

# Darwin Initiative: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2010)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	EIDPO031
<b>Project Title</b>	Restoration of the Mangrove Finch in Isabela, Galápagos
<b>Country(ies)</b>	Galápagos, Ecuador
<b>UK Organisation</b>	Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust
<b>Collaborator(s)</b>	Charles Darwin Foundation, Galápagos National Park Service
<b>Project Leader</b>	H. Glyn Young
<b>Report date</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> October 2010
<b>Report No. (HYR 1/2/3/4)</b>	HYR 2
<b>Project website</b>	

## 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).

Field Manager, Francesca Cunninghame, has settled well and continued the routines established by Birgit Fessl.

Visits were made to Mangrove Finch sites on 28 April-5 May, 22 May-9 June and 10-22 July. Breeding activity at Playa Tortuga Negra and Caleta Black had almost ceased by late April. Rat bait stations were checked and refilled as necessary by the Project in April, by GNP in May and by the Project in July.

The Action Plan recommended translocation of Mangrove Finches to Bahía Cartago; however, reconnaissance at this site highlighted logistical problems with monitoring birds (dense mangles, few landing and camping areas). The mangrove area at Bahía Urbina, south of PTN, was nominated as a site for a trial release ahead of any large-scale programme. Urbina was visited in April in preparation for translocation of Mangrove Finches when the breeding season at the traditional sites had ended. The first rat bait stations at this site were distributed and transects cut. Nine finches (four adults and five juveniles) were translocated by boat from Playa Tortuga Negra to Urbina in late May accompanied by a veterinarian (Sharon Deem). All birds were moved on the day of capture and were held in captivity 2-7 hours. Each bird was ringed and fitted with a radio transmitter, initial monitoring lasted 2-14 days depending on how long the transmitters remained on the birds. All birds appeared settled after release and were seen to feed. One juvenile was subsequently found dead eight days after release and one returned to PTN having flown over 12km of bare lava.

Urbina was visited again 10-22 July but the translocated finches could not be located. By this time the breeding season had ended and Mangrove Finches do not sing and are very hard to locate in dense mangles. PTN was visited but the, ringed, birds were not seen here.

Sandra Landazuri has been employed through the Project to manage education projects in Puerto Villamil.

Maxwell Collignon (SUNY) has reported on positive progress with *Philornis* tests using material collected by Mangrove Finch team. Although further flies are requested for pheromone trials things are looking hopeful.

One further scientific paper has been published and two have been accepted for publication following revisions:

Brumm, H., Farrington, H., Petren, K. & Fessl, B. (2010). Evolutionary Dead End in the Galápagos: Divergence of Sexual Signals in the Rarest of Darwin's Finches. PLoS ONE 5(6): e11191. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0011191

Fessl, B., Dvorak, M., Vargas, F.H. & Young, H.G. (in press). Recent conservation efforts and identification of the Critically Endangered mangrove finch *Camarhynchus heliobates* in Galápagos. *Cotinga*

Fessl, B., Loaiza, A.D., Tebbich, S. & Young, H.G. (in press). Feeding and nesting requirements of the critically endangered Mangrove Finch (*Camarhynchus heliobates*). *Journal of Ornithology*.

The Action Plan has been translated into Spanish, by Hernan Vargas, and will be printed shortly.

**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.**

Predicted costs for internal travel (notably boating requirements) continue to be problematical. The budget has always been based on expenses required to hire boats to and from the field if GNP support is unavailable through conflicts of work programme. However, increasingly the Project is able to fit in with GNP schedules. We have also become very adept at acquiring free lifts!

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

Notes to reviewers of 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Report (Year 1) have been sent (29/10/10) and include proposed changes to project logframe.

**Discussed with LTS:**                      no/yes, in..... (month/yr)

**Formal change request submitted:**    no/yes, in.....(month/yr)

**Received confirmation of change acceptance**                      no/yes in.....(month/yr)

**3. Do you expect to have any significant (eg more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?**

Yes     No  Possible underspend is unclear until after planning meetings in Galápagos in November 2010.

**If yes, and you wish to request a carryforward of funds, this should be done as soon as possible. It would help Defra manage Darwin funds more efficiently if you could give an indication of how much you expect this request might be for.**

**Estimated carryforward request: £**

**4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin's management, monitoring, or financial procedures? No**

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 LTS International directly.**

Please send your **completed form by email** to Eilidh Young at [Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.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: 17-075 Darwin Half Year Report**