



Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 8 - June 2014



This quarter saw most of EMD being physically relocated to Scotland Offices; The Marine Team remains in Essex House. We've also had a number of new staff join EMD, most into new posts, evidence that EMD is developing and our remit expanding.

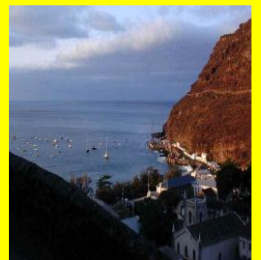
Following on from last quarters work on archaeology, this quarter saw some EMD staff (along with others) undertake training in basic archaeology, this was very well received by all.

Also this quarter EMD paid tribute to two international events, the International Day for Biological Diversity and World Environment Day, putting a local focus on global initiatives.

Enjoy the read and don't forget to report your marine sightings.

Isabel Peters

Environmental Assessment & Advocacy Division Manager



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EMD HAS RELOCATED TO SCOTLAND

EMD staff, with the exception of the Marine Conservation Section are now all primarily located at Scotland.

The telephone number at Scotland is 24724. Please note that all email addresses remain the same.

The Marine Conservation Section remains in Essex House.

Please note that staff are also hot-desking between the two sites.



STAFF TRAINING

The following members of staff participated in some sessions of the Archaeology training:

- Shayla Ellick
- Isabel Peters
- Dave Higgins
- Cherilee Thomas

NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Over the past quarter, EMD has successfully recruited some new staff members:

- **Ceri Sansom:** Climate Change & Pollution Officer (Part-time)
- **Clint Scipio:** Climate Change & Pollution Officer (Part-time)
- **Liza White:** Invertebrate Co-Ordinator under the Darwin Invertebrate Project. (18 Month Contract)
- **Samantha Cherrett:** Environmental Data & GIS Monitor (18 month contract)

Under the LEMP Project the following staff has been recruited to work in the nursery:

- Rhianna Henry
- Brendan O'Bey
- Antonio Green

Also under the Apprenticeship Scheme, we welcome:

- **Dwayne Joshua:** Marine Apprentice

AN INTRODUCTION TO LIZA WHITE: EMD'S INVERTEBRATE CO-ORDINATOR

Liza took up the post of Invertebrate Co-ordinator on the first of May within the Environmental Management Division of the ENRD. Since this time, she has been working closely with Buglife Project Invertebrate Co-ordinator David Pryce of the St Helena National Trust to learn about the many invertebrates of St. Helena.

David has been working on the three year Darwin Initiative funded 'Bugs on the Brink' project along with Education Officer Liza Fowler since early 2013. The project, a partnership between Buglife, St Helena National Trust, St Helena Government and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, aims to assemble all the knowledge we already have of the island's land-based invertebrates to create a resource for future conservationists. As well as this, the project will train staff and raise island awareness of the importance of invertebrates to the environment and help to restore habitats and ecosystems for these invertebrates.

So far, David has consolidated the records of over 1300 invertebrate species that have been found on the island since the earliest collections were made in around 1790. Of these, over 450 are species unique to St. Helena. Unfortunately, as many people will be aware, some of these are already probably extinct, such as the Giant Earwig, Giant Ground Beetle and St. Helena Dragonfly.

Liza's role will be to carry on the project work after David's departure later this year. Ultimately, the information gathered from the project on the vulnerability and conservation issues of the native and endemic invertebrates will be used to incorporate protection of these species into government policies for proposed National Conservation Areas.

Liza White,
Invertebrate Co-Ordinator

AN INTRODUCTION TO CLINT SCIPIO: CLIMATE CHANGE AND POLLUTION OFFICER

My name is Clint Scipio. I was born on the Island of St. Helena, went to school here and worked here. I have spent a number of years in South Africa, travelling around a bit. I came for a holiday in December and became eager to return to stay. I studied Chinese Medicine with acupuncture application (energy medicine) while overseas because of my passions to help people. I have also had an on-going concern for the protection of the environment, especially St. Helena's environment and I am excited to be a part of the team at EMD and am eager to make a contribution to the protecting of our environment here on this beautiful Island.

