

CEPF SMALL GRANT FINAL PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT

Organization Legal Name:	Te Ipukarea Society
Project Title:	Enhance the breeding capacity of the reintroduced Rimatara Lorikeet (<i>Vini kuhlii</i>) by reducing harassment by Common Myna (<i>Acridotheres tristis</i>)
Date of Report:	10 April as a preliminary report Extension to 30 April - report +60days ie. 29 th June Email extension to 10 July
Report Author and Contact Information	Gerald McCormack, gerald@nature.gov.ck

CEPF Region: Micronesia-Polynesia Hotspot

Strategic Direction: 1. Prevent, control, and eradicate invasive species in key biodiversity areas.

Grant Amount: USD19,220

Project Dates: Initial project 1st Feb 2009 to 31 Jan 2010, with extension to 31 April 2010

Implementation Partners for this Project (please explain the level of involvement for each partner):

Natural Heritage Trust - the project was implemented by the Trust with the community of Atiu

Conservation Impacts

Please explain/describe how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile.

The project was proposed under CEPF strategic direction: 1. Prevent, control, and eradicate invasive species in key biodiversity areas.

Per the proposal this project reduced mynas on Atiu and thereby reduced the level of harassment by Common Myna on the reintroduced Rimatara Lorikeets during the breeding season.

During the 2008 breeding season mynas were seen to constantly harass the lorikeets at the only two known nests and in one case they attacked a fledgling as it left the nest. Although there are still too few lorikeets to accurately sample and estimate the population we have some indicative estimates, which indicate an increase from the 23 reintroduced in mid-2007 to at least 90, and possibly around 120, by June 2010. And although we are not able to quantify the effect, we believe that reducing the number of mynas made a positive contribution to increasing the number of lorikeets.

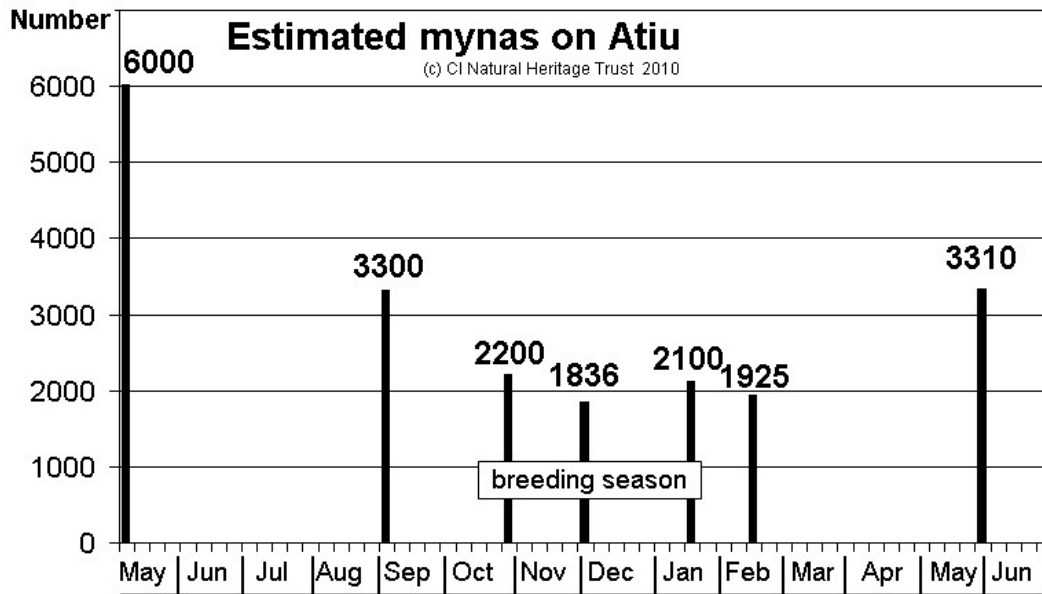
Although this project was implemented under CEPF strategic direction of controlling an invasive, it equally enhanced the survival of the Rimatara Lorikeet, a CEPF priority species for CEPF investment, and it benefited other birds on the island of Atiu, which is a priority site for CEPF investment.

Please summarize the overall results/impact of your project against the expected results detailed in the approved proposal.

The project was to drastically reduce the number of common myna on Atiu. The project reduced the population to about 30% at the peak of the Atiu bird breeding season.

Various efforts were made to estimate the myna population and we think there were at least 6,000 when the project started in May 2009. By December, the middle of the bird breeding season of Atiu birds, the mynas were down to about 2,000. Although the programme continued the surviving mynas breed relatively successfully and in the New Year mynas had too much

alterative food to be very interested in poison rice. Despite this the project managed to keep the number down to about 3,000 by June 2010.



