

Here are some examples of possible ways in which you could reference Conservation Evidence in your application, based on previous successful applicants.

UK mammal project examples

Bats in urban environments

This project aims to understand whether altering the ground vegetation of green spaces in York, by delaying mowing and planting wildflowers, affects bat abundance, species composition or feeding activity. According to www.conservationevidence.com, the effects of providing foraging habitat for bats in urban areas have been little studied (<http://www.conservationevidence.com/actions/954>). One study in the USA found higher bat activity and changed species composition in restored forest preserves in urban areas compared to an unrestored forest preserve, and a study in the UK found significantly higher bat activity and more bat feeding events over green roofs in urban areas than over conventional unvegetated roofs. There is therefore clear potential that bat abundance and diversity can be increased in urban areas. However, given that the single study on bats and agri-environment schemes in the UK showed lower insect abundance and lower bat activity on farms where agri-environment schemes such as managing field margins, hedgerows, or grasslands (<http://www.conservationevidence.com/actions/962>), it is important not to assume that 'positive' changes to management will benefit bats. This is why we will carefully evaluate the impacts of the new management regime.

Pine marten recovery

In this project, we will trap pine martens in Scotland for release in Wales, to reintroduce the species to parts of its former range. As of 2017, evidence for the effect of conservation interventions for pine martens have not yet been collated on www.conservationevidence.com. Instead, we have conducted our own feasibility analysis, by referring to a wide range of literature and our own pilot studies (<http://www.vwt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Feasibility-Assessment-for-Reinforcing-Pine-Martens-in-England-and-Wales.pdf>). We analysed not only the likelihood of the martens surviving and reproducing, but also the potential impacts on other species, and the receptiveness of local people to the idea of reintroduction. While public support was high for a reintroduction, in some places we may need to engage with local communities to avoid persecution of this species. Results from studies of efforts to reduce bird persecution by education programs and local engagement indicated that in five out of six cases there were increases in bird populations or decreases in mortality following education programmes (<http://www.conservationevidence.com/actions/274>). However, the results are difficult to interpret as in all but one case, education was one of several interventions employed. We will document changes in public attitudes before and after education programs, and in control sites where education programs were not employed.

Worldwide project examples

Mountain chicken

The antifungal drug itraconazole has established itself as a useful treatment for chytridiomycosis in laboratory or semi-field conditions. According to Conservation Evidence (<http://www.conservationevidence.com/actions/882>), six of the eight studies in Japan, Tasmania, the UK and USA testing treatment of captive amphibians with itraconazole found that it was

effective at curing amphibians of chytridiomycosis. One study found that it reduced infection levels and one found mixed effects. In one study, wild amphibians were treated in captivity for 7 months, then released, which reduced infection levels although not clearing the infection completely (<http://www.conservationevidence.com/actions/767>); however there have so far been no trials treating amphibians for chytridiomycosis completely in the wild. In this project we will build on the previous success of itraconazole as a treatment, by testing how effective it is at reducing chytridiomycosis infection in wild amphibians *in situ*.

Snow leopards

We aim to test whether building permanent night-time livestock enclosures of 2 m high chain-link fencing will reduce livestock depredation by snow leopards, hopefully reducing snow-leopard/human conflict. While the evidence for the effectiveness of livestock protection schemes on big cat conservation has not yet been collated on www.conservationevidence.com, using search terms such as 'lion', 'leopard', 'fence' and 'livestock' yielded some relevant summarised individual studies. Fortifying traditional night-time livestock corrals with chain-link fence (height unspecified) was a cost-effective way to reduce livestock depredation by lions in Kenya (<http://www.conservationevidence.com/individual-study/6238>), however larger fenced areas with a 2 m chain link fence proved ineffective at reducing losses in South Africa (<http://www.conservationevidence.com/individual-study/1442>). 2 m high chain link fences around a relatively small grazing area reduced livestock attacks by bears in China (<http://www.conservationevidence.com/individual-study/5478>). Based on these results, we consider that fencing of livestock at night may be a viable way to reduce losses. We aim to test a) whether a 2 m high chain link fence around night-time corrals reduces livestock losses, b) whether the cost of the fence is lower than the cost of the 'saved' livestock, and c) whether this results in fewer retaliatory killings of snow leopards.