

Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 4 - June 2013

Environmental &
Natural Resources Directorate

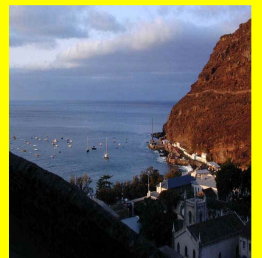
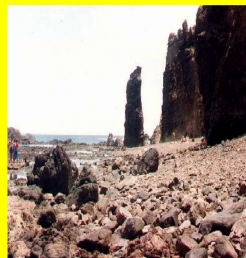
EMD
Environmental Management Division
"Our Island. Our Environment. Our Responsibility."

Another exciting, interesting and very busy quarter. Some key highlights are flagged up in the articles within the newsletter. We have also launched the islands first state of the environment report – which is available on online. It is a snapshot of most of what is being recorded environmentally on the island and is a good read. We are adding more information to our web area on the SHG website, including reports and please do visit www.shg.gov.sh

We are in the final stages of drafting a comprehensive environment law for the island, and have had a series of workshops and teleconferences with a range of stakeholders to work to develop this important piece of legislation.

As always, any comments or feedback welcome, and we look forward to continuing to work together to effectively manage our unique environment.

Tara Pelembe
Head of EMD



CONTENTS

ENVIRONMENT WEEK – **Page 2**

ELIZABETH CLINGHAM, MARINE CONSERVATION OFFICER ON TRAINING WITH THE SHALLOW MARINE SURVEY GROUP – **Page 3**

ST HELENA SEABIRD RINGING – **Page 4**

RESEARCH CONDUCTED ON EGG ISLAND – **Page 5**

MONITORING PROTECTED AREAS WORKSHOP ON ASCENSION ISLAND – **Page 6**

ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE – **Page 7**

STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS – **Page 8**



ENVIRONMENT WEEK 2013

THINK.EAT.SAVE -
Reduce Your Foodprint

Environment Week was successfully hosted from the 3rd – 8th June; incorporating World Environment Day on the 5th June. An information and display centre was opened to the public at the Consulate Hotel. The information and display centre showcased various displays relating to this years World Environment Day theme which was: Think. Eat. Save – Reduce your foodprint. Displays focused on: Food waste: why and how we waste food and how we can prevent food waste. Recycling and Composting: How we can reuse, recycle and how we can compost our food waste. Water and Energy: How we can become more economical and save water and energy. A healthy eating display by Gavie Williams, Health Promotion Co-ordinator from Health & Social Welfare Directorate, showed how much fat, salt and sugar are in the foods that we eat. There were also interesting displays on fishing and farming.

Pupils/students from the schools visited the information and display centre during the week and they were involved in planned discussions and activities. Several competitions were held during Environment Week; 3 to 7 year olds did a picture and/or description of “My favourite food.” 7 to 11 year olds did a poster, poem or story on “Why I am thankful for my food.” Prince Andrew School students did a poster or multi-media presentation on “The journey of my favourite food.” And the adults did a description of “What we used to eat before days.” Overall the competition received a very positive response with 166 competition entries.

The finale of Environment Week took place at the Consulate Hotel on Saturday 8th June. Several stalls were present for Market Day, which was organized by Hazel Wilmot of the Consulate Hotel in conjunction with Enterprise St Helena. On offer was a variety of homemade jams, handmade cards, plants, herbs and other goods. Fun activities which included treasure hunts, quizzes, face painting and nail art, were also enjoyed by all.





ELIZABETH CLINGHAM, MARINE CONSERVATION OFFICER ON TRAINING WITH THE SHALLOW MARINE SURVEY GROUP

To improve and support marine monitoring, surveying and fisheries science on St. Helena, Elizabeth Clingham, Marine Conservation Officer was on Ascension Island for training. Elizabeth left the island on the 28th May and returned on the 20th June. The training has been facilitated by members of the Shallow Marine Survey Group (SMSG) from the Falkland Islands. The group is made up of marine ecologists, biologists and fisheries scientists who are currently undertaking baseline surveys of Ascension Islands' inshore marine environment as part of a Darwin Challenge funded project.

For further information on SMSG and to read their Ascension trip blogs visit the SMSG website on <http://www.smsg-falklands.org>

Whilst on Ascension, Elizabeth reported:

"As the Marine Conservation Officer for St. Helena Island, I have been lucky enough to join the Shallow Marine Survey Group on this Ascension Island trip in a training capacity. Over the last week I have participated in numerous underwater surveys, collection dives, intertidal surveys and collections. I have also helped and observed with some fish ageing, sexing and otolith extractions. I can honestly say that already, I have learnt a great deal and in such a short time. My learning process is also fuelled by the passion that each and every member of the group knows what they are doing. Everyone has taken the time to impart their knowledge and skills to ensure that I get the best out of this trip.

I have also been able to support the group as St. Helena and Ascension share many species in some cases species ID is made easier. As the only "Saint Helenian" being involved, this has given me the opportunity to help raise the profile of the work that is done not only on Ascension but also what future work is planned for St. Helena as a result of this training."

