



# Monthly Newsletter from The Environment & Natural Resources Directorate, Environmental Management Division. November 2013



## Congratulations to 'SHAPE'

SHAPE (St Helena's Active Participation in Enterprise), won this year's Green Business Award on Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Well done SHAPE!

### NEW HEAD OF EMD – BEN SANSOM

It was a very warm welcome that greeted my family and I when we arrived on Saint Helena on the 6<sup>th</sup> November. We had been given a small introduction to island life before we came from friends who either live here or have visited Saint Helena, but nothing could prepare us for the beauty of the island and the friendliness of its people when we arrived.

As the new Head of the Environmental Management Division (EMD), my role is to consolidate plans, policies and processes that have been set during the establishment of EMD in 2012 and to ensure that the National Goal 3 (in the Sustainable Development Plan) - "Effective Management of the Environment" - is delivered. Throughout the next two years I aim to raise the profile of the environmental guidelines and ensure that appropriate enforcement and monitoring systems are in place to protect our natural and built environment, safeguard our health and protect our islands natural resources.

Over the past two weeks I have started to meet many of the organisations, groups, businesses and individuals working to protect and sustainably develop Saint Helena. I look forward to continue working collaboratively with them and working alongside you to ensure that we deliver National Goal 3.

On a final note, please remember to use water wisely over the coming months so that we can all continue to have access to water during the Summer – every drop counts.

**Ben Sansom**  
Head of EMD

### CHICKS, CHIPS AND SNIPS

As some readers may know cats can have a dramatic effect on the survival of bird populations. Whether a cat is domestic or otherwise it is a sad fact that they can cause a lot of damage.

Recently as part of the Seabird Tracking Project run by the Marine Section of EMD it has become evident that cats are a main cause or nesting failure (54%) in red-billed tropicbirds at the Ladder Hill colony. The cats seem to have a particular taste for downy chicks which is why the Marine Section has set up some traps at key areas of the colony. If you own a cat and it doesn't wear a collar and it isn't Microchipped then we encourage you to please get it microchipped so that we can return your pet in the unlikely event it is caught in a trap. In fact it is now law that your pet cat should be microchipped and licensed by 7 months of age. Microchipping only costs £3 which goes to the SPCA. **Cats can be chipped at ANRD**



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**during the drop-in clinic between 1.15pm and 3.15pm on Wednesday afternoons, or by contacting the SPCA warden Julie Balchin on 24369.** We also encourage cats to be neutered – they lead happier, longer, healthier lives and make cleaner, better pets – and the chip can be inserted at the same time. If a cat is neutered, the licence is free and issued once for life. Neutering costs £5 for a male, and £6.50 for a female. Contact veterinary surgeon **Joe Hollins on 24724** to arrange this and for further information.

**Annalea Beard**  
Marine Assistant

### STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

#### Congratulations to:

✓ Leslie Benjamin

For undertaking Emergency First Response last month.



### SIGNING OF CONTRACT WITH BASIL READ – REDEVELOPMENT OF THE HORSE POINT LANDFILL SITE

The 1<sup>st</sup> November, saw the start of another project as SHG signed a contract with Basil Read for the redevelopment of the Horse Point Landfill Site.

The signing of the contract was completed by Basil Read's Island Director, Deon De Jager and SHG's Acting Attorney General, Frank Wastell. The signing of the contract was witnessed by the Acting Head of EMD, Isabel Peters in the presence of Environmental Risk Manager, Mike Durnford (Solid Waste Project Manager), Project Manager (Construction Phase), Bill Scanes and Senior Environmental Health Officer, Georgina Young.

The redevelopment of the Horse Point Landfill Site will significantly reduce the risk of bird strikes to aircraft and has been designed to better manage the existing landfill site. This includes construction of a waste reception building, civic recycling centre, internal road infrastructure and procurement of specialist vehicles, which are Key measures required to better manage the solid waste.

During the project Basil Read will be able to utilise spoil from the airport construction. This can be used on areas which have been used for the disposal of waste. It is anticipated that during restoration works access to the site will at times need to be restricted, these times will be communicated to the public via the media.

