • The integrative factors including food, shelter and temperature drive the habitat preference.
Assessing impacts from local communities			Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One member had been working on this topic for 12 months, and she interviewed more than 200 local households and established data set. • Livestock-keeping, plant-picking, marginal agriculture and stall-keeping of the local communities imposed impacts on musk deer.
Influence from eco-tourism			Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One member had been worked on this topic for 12 months, and she interviewed more than 300 tourists and established data set. • In XNNR, the prime season of tourism is from May to October. For XNNR, the tourism was the only measure to develop economy. • Some scenic sites located in core habitat of musk deer, and its scheming could be improved.
Poaching			Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poaching has existed and poachers were mainly from outside of reserve. • Steel-snare was the main poaching tool.
Environmental education and education improvement.			Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five team members lectured for local pupils for 3 months. • Five team members lectured for local pupils for 3 months.
Academic presentation			Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two journal papers have been written. • Attended national conference twice. • Made public presentations six times.

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

- Surveying the local officials and collecting related data (e.g., the yearly tourists) from the local government, as it was thought to be secret. After interacting with them for a long time they believed that we were of the goodwill of nature conservation then they would be surveyed very well.
- It is very important for the project to absorb locals into the team.

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

- The general average musk deer density in XNNR was 1.8 deer/ km², but the density was 7.43 deer/ km² in the core area with preferred habitats, and the total population of musk deer in XNNR was 600.
- There existed seasonal patterns of habitat utilisation for wild Alpine musk deer, and the integrative factors including food, shelter and temperature drive the seasonal habitat preference.
- Poaching has existed and poachers were mainly from outside of the reserve.
- In XNNR, livestock-keeping, plant-picking, marginal agriculture and stall-keeping of the local communities imposed impacts on musk deer.
- The prime season of tourism in XNNR was from May to October. Some scenic sites located in core habitat of musk deer, so its scheming could be improved.

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

- Some locals worked with us as the pay guides, through which they knew the value of musk deer and nature conservation and the related methods.
- The education-improving was conducted for more than 100 local adults and pupils.
- More than 200 local households involved in our communities-surveying.
- From talking and interviewing locals, the alternate production system such as medicinal plant planting and beekeeping were determined as the preferred ones.

5. Are there any plans to continue this work?

- Owing to this project supported by RSG, we have preliminarily established a research foundation in Gansu Province of north-western China, which is the main and core distribution area.
- In the future, we hope broaden our research topics and working area to other reserves, e.g. Shoulushan National Nature Reserve and Lianhuanshan National Nature Reserve, which are close to current XNNR and the musk deer are more endangered. The endangering issues and the related reasons have not be researched and determined owing to the complexity of absolute poverty, limited transportation and minority communities.
- We hope RSG could support our research through funding, which will make us continue the musk deer conserving and studying.

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

- Public Presentation: We have made six public presentations, and such activities will be continued in the future.
- Collected data have been analysed and the results will be published in international and local journals.

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

- The actual length of the project reached more than the planned length.
- From December 2009 to February 2010, the team consisted of five graduate students and two teachers have been working in XNNR.
- From March 2010 to June 2010, the team consisted of three graduate students and two teachers have been working in XNNR.
- From July 2010 to September 2010 the team consisted of three graduate students and three teachers have been working in XNNR.
- From November 2010 to January 2011, the team consisted of two graduate students and one teacher has been working in XNNR.
- During whole research (From December 2009 to January 2011), the team included five locals who have joined the project.

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
Return travel from Beijing to Gansu Province	£2,000	£2,000		Five return plane tickets
Travel in the reserve and surrounding areas	£2,000	£2,000		Rent jeep, tractor and motor in the nature reserves
Fee for Guide	£3,000	£3,000		5 £/day-guide×100days×6 guides
Map purchasing	£1,000	£1,000		A set of maps
Accommodation	£1,500	£1,500		During working in regions
Living provision (member and local guides)	£1,500	£1,500		For team member and local guides
Field equipment	£1,500	£1,500		Camp, rain coat, shoes, bag etc.
Public presentation	£1,000	£1,000		Exhibition, poster, tourist training
Socio-economic surveying	£500	£500		With local households
Environmental Education	£500	£500		Purchasing books and stationery
Result publicizing	£ 500	£500		Publication, result publicising and presentation
TOTAL	£ 15,000	£12,000 was funded by RSG, and other £3000 was funded by "985 Research Project" of Minzu University of China.		

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

- For the project conducting in minority regions of China, more minority undergraduates and local minority pupils and adults should be attracted and encouraged in participation.
- The nature conservation and wildlife protection should be strengthened through the cooperation of researcher, local government and managing bureau.
- Maybe RSF could help Chinese researcher publicise the results to international academic communities, e.g. provide funding stay in one international institution for results publicising.

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, the RSGF logo was always used in whole project undertaking in presentations and talking materials;
- Because we often worked in the field and the internet is often not available, we could not provide enough information on our project to RSG, which will be changed and improved if we could conduct next RSG project. On the other hand, we provide the detailed information collectively which include the process of project and results in every stage.

11. Any other comments?

I and other team members are especially grateful to RSG. Because of RSG grants, we established an excellent team well-known in China for our work in minority regions and musk deer conservation. I would like to say I and my team have been growing and developing with RSG. In the future, we would work harder and act as the flagship team for musk deer conserving and minority development in the world. Thank you so much!