Elizabeth Clingham
Marine Conservation Officer



St Helena Seabird Ringing

The St Helena seabird ringing scheme has been set up to develop our knowledge of key seabird species; masked boobies (*Sula dactylatra*), Madeiran storm petrels (*Oceanodroma castro*) and red-billed tropicbirds (*Phaethon aethereus*). Over the last few months the Marine Section team have been working on the Masked Booby Mainland Project, colour ringing the masked booby colonies at Lot's Wife and Blue Point. In April 50 birds were ringed including 32 birds which were also fitted with colour rings.

What is ringing?

Each bird is individually identified by the fitting of a uniquely numbered metal ring on their right leg, in addition masked boobies have a plastic colour ring also fitted to their left leg. The colour ring is orange with a black two alpha-numeric code which allows birds to be easily identified visually from a distance.



What information does ringing tell us?

Ringing data can be used to measure trends in bird populations which is vitally important to effectively protect and conserve them. One of the key areas we monitor in the St Helena Seabird Ringing Scheme is survival – quite simply the proportion of birds that survive from one year to the next. The number of sightings of ringed birds we receive allows us to estimate survival with more precision. It can be used to help unravel the movement patterns of the birds making links between the places they visit, breed and rest. All this information allows us to provide more effective conservation advice.

Key aims of the scheme

- To increase our understanding of the lives of seabirds on St Helena
- To highlight the importance of National Conservation Areas used by seabirds
- To increase our knowledge of seabird movements between areas in which they occur

Through colour ringing masked boobies we hope to answer these questions;

- How large is the masked booby population on St Helena?
- How successful are they at breeding on the mainland?
- Are they faithful to the same breeding areas within and between years?
- Do the same masked boobies visit the mainland at the same time each year?
- How long does the average masked booby live and are the survival rates different between juveniles and adults?



In the longer term it is hoped that survival rates and movement patterns can be compared to other populations of ringed masked boobies in the South Atlantic. This project will provide vital data towards furthering our knowledge of the seabirds using the mainland on St Helena. We intend the project to continue as part of the marine team baseline monitoring for many more years to come after the initial three year project.

We want you to be a part of it

Whilst walking in the Sandy Bay area record your sightings and report back to us.

Reporting a ringed bird;

Please tell us as much as possible about the bird and the colour ring by writing down the following information:

Ring description; write down the ring number (if known) and the colour ring black 2 alpha-numeric code.

Where and when; the date, time, and description of the location it was found, including the name of the nearest landmark and GPS co-ordinates (if known).

Behaviour; what was the bird doing i.e. was it incubating eggs or chicks, roosting, flying.

The bird; was it an adult or juvenile.

Your details; your name and contact details so we can send you information about when and where the bird had been ringed.

Additional information; please include any other details you may think is useful e.g. pictures.

How to contact us

Please contact the project manager Miss Annalea Beard directly or any member of the Marine Team at:

Environmental Management Division, Essex House, Jamestown.

Tel: 2270 E-mail: annalea-beard@enrd.gov.sh

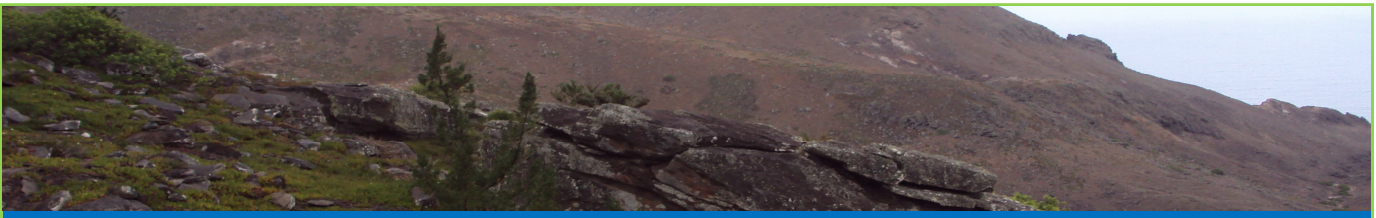


Research conducted on Egg Island

For ten nights in June the Marine Section team together with help from others in EMD, the National Trust and local volunteers went onto Egg Island to conduct some important research on the Madeiran storm petrel population. Egg Island is the largest accessible offshore island that has a large population of breeding storm petrels. Storm petrels are very difficult species to monitor using normal techniques as they are nocturnal and nest in burrows. The focus of the nightly excursions had two main aims 1. To test the feasibility of using mark re-capture techniques to gain an index of the breeding Madeiran storm petrel population. 2. To conduct a series of breeding call playback trials to indicate which populations of storm petrels the St Helena populations are closely related to. The mark re-capture feasibility work took 5 hours a night and was completed over a 9 night block. This was important as storm petrels are known to have an approximate eight day foraging trip so within an eight night block the breeding population should be quite closed with little movement on or off the island. Storm petrels were caught using mist nets, these are fine nylon nets strained between upright poles held in place by guy lines. Birds flying into the net fall into pockets or “shelves” where they can then be taken out by hand to be measured, weighed and fitted with a uniquely numbered metal ring. In total 802 storm petrels were processed, this included 734 un-ringed or “new” storm petrels, 60 “re-traps”; petrels that were ringed by the Marine Section, and eight “controls”; birds that were not ringed by the Marine Section. On the 10th night 14 playback trials were completed which was a significant achievement and the results from which are still being analysed. All the information gathered from the Egg Island expeditions will help further our knowledge of the storm petrel populations breeding on St Helena and enable us to effectively monitor, conserve and manage these special areas where they are known to occur for the future.