**Cherilee Thomas**  
Environmental Assistant (Policy, Promotion & Administration)



**ANRD**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources  
Division



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## DARWIN PLUS 'RARE PLANT CENSUS' PROJECT

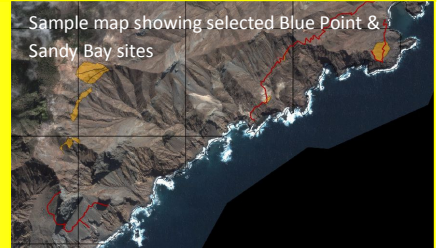
The St Helena Nature Conservation Group (SNCG) was awarded Darwin Plus funding in April to undertake a rare plant census on the island. The main aim of the year-long project, led by SNCG's Dr. Phil Lambdon, is to undertake surveys at known sites of St Helena's rare plants (all endemic and some rare natives), to gain an idea of population sizes, current status and threats. The data from these surveys will be used to inform plant assessments for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List (<http://www.iucnredlist.org/>). The Red List is a global database that assesses species population status and risk of extinction. Currently, less than half of St Helena's rare plants have been formally assessed, and those that have are out of date, so there is a desperate need for this data. Up-to-date Red List assessments will help inform biodiversity action plans and help in prioritising island conservation efforts.

Over the past few months approximately 30% of the sites identified have been surveyed. The focus so far has been concentrated on drier, lowland and middle-altitude areas, in order to survey the winter annual species before they disappear!

There is still a lot more surveying to do before the data for each species can be written up into formal Red List assessments and submitted to IUCN. Once approved, the up-to-date assessments will be published on the IUCN Red List site.

For more information on the project please visit the project website (<http://www.shncg.org/endemic-plant-survey/>) or contact Shayla Ellick at EMD ([shayla-ellick@enrd.gov.sh](mailto:shayla-ellick@enrd.gov.sh)). Images courtesy of Dr. Phil Lambdon.

**Shayla Ellick**  
Species Conservation & Environmental Research Officer



Scrubwood area at Blue Point

### EMD APPRENTICESHIP PROPOSAL

The Environmental Management Division (EMD) would like to offer an apprenticeship scheme so young people can gain valuable skills and experience in terrestrial and marine conservation.

The scheme would be suited to people aged 16 years and above. Apprentices will explore all of EMD's remit, including Environmental Assessment and Advocacy and Environmental Risk Management. However, the main focus will be with our conservation sections.

**Terrestrial Conservation:** The Habitats team work in the Peaks National Park on endemic cloud forest restoration, maintenance and monitoring, and conservation of endemic fauna. The Species Team run the Endemic Nursery, collect and store seed, and propagate globally threatened species for restoration.

The apprentice will learn about species identification; seed collection, sorting, storage and propagation; invasive weed clearance; ecological restoration; survey and monitoring skills.

**Marine Conservation:** The Marine Section consists of four staff. Their day to day activities include field and laboratory work, data analysis, report writing and awareness raising. Monitoring is a large component of the work and the team run several seabird monitoring schemes as well as a marine biodiversity and habitat mapping project funded by the Darwin Initiative.

The apprentices will work on seabird monitoring and tracking, bird handling and ringing skills, species identification; fisheries science including fish dissections and observation work.

Training packages will be agreed with the apprentices, Work Development Coordinators and EMD.

**The apprentices:** We are looking for bright, physically fit, practical young people with an interest in conservation. Important qualities for these opportunities are enthusiasm and a positive outlook.

If interested please contact: David Higgins or Elizabeth Clingham on 22270, or by email: [david-higgins@enrd.gov.sh](mailto:david-higgins@enrd.gov.sh)

**Shayla Ellick and Dr Dave Higgins**  
Species Conservation & Environmental Research Officer and Terrestrial Conservation Advisor and Trainer

### SIGHTINGS SCHEME

## Remember

to report your sightings of ringed seabirds, whales, dolphins, turtles, unusual birds.

The marine section can be contacted at Essex House, Jamestown on telephone 22270 or a message can be left on the environmental hotline number 22790 or post on our facebook page:

[www.facebook.com/sthelenaconservation](http://www.facebook.com/sthelenaconservation)

For each sighting please note: date and time, species and number (photo), location. Please leave your name and contact details should we have additional questions, unless you wish to remain anonymous.

### OFFICIAL SIGHTINGS!

The first official sighting of a Whaleshark has been reported for this season!