The reason for proposing a reduction rather than an eradication was that from an earlier feasibility study on Mangaia it was estimated that it would take \$NZ100,000 (USD70,000) to have a reasonable chance of eradication with no guarantee of success. Because of the urgency to start the reduction programme on Atiu to assist the breeding of the few reintroduced Rimatara Lorikeets it was decided to apply for a Small Grant because CEPF literature indicated that this could be granted in a shorter timeframe. Therefore we applied for a USD20,000 grant to reduce myna numbers and thus reduce the level of harassment on the breeding lorikeets.

Although we have come to the end of the small grant the myna reduction project on Atiu is continuing with a major change of strategy launched on the 1st July. This new strategy sets certain community goals and if these are achieved then we will open discussions on changing the reduction project into an eradication campaign. Although there is plenty of talk and theorising about eradicating mynas on islands, this has never been achieved on the scale of the Atiu situation and there is no doubt that eradication will be a formidable task for a community-based project.

Please provide the following information where relevant:

Hectares Protected: n/a
Species Conserved: n/a
Corridors Created: n/a

Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives.

Such a project on mynas has not been attempted on a Pacific tropical island before, so the project was one of continual experimentation and adaptation. The primary system was poisoning with Starlicide (DRC1339) and this was implemented by two Atiu workers employed around two hours each afternoon. In this way the project helped with poverty alleviation on the island, was well accepted by the local community, and the workers knew the protocols concerning access to land under traditional ownership. The

coordinator visited Atiu seven times in the course of the project to monitor progress and suggest changes to the poisoning methodology. Although the coordinator travel was factored into the project proposal the local airline decided to become a major sponsor and this enabled all air travel funds to be used to fund the actual reduction work. We were also able to reduce administration costs by not appointing an assistant supervisor.

Poisoning:

On Mangaia the mynas were in only a few roosts and for some, at least, there were clear areas nearby for afternoon poisoning. On Atiu the college students found mynas in 38 roosts and most had no areas nearby for evening poisoning. Initial experiments were undertaken near an accessible roost with pre-feeding for three evenings in a wire cage to exclude roaming chickens. The poisoning killed most of the feeding birds but the next evening no birds would approach the feeders and it appeared that more than 50% of the birds in the roost had not visited the feeders having come to the roost from other directions. A couple more attempts of poisoning at roosts were trialed and then this method was mainly abandoned.

After abandoning the poisoning at roosts, the poison was made available in different ways: on the ground after cultivation or mowing of fields without pre-feeding; at known feeding areas there was pre-feeding on small trays followed by one evening of poisoning; and putting poison rice inside papaya and coconuts. Poison was primarily dispensed in boiled rice but many combinations of fruit and rice were trialed - the system was under constant development.

Bounties:

The community was offered a bounty for dead mynas (\$1, later \$2) or reported myna nests (\$3) and they participated with variable success.

Trapping:

In December the co-coordinator constructed experimental traps based on simplified Australian designs. They worked well on Rarotonga mynas but failed to catch any mynas on Atiu. By this time the reduced number of mynas meant there was much ripe fruit on plants and the mynas were not interested in open fruit in the cages, and gradually their interest in poisoned rice also waned.

Air-guns:

Two air-guns with telescopic sights were provided to the workers in August but they proved ineffective because inhabitants did not like the telescopic sights, and even after these were removed the patience to use the guns effectively against mynas was an obstacle.

By December about 30% of the original mynas remained and this remained the case through to February. However the June count showed that the population had increased to about 50% of the original, showing the effect of the last breeding season.

Despite the increase of mynas after their breeding season, the project achieved an excellent result for a grant of only US\$20,000.

Although the small grant has finished, the project is ongoing to drastically reduce the mynas for a second lorikeet breeding season. A new strategy was launched this month and after the first week the results are very encouraging. If the success continues we will be in a position to consider starting an eradication campaign in September.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

None that I know of.

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building. Consider lessons that would inform projects designed or implemented by your organization or others, as well as lessons that might be considered by the global conservation community.

As a ground breaking project we focused on experimentation, adaptation and capacity building - see above. It must be emphasized that this project was undertaken by residents with monthly monitoring and encouragement from a scientist. The focus was on community participation and capacity building. The Atiu college students were used to find the 38 myna roosts. The Trust arranged for a University of Leeds (UK) student to do her masters thesis on the myna population in June 2009 and her estimates of the total number of mynas were important background information.

The initial plan of poisoning at winter roosts proved ineffective and after that it was a project of discovery - poisoning at piggeries, on freshly mown or cultivated fields, and along roads; poisoning on the ground and on elevated trays; mixing poison with rice and various fruits; ways to reduce the intake of poison by roaming chickens; the use of airguns; using traditional chicken traps; using different designs of myna traps from Australia; destruction of nests - and this project is continuing with further strategies of killing mynas. If these new strategies are successful we should be in a position to discuss moving onto an eradication campaign around September, and then we will initiate further new strategies to kill more birds and to reduce their nesting capacity.

Project Design Process: (aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

The non-eradication objective was realistic considering the small amount of funds, and the fact that an initial 65% reduction was achieved was more than expected. In addition to this reduction the project was mainly one of learning and capacity building.

Project Implementation: (aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings)

The project achieved its primary objective. This could have been achieved by importing an overseas team of pest control experts, but the idea here was to build the capacity of the community and have them execute the project with periodic monitoring and advice from a visiting scientist (myself). Around 80% of the funds went directly to the Atiu community.

It was known that this approach would make the control programme much slower but not more expensive.

In the larger conservation picture it would have been best to have had the time to apply for a major CEPF grant so that more people in the Atiu community could have been employed and then we could have realistically sought to eradicate the myna. However, with the experience gained over the course of the present project we are now continuing to achieve a further reduction of mynas for the coming breeding season and, depending upon the success of the reduction, it might be realistic to change the programme into an eradication project.

Other lessons learned relevant to conservation community:

Work with local residents rather than bring in overseas 'experts'. This has the advantage that most of the funds directly support community livelihoods, along with capacity building and increasing awareness of the harm done by invasive species. Although local communities are very used to waiting for overseas experts to implement projects we felt that it was better to implement the project more slowly with plenty of time for experimentation and capacity building.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Provide details of any additional donors who supported this project and any funding secured for the project as a result of the CEPF grant or success of the project.

Donor	Type of Funding*	Amount	Notes
Air Rarotonga	A	USD8,000	most air travel for coordinator

**Additional funding should be reported using the following categories:*

- A Project co-financing (Other donors contribute to the direct costs of this CEPF project)*
- B Grantee and Partner leveraging (Other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF project.)*
- C Regional/Portfolio leveraging (Other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project.)*

Sustainability/Replicability

Summarize the success or challenge in achieving planned sustainability or replicability of project components or results.

The project outcome was not expected to be sustainable. It was explained above why we applied for only a small grant known that this could not achieve a sustainable eradication of the common myna on Atiu. Depending on the outcome of new strategies now underway, we will be applying for further funds to attempt an eradication of the myna on Atiu, which will be sustainable, because the myna is not known to colonize over ocean gaps as surround Atiu.

Summarize any unplanned sustainability or replicability achieved.

Nil

Safeguard Policy Assessment

Provide a summary of the implementation of any required action toward the environmental and social safeguard policies within the project.

Nil

Performance Tracking Report Addendum

CEPF Global Targets

(Enter Grant Term)

Provide a numerical amount and brief description of the results achieved by your grant.
Please respond to only those questions that are relevant to your project.

Project Results	Is this question relevant?	If yes, provide your numerical response for results achieved during the annual period.	Provide your numerical response for project from inception of CEPF support to date.	Describe the principal results achieved from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. (Attach annexes if necessary)
1. Did your project strengthen management of a protected area guided by a sustainable management plan? Please indicate number of hectares improved.	N/A			Please also include name of the protected area(s). If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
2. How many hectares of new and/or expanded protected areas did your project help establish through a legal declaration or community agreement?	nil			Please also include name of the protected area. If more than one, please include the number of hectares strengthened for each one.
3. Did your project strengthen biodiversity conservation and/or natural resources management inside a key biodiversity area identified in the CEPF ecosystem profile? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	no			
4. Did your project effectively introduce or strengthen biodiversity conservation in management practices outside protected areas? If so, please indicate how many hectares.	yes			Members of the community became more aware of managing invasives.
5. If your project promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, how many local communities accrued tangible socioeconomic benefits? Please complete Table 1 below.	yes			Much of the community participation was funded by the project, especially the two part-time staff who poisoned most days. The local motel benefited by seven visits of teh organiser.

If you answered yes to question 5, please complete the following table.

Table 1. Socioeconomic Benefits to Target Communities

Please complete this table if your project provided concrete socioeconomic benefits to local communities. List the name of each community in column one. In the subsequent columns under Community Characteristics and Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit, place an X in all relevant boxes. In the bottom row, provide the totals of the Xs for each column.

Name of Community	Community Characteristics							Nature of Socioeconomic Benefit													
	Small landowners	Subsistence economy	Indigenous/ ethnic peoples	Pastoralists/nomadic peoples	Recent migrants	Urban communities	Communities falling below the poverty rate	Other	Increased Income due to:				Improved food security due to the adoption of sustainable fishing, hunting, or agricultural practices	More secure access to water resources	Improved tenure in land or other natural resource due to titling, reduction of colonization, etc.	Reduced risk of natural disasters (fires, landslides, flooding, etc)	More secure sources of energy	Increased access to public services, such as education, health, or credit	Improved use of traditional knowledge for environmental management	More participatory decision-making due to strengthened civil society and governance.	Other
									Adoption of sustainable natural resources management practices	Ecotourism revenues	Park management activities	Payment for environmental services									
Atiu island community	X	X	X							X		X	X								
Total	1	1	1							1		1	1								

If you marked "Other", please provide detail on the nature of the Community Characteristic and Socioeconomic Benefit:

Additional Comments/Recommendations

Nil

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

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