Annalea Beard
Marine Assistant





Monitoring Protected Areas Workshop

The Falkland Islands' Protected Areas Project held a workshop on Ascension from Tuesday 4th June to Saturday 8th June on 'Monitoring Protected Areas'. There was a relatively large group from St Helena attending: three members of EMD's Terrestrial Conservation team: Dr David Higgins, Lourens Malan and Shayla Ellick, along with a representative of the St Helena National Trust: Kevin George.

The aim of the workshop was to work out a strategy for monitoring protected areas across the South Atlantic UK Overseas Territories (UKOTs). Protected areas are areas designated for their unique natural and cultural heritage, which there is a need to conserve; particularly with the significant range of exceptional biodiversity represented within the South Atlantic UKOTs.

The workshop was very well attended by participants from across the South Atlantic UKOTs and reflected a diverse group of people, including conservationists, scientists and landowners. In addition, a range of experts from Kew and RSPB attended and the workshop was facilitated by a member from each organisation. Unfortunately, due to timing and logistics, no one from Tristan da Cunha was able to attend; however, a few of the participants that had recently worked on Tristan da Cunha were able to provide valuable input to the workshop.

It was great to be able to get together and propose a cross-territory strategy that can be adapted to individual territory needs; particularly because of the workshop's relevance to St Helena's recently designated National Conservation Areas. It was also an extremely valuable networking opportunity because of the wide range of people representing the South Atlantic UKOTs; there was a fantastic feeling of inclusiveness across the Territories and a desire to work together more closely in future, to see how we can benefit each other.

The workshop was a mixture of theoretical sessions, including policy theory; protected area monitoring in theory and practice; the need for protected area designation, and problems associated with this; management planning and reviews; and monitoring invasive species and visitor impacts to protected sites.

There were also incredibly beneficial practical sessions, which allowed all of the participants to share their experiences from across the territories, and receive training and advice on issues with monitoring from the Kew/RSPB contingent.

We would like to extend massive thanks to Clare Cockwell of Falklands Conservation and the funders of the Falkland Islands' Protected Areas Project (OTEP & Falkland Islands Government), for organising the workshop and making it all possible; thanks also to AIG for all the help and support they gave, and for hosting a brilliant BBQ before the workshop started. Finally, huge thanks go to AIG's Conservation Team for taking care of the participants, providing sites for the practical sessions and, for hosting the workshop at the Red Lion up on Green Mountain - a brilliant showcase of an international conference venue.

Shayla Ellick
Species Conservation & Environmental Research Officer





Environmental Hotline

The Environmental Management Division (EMD) has set up a new answer phone for reporting of species sightings and environmental incidents.

TELEPHONE:

2790

24 HRS A DAY

Please use this number for out of office hours or anonymous calls relating to:

- **Illegal waste deposits:** “fly tipping” on land around the island or in the sea e.g. dumping of rubble and building materials, large scale littering, hazardous waste being disposed of carelessly
- **Pollution incidents** e.g. oils, waste liquids or other materials being spilt or released onto land or in water, smoke or other emissions
- **Sightings of marine creatures:** turtles, whales, dolphins, seabirds, sharks and any other unusual marine species
- **Sightings of unusual land creatures and plants:** unusual beetles, moths, butterflies or other insects. New/unidentified plants, rare endemic species, Invasive or dangerous species
- **Environmental Damage** as a result of construction work or any other activities on island or around the coast

To report any of the things above during office hours (Mon to Fri; 08.30 – 16.00)

or if you would like to talk to us in person; **call 2270 or visit Essex House, Jamestown.**



STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

The following training courses were undertaken by EMD staff over the past three months:

MS Excel Intermediate:

- Elizabeth Clingham
- Gareth Johnson
- Leeann Henry

Environmental Introductory Training Courses:

- Dave Higgins
- Gareth Johnson
- Ian Rummery
- Shayla Ellick

Project Management (Beginners) Level 5:

- Mike Durnford

Project Management (Intermediate) Level 5:

- Mike Durnford

NVQ Assessors Course:

- Vanessa Thomas

Training with the Shallow Marine Survey Group:

- Judith Brown
- Elizabeth Clingham

Conservation NVQ:

- Darrell Leo

Synoptic Theory, Practical observer & Radiosonde familiarisation training:

- Marvin Benjamin



Disclaimer

Unless otherwise stated all photographs are the copyright of EMD. Any reproduction of articles from this newsletter will need prior permission from EMD

**St Helena Island Government | Environmental Management Division
Essex House | Jamestown | STHL 1ZZ
Tel - (290) 2270**

Email - isabel-peters@enrd.sainthelena.gov.sh

Design & Editorial provided by Environmental Assessment & Advocacy Division from the Environmental Management Division