

Darwin Fellowships Reporting Guidelines

Darwin Fellows are expected to submit two reports to the Darwin Initiative, in which they have the opportunity to report on their experiences gained during the Fellowship and on any other issues they would like to raise. Please look at the formats for both reports provided overleaf and contact me if you have any questions.

Darwin Fellows are expected to prepare the reports in conjunction with the UK Host Organisation who are responsible for ensuring the submission and reporting deadlines are adhered to.

If the Fellowship is between 3-6 months: please provide:

- a brief Interim Report after 3 months (max 3 pages), submitted by month 4;
- a Final Report within 1 month of the end of the Fellowship, (max 6 pages excluding annexes).

If the Fellowship is between 6-12 months: please provide:

- a brief Interim Report after 6 months from commencement (max 3 pages) submitted by month 7.
- a Final Report within 1 month of completion of the Fellowship (max 6 pages excluding annexes)

ECTF will read all reports submitted, but will only provide a written review of the Final report – please do not expect feedback from the Interim Report unless there are specific concerns about the progress of the Fellowship. ECTF will provide a written review of the Final report within 2 months of receipt – if you have not heard from us within that timescale, please feel free to contact me for an update.

Please send your report by email to me at Darwin-Projects@ectf-ed.org.uk and include the name of the Darwin Fellow in the subject line.

If you have any additional queries about reporting, please feel free to email or call on 0131 440 5181.

Eilidh Young
Darwin Projects

Darwin Fellowship - Interim Report

(Please check guidance for submission deadlines, max 3 pages.)

Darwin Main Project Ref No	EIDPS19
Darwin Project Title	
Name of Darwin Fellow	Julie Hanta Razafimanahaka
UK Organisation	School of Biological Sciences University of Aberdeen Aberdeen AB24 2TZ
Your Organisation(s)	Madagasikara Voakajy BP 5181 101 Antananarivo Madagascar
Your role within your Organisation	Research Project manager
Start/end date of Fellowship	01 September 2007/31 August 2008
Location	School of Biological Sciences University of East Anglia Norwich NR4 7TJ
Darwin fellowship funding (£)	27,264
Type of work (eg research, training, other, please specify)	MSc course in Applied Ecology and Conservation
Main contact in UK Organisation	Pr Paul Racey
Author(s), date	Julie Hanta Razafimanahaka Pr Paul Racey 22 February 2008

1. Background

- Briefly describe your involvement in the Darwin project before the start of your fellowship. In 2003/04, I was an undergraduate trainee on a Darwin project (16/10/024) during which I learned the basic essential field techniques to study and conserve endemic microchiropteran bats. I later became a staff member on a Darwin post-project grant (EIDP10) which saw the creation of a new Malagasy biodiversity organisation called Madagasikara Voakajy. I was responsible for the management of our bat database, the environmental education project which involved collaborating with the Ministry of Education and Scientific research and leading field surveys for bats. From 2006, I was the principal investigator a study of habitat preferences, roost selection and hunting patterns of *Hipposideros commersoni*, the largest insectivorous bat of Madagascar.

- Describe aim and objectives of the Fellowship, and programme of work

The aim of the Fellowship is to acquire a high standard of research and conservation skills through an MSc course in Applied Ecology and Conservation at the University of East Anglia. Among the skills to be learned are research design and planning, data analysis, population modelling, and conservation genetics. These will be acquired through a six-month taught programme (September 07 – March 08), and a six months field research project which will be presented as a thesis in August 08.

- Briefly describe the roles of the UK and Fellow's institutions

The University of Aberdeen administers the project fund. I also receive advice from Professor Paul Racey (University of Aberdeen) and Dr Richard Jenkins (Madagasikara Voakajy) on aspects related to living in the UK.

2. Progress

- Provide a brief account of your work since the start of your fellowship, showing progress against the programme of work.

The course started on 19th September 07 and eight modules have been attended:

- Univariate and multivariate statistics	Compulsory	66/100
- Research skills for ecologists	Compulsory	69/100
- Issues in conservation	Compulsory	72/100
- Ecological survey methods	Compulsory	
- Population dynamics and modelling	Optional	69/100
- Restoration ecology	Optional	
- Introduction to GIS	Optional	
- Conservation genetics	Sitting in	

The research project will be done with the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation on the restoration of the Bambous Mountains in the east coast of Mauritius. I will particularly look for the suitability of the Bambous Mountains for the reintroduction of the Mauritius cuckoo shrike (*Coracina typica*) and paradise-flycatcher (*Terpsiphone bourbonnensis desolata*). This research will be conducted with another student in my class. She will investigate habitat suitability while I will focus on the prey availability.

- Provide an account of any problems encountered and how you have or are planning to overcome them.

No problems have been encountered so far.

- Are there any issues you would like to raise?

There are no issues to raise

3. Achievements and Outcomes

- What have been the main achievements and outcomes to date, and how do they relate to the overall aim and objectives of the Fellowship.

I'm almost at the end of the taught part of the programme. To date, I have learned to write grant application and research proposals, to analyse data using SPSS (statistics) and ArcGIS (geographic information). I could also improve my understanding of genetic conservation and population modelling issues. The overall aim and objectives of the Fellowship are being achieved from a theoretical viewpoint. The research project will be an opportunity to apply these new learnt skills and to achieve the objectives practically.

4. Next Steps

- Briefly describe forthcoming activities, events, milestones

28th March – 15th June: Field data collection in Mauritius

18th July: Research results presentation

02nd August: Submission of thesis write-up

By the end of August or early in September, the final results will be announced and the official graduation will be in July 2009.

In September 08, I'll go back to Madagascar and will return working with Madagasikara Voakajy. I will share my newly acquired skills with my colleagues and students I'll be working with, and will contribute to raise funds for our organization.