

Darwin Initiative

Half Year Report (due 31 October each year)

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the increased number of reports expected in 2005, we will not be able to confirm receipt of reports but will contact you individually should any questions arise

Project Ref. No.	14-028
Project Title	Conservation of Puna's Andean cats across national borders
Country(ies)	Argentina, Bolivia and Chile
UK Organisation	Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), Oxford University
Collaborator(s)	Andean Cat Alliance (AGA); Mammal Behavioural Ecology Group, Universidad Nacional del Sur (GECM, Argentina); Museo de Ciencias Naturales de Salta, Universidad Nacional de Salta (Argentina); Colección Boliviana de Fauna (CBF, Bolivia); Fundación Biodiversitas (FB, Chile)
Report date	31 October 2006
Report No	HYR 1
Project website	www.wildcru.org/andeanecat

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 research and educational activities have progressed well in relation to our timetable. Collection of field data on Puna's mammals is progressing in all three countries. Two short field campaigns have been completed in Bolivia; the Chilean team conducted an exploratory field visit soon to be followed by a longer campaign; in Argentina researchers are presently engaged in a long field campaign. A line-transect protocol, developed and adopted by all teams in our Methodology workshop last year to ensure data compatibility, is the main method used for recording presence of carnivores and their prey base. Shortly we will be able to analyze the most recent transect data and run a more definitive power analysis to determine the methodology utility for strict statistical comparisons between areas, habitats and species (or groups of species most likely). The field manual on monitoring techniques is well advanced, and will be tested during the first training workshop with protected area staff to be held in Bolivia. The revised version will be published by January 2007.

We have started a new analysis of Andean cat diet, which uses DNA-based specific identification of faeces, in collaboration with Daniel Cossios (AGA – Peru, and University of Montreal, Canada). Preliminary results confirm the expected relative rarity of Andean cats in the study area. The faecal samples will be integrated into Daniels's PhD dissertation looking at population genetics of Andean and Pampas cats.

Three postgraduate students, one in each country, have been evaluated and research plans approved at their respective institutions. Data collection plans have been prepared in accordance to their research plans and the project's overall aim of understanding better the relationships between carnivores and their prey in this ecosystem.

Magdalena Bennett received a fellowship from the Society for Conservation GIS and ESRI (Environmental System Research System) to participate in a GIS training course and the Congress of Conservation Biology in California, where she presented results on her work on habitat use of the Andean cat in the Surire National Monument, Chile.

Education activities have expanded in Argentina with a teacher's training workshop attended by

3. 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.

Question: Whether and to what degree the project engages with the Andean cat action plan as mentioned in the original application?

Answer: The DI project was conceived chiefly as a response to the publication of the Andean Cat Conservation Action Plan (PAGA), on which guidelines this project has been based. Our activities and all the activities undertaken by the project contribute to the fulfilment of many of the PAGA's specific objectives http://www.wildnet.org/downloads/AGA_action_plan.pdf

Please note: Any planned modifications to your project schedule/workplan or budget should not be discussed in this report but raised with the Darwin Secretariat directly.

Please send your **completed form by 31 October each year per email** to Stefanie Halfmann, Darwin Initiative M&E Programme, stefanie.halfmann@ed.ac.uk. The report should be between 1-2 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message.**