

Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report October 2008

Project Ref. No.	475
Project Title	Tropical Andean Butterfly Diversity Project – TABDP
Country(ies)	USA, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Perú, Bolivia
UK Organisation	University College London
Collaborator(s)	Venezuela: Museo del Instituto de Zoología Agrícola, Universidad Central de Venezuela, Maracay (MIZA); Instituto de Investigaciones Científicas de Venezuela IVIC. Colombia: Instituto de Ciencias Naturales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia (ICN); Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá. Ecuador: Museo Ecuatoriano de Ciencias Naturales, Quito (MECN). Perú: Museo de Historia Natural, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima (MUSM). Bolivia: Museo de Historia Natural Noel Kempff Mercado, Santa Cruz (MHNNKM); Museo Alcides D'Orbigny Cochabamba (MAO) y Colección Boliviana de Fauna de La Paz (CBF). USA: Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida, Gainesville (FLMNH). Andes Region: Conservation International (CI).
Report date	October 31, 2008
Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)	HYR 4
Project website	www.mariposasandinass.org (Spanish), www.andeanbutterflies.org

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – September) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up).

Data analysis

Preliminary data analysis was initially planned to have been conducted in April 2008. Our plans had been to use WORLDMAP software to identify a network of maximum-complementarity areas that most efficiently represented all tropical Andean butterfly species. However, following discussions with colleagues at Conservation International, we were advised to follow an alternative approach, that of identifying "Key Biodiversity Areas". We therefore decided to discuss both approaches with South American and international project partners and experts at the Workshop in September, before conducting any initial analyses (see below). We now plan to conduct data analyses in early 2009, depending on when we receive final databases from several project partners.

Andean Butterfly Diversity Workshop

Our final project workshop "Priorities in the Research and Conservation of Andean Butterflies" was held in Urubamba (Cuzco, Peru) in September 2008. There were 15 participants (UK: 1, USA: 2, Colombia: 4, Ecuador: 1, Peru: 2, Bolivia: 3, Poland: 1, France: 1), with another 5 invitees only being able to attend the subsequent conference (see below) due to work commitments. All of the country coordinators (except Venezuela) attended, in addition to other experts on principal groups of Andean butterflies and regions. Invitees who expressed an interest in contributing but were unable to attend will be invited to contribute to the final project publication. The workshop included the following main topics: report from Andean coordinators on the project's activities, achievements, problems and recommendations; content of the final project publication; methods for selection of priority areas for research and conservation; results to date for the IUCN Red List assessment and description of methods used, including the use of DIVA-GIS for ecological niche modelling; feedback from participants on current IUCN assessments, including compilation of additional locality data; compilation of databases and preliminary data verification; agreement of timetable and responsibilities for contributions to the

final project publication; ideas for future projects and potential sources of funding.

Key Butterfly Areas and “Regional Strategy for Butterfly Research and Conservation in the Tropical Andes”

A key topic of debate at the workshop was how best to prioritise areas for research and conservation. With input from Conservation International we eventually decided to primarily adopt their "Key Biodiversity Area" approach, because of ease of application, and because this is the approach that they favour, thus results will be of practical value to our main target audience. "Key Biodiversity Areas" (KBAs) are areas defined initially based on existing land use, typically existing protected areas, that contain either IUCN threatened category species, or restricted range species (those with a global range of < 50,000 km²). Compilation of data for restricted range species is much more straightforward than for all species and is already being done as part of the IUCN Red List assessment that we are conducting. A large number of KBAs is an almost inevitable result, so we plan to prioritise such areas based on number of key species, threat, number of additional species, and other criteria, to produce a target list of the 50 most important areas. Based on these areas, a Gap Analysis can be conducted to identify areas in most need of future research and/or conservation. We will also use additional criteria to identify areas in need of research, such as proximity to range edges of multiple species, areas with no current knowledge, areas under particular threat, etc. As described above, the content and structure of final project publication has now been defined and authors designated for chapters. Authors have agreed to submit their chapters and data by 31 March 2009 for compilation, editing and completion of the publication by the end of June 2009, the date for submission of the final project report.

I International Conference on Andean Butterflies

Partly in response to overwhelming interest among students at the courses conducted by the project over the last 2 years, and partly to encourage international experts to also attend the workshop, the project organized the first International Conference on Andean Butterflies to be held in Urubamba immediately after the workshop. Although our DI grant provided no financial support to the conference (instead, we received contributions from Conservation International and other research grants, as well as some payments by the conference participants themselves), we nevertheless feel it is an important outcome of the project and acknowledged the Darwin Initiative throughout. A total of 120 participants registered at the conference, from 12 countries, including 87 from the five tropical Andean countries, the great majority students. There were 50 talks and c. 20 posters presented, with prizes for the best poster, best undergraduate and best graduate student talk.



Publications

As discussed elsewhere, the publication schedule for the final project publication and key

papers has now been set back to the middle of 2009.

Database

The Bolivian and Peruvian country coordinators reported at the workshop that their databases now contain 20,041 and 5,000 records respectively, and should soon be handed over to the project leader for use in data analysis. Databasing continued at FLMNH and BMNH, but the majority of work is now concentrating on georeferencing localities and checking records for errors. This process is expected to continue until the end of March 2009, when the online database will be once more updated with new records.

2. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

All of our main project activities have been running several months behind the originally planned schedule, due to initial scheduling of the student courses in the first year of the project, which were determined by availability of project members, field sites, seasons, university term times etc. Thus our final project workshop also took place several months later than expected. In addition, the compilation and verification of data from project contributors is proving to be much more time-consuming than initially envisaged, with some 30 different databases to be merged. Although these changes should not impact the project budget, we expect a delay to completion of several project activities (as discussed above).

Have any of these issues been discussed with the Darwin Secretariat and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

The above issues were discussed with the Darwin Initiative in July 2008. We made a formal request to extend the end-date of the project to 31 March 2009 which was approved on 17/07/08. This change should not affect the budget of the project, but we do expect a delay in the final analysis of project data (as discussed above). Nevertheless, the timetable which we set out for receipt of data and contributions from collaborators should permit us to complete all of our project activities by the time the final report is due to the Darwin Initiative at the end of June 2009.

Discussed with the DI Secretariat: yes, in 07/08

Changes to the project schedule/workplan: yes, in 07/08

3. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

Not at this time.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document.

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form email** to Eilidh Young, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme at Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message eg Subject: 14-075 Darwin Half Year Report**