



## Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31 October 2016)

<b>Project Ref No</b>	DPLUS040
<b>Project Title</b>	Securing the future for St Helena's endemic invertebrates
<b>Country(ies)/Territory(ies)</b>	St Helena
<b>Lead Organisation</b>	St Helena National Trust
<b>Partner(s)</b>	St Helena Government, Natural History Museum, Royal Museum for Central Africa, Buglife
<b>Project Leader</b>	David Pryce
<b>Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)</b>	HYR2
<b>Project website/ Twitter/ Blog/ Instagram etc.</b>	<a href="http://www.nationaltrust.org.sh/shnt-conservation-programmes/natural-heritage/bugs-on-the-brink-our-invertebrates/">http://www.nationaltrust.org.sh/shnt-conservation-programmes/natural-heritage/bugs-on-the-brink-our-invertebrates/</a> <a href="http://www.facebook.com/buglives/?ref=bookmarks">http://www.facebook.com/buglives/?ref=bookmarks</a>
<b>Funder (DFID/Defra)</b>	DEFRA

### 1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) 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 to end September).

#### Output 1

An Invertebrate Project Officer has been appointed; Sasha Bargo is a St Helenian national and has a degree in Ecology and Conservation Management from Sparsholt College in the UK; she has been in position for two months. Training so far has been centred around invertebrate surveying, identification, and ecology. She is currently progressing through the online Red Listing training and has nearly completed this challenging work.

#### Output 2

The invertebrate reference collection continues to grow; it now contains 1403 specimens of 227 species (16.1% of those recorded from the island). About half of the specimens are in the alcohol collection and half pinned or card mounted in the dry collection.

The digital resource continues to grow and be improved. There are now 1874 high resolution macro-photography images of 506 taxa in the resource; nearly all the taxonomic literature available for the island's terrestrial invertebrates has been collated and digitised. The island species list and records file have also been worked on extensively; 1403 species have now been recorded from the island of which 1264 are believed to be extant; the records file currently holds 10,908 species occurrences, all of which are now able to be mapped in high resolution.

Identification keys to 277 taxa have been prepared and are currently being tested.

The capital equipment and invertebrate traps have been ordered and we are currently awaiting their arrival.

#### Output 5

An initial survey has been undertaken to determine the extent of Mole spider territory on Prosperous Bay Plain and it has been agreed with Basil Read that data can be shared so that we can include an area that is now off-limits due to airport security regulations.

In July, the Project Manager attended the Island Biology 2016 conference hosted by the University of the Azores. The conference provided a platform to raise awareness of the St Helena and the many issues regarding conservation on the island; it was also very useful for networking and informal meetings were held with numerous workers from institutions such as Kew Gardens and Buglife. Stefano Taiti from the Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche in Italy, who is working with the Spiky yellow woodlouse project (DPLUS025) as also in attendance and discussions were held with him about this and how he could help.

A two-day Red Listing workshop was attended with other members of the Mid Atlantic Island Invertebrate Specialist Group (MAISG), before the conference. This was the first meeting of the group established under the previous invertebrate project 19-029. Following the conference US\$1,500 of funding from Toyota was obtained through MAISG to help with the Red Listing work on St Helena. Five days of invertebrate training were also delivered to the two new Terrestrial Conservation Officers on Ascension Island during the return leg of this trip.

The Education and Project Officer continues to improve and enhance the resources developed during 19-029 and 20-005 projects. A forest school has now been established on island and she is working in conjunction with the Trust's Forest School Officer to deliver invertebrate and wildlife themed activities, mostly to Primary aged children.

A contract was secured by the Trust to provide training in invertebrate identification to biosecurity staff; the first part of this has now been delivered.

The project has engaged with the DPLUS0029 project to assess the invertebrate faunas of the endemic fragments being conserved by that project. A standardised, careful sampling methodology has been developed to minimise the risk to populations present at these sites. A total of 10 sites have been surveyed so far and an objective scoring system developed to assess the relative importance of the sites. This has generated significant important material for the invertebrate collection which is still currently being processed and added to it; so far a total of 19 species not seen since the last major survey in 1967 have been identified.

The Trust has also undertaken an EIA for several proposed new reservoirs on the island. This involved invertebrate survey work and has enabled us to trial the methodology we will be using during the main survey; this has resulted in us reducing the amount of time the traps will be operating to three days every four weeks to reduce the amount of material collected to more manageable levels. Specimens from this material have yet to be added to the collection.

**2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt 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.**

The project has faced some unforeseen and unavoidable challenges related to personal matters impacting the Project Manager at the outset of the project. These have now been largely resolved and should present no further difficulties. As a direct result of this the timeline outlined in the initial project bid needs to be adjusted significantly. These adjustments will be outlined in full in a Change Request to be submitted shortly. The requested changes will bring the project back on track, but additional time will be required to complete the project.

**2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?**

Discussed with LTS: No

Formal change request submitted: [to follow]

Received confirmation of change acceptance No

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

Yes  No  Estimated underspend: £19,921.56

**3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully.** Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project please submit a re-budget Change Request as soon as possible. There is no guarantee that Defra will agree a re-budget so please ensure you have enough time to make appropriate changes if necessary.

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

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 can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at [Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk](mailto:Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk) . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g., Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**