Clint Scipio,
Climate Change & Pollution Officer

AN INTRODUCTION TO CERI SANSOM: CLIMATE CHANGE AND POLLUTION OFFICER

I come to EMD having had experience working as an environmental consultant with utilities and civil engineering consultants. It is a vibrant time to be working in Environment on St Helena with its opportunities to contribute to the policies and projects that will shape the Island in the short to medium and long term. Working with Mike and helping support waste management, climate change and environmental management generally is something I'm already enjoying.

Ceri Sansom,
Climate Change & Pollution Officer



MORE ON ARCHAEOLOGY

John Barber, archaeology advisor/ trainer left the Island on 24th April after a 2 month visit. During his time on Island, John:

- Reviewed our archaeology baseline;
- Created the basis for a system/ process for the effective management of St Helena's archaeological resource;
- Recommended roles and responsibilities for archaeology on the Island;
- Provided training for the recommended roles and responsibilities.

John met with a number of stakeholders including staff in the Environment and Natural Resources Directorate, Education and Employment Directorate, Corporate Services, National Trust, Heritage Society, Museum and Tourism. John ran a series of training sessions, intended primarily for those who had been identified as having a key role in the management of archaeology, this included staff from the National Trust, Museum and Environment and Natural Resources Division.

Staff from Basil Read's environment team also attended some of the training sessions as some of the sites used for the practical training were within the airport development area. We thank Basil Read and the PMU for facilitating access to these sites.

The training covered the following topics: managing heritage assets; management of heritage projects and post excavations processes and included both theory and practical sessions.

The following are some of the comments received on the training:

"Immensely informative and useful" *Alfred Isaac, Planning Officer*

"A great insight into the management of St Helena's important heritage" *Dave Higgins, EMD*

"Really interesting and useful and the skills will be used in my line of work" *Adam Sizeland, Museum representative*

"The Archaeology field was totally new to me. I found the training sessions interesting especially when John related to some of his own experiences. The highlight for me was the field sessions, excavating to reveal the construction and repairs to a bridge including scaled drawings. The unknown is always there. I hope to use these basic skills as required." *Kevin George, National Trust*

A session on development control and heritage processes was also held for the Land Planning and Development Control Authority and the Planning and Development Appeals Tribunal. A session was also held with members of Legislative Council. Whilst we had hoped to involve members of the public in the training, this was not possible and we do apologise to those who registered their interest that we could not accommodate you. We will however look for opportunities to run training and public awareness events in the future.

Prior to leaving the Island, John submitted his draft report which is currently being considered by key stakeholders. Under SHG's contract with AOC, John will also provide remote support on a call-down basis for the next six months.

Isabel Peters,
Environmental Assessment and Advocacy Manager



THE GLOBAL IMPORTANCE OF ST HELENAS NATURE

The estimate of global species lies between 1 and 100 million; with an accepted figure of 10 million. The natural extinction rate is 2 species per million per year, this means 20 extinctions globally per year. However, today's human impacted rate is between 1000 to 10,000 times above this.

Assuming there are 10 million species in existence the extinction rate due to human impacts is 20,000 to 200,000 per year suggesting all life would disappear within 50 to 500 years. Clearly not all species will go extinct; nature will find an equilibrium based on human impacts such as habitat loss, climate change and overharvesting. What is worrying for St Helena is that isolated islands are notorious places for extinction meaning the rate here will probably be above average.

The RSPB stock take of the Overseas Territories has shown that St Helena holds an astonishing 30% of all endemic species within the UK and British governed territory despite covering 0.04% of the total land area. To add to this St Helena has 8 times more endemic terrestrial invertebrates than the Galapagos Islands if calculated by land area. More endemic species are being discovered in the marine environment.

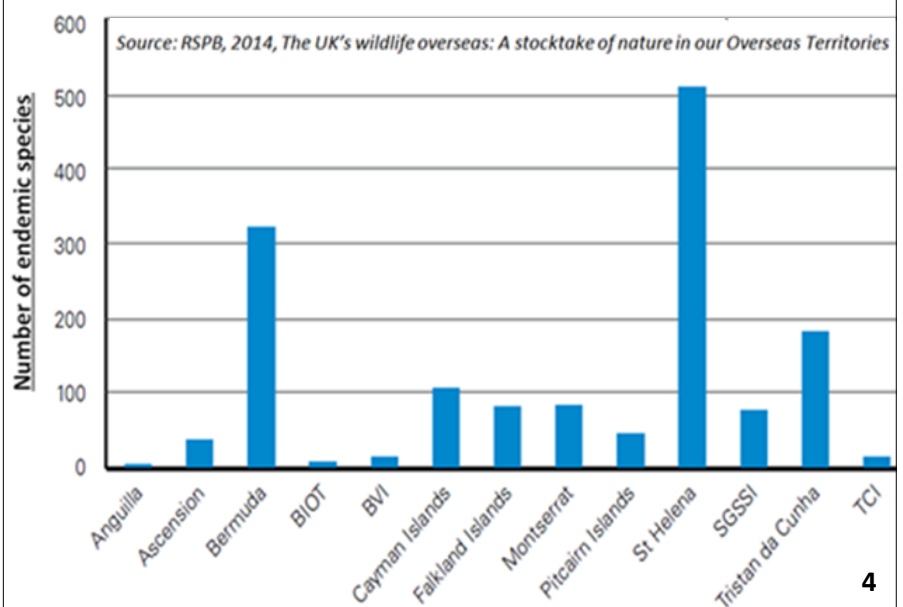
St Helena's network of National Conservation Areas is being developed to 'represent the best landscapes, plant, animals, landforms and heritage.' The aim is to reverse species decline and restore functioning ecosystems enabling native and endemic species to thrive. The NCAs help protect St Helena's internationally important species: The spiky yellow woodlouse, wirebird and bastard gumwood tree.

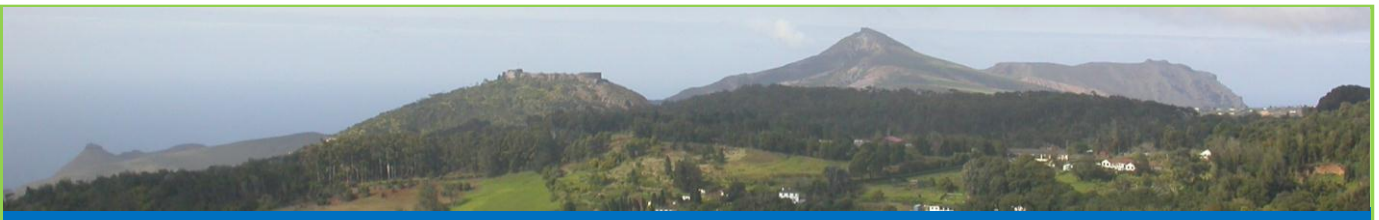
Dave Higgins,
Terrestrial Conservation Adviser
& Trainer

Some of the species on St Helena, that are now extinct or under the threat of extinction.

Species	IUCN status	In the wild
Ground hoopoe	Extinct	0
Giant earwig	Extinct	0
Giant ground beetle	Extinct	0
St Helena dragonfly	Extinct	0
Redwood	Extinct in the wild	0
St Helena Olive	Extinct	0
Rosemary	Critically endangered	Declining
Large bellflower	Critically endangered	<30
Ebony	Critically endangered	5
False gumwood	Critically endangered	7
Bastard gumwood	Critically endangered	1
She cabbage	Extinct in the wild	0 since Osbournes trees died
He cabbage	Critically endangered	<40
Whitewood ♂ + ♀	Endangered	<50
Dogwood ♂ + ♀	