



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Department
for International
Development



Darwin Plus: Half Year Report

(due 31 October 2015)

Project Ref No	DPLUS006
Project Title	Seed conservation in the Caribbean UKOTs
Country(ies)	Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands
Lead Organisation	Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
Partner(s)	Anguilla Department of Environment, National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands Department of Environment, Montserrat Department of Environment, Turks and Caicos Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs
Project Leader	Thomas Heller
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR3
Project website	

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) (max 500 words).

The project was originally due to end at the end of July 2015, but we were granted a five month no-cost extension, to the end of November, to provide more time for the targeting and collecting of seeds over the course of the summer.

In the 6 months April to September 2015, collecting has continued in all five partner countries (Output 2). For example, in Montserrat, reconnaissance visits to the field by Department of Environment staff have yielded localities for 17 target species, and seed collections made for 13 of these, all of them previously identified as priorities for the project. In the British Virgin Islands, the National Parks Trust have been collecting across the islands, with important collections of three very important target species: *Leptocereus quadricostatus*, *Erythrina eggertii*, and *Sabal causiarum*, all of which are endemic to the Puerto Rican Bank and are therefore high priorities for *ex-situ* conservation. Partners at the Department of Environment in Cayman have secured collections of 15 species in this time, with a large proportion of these from priority species.

Repatriation of seeds (Output 1): Import permits have now been issued for repatriation of seeds to Cayman and the British Virgin Islands; with shipping to Cayman, BVI and Montserrat due to take place in the last week of October. Repatriation of seeds to Turks and Caicos continues to be delayed by difficulties in purchasing a freezer for housing seeds in-country. We continue to seek progress on this matter.

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 (max 300 words).

A very dry summer in the Caribbean, especially in the Turks and Caicos Islands, British Virgin Islands and Anguilla, has resulted in a lower than usual level of flowering and fruiting plants in the region, making targeting species for seed collecting much more difficult. Where target species are found to be fruiting, the availability of seeds is often found to be lower than ideal. This is having an impact on achieving the target number of collections. The figure currently stands at about 216, versus the target of 250. We will continue to monitor this in the final months of the project and ensure efforts to make collections continues to the end of the project.

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

No.

Discussed with LTS:	Yes/No
Formal change request submitted:	Yes/No
Received confirmation of change acceptance:	Yes/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: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year. 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 and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

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 . The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g., Subject: DPLUSXXX Darwin Half Year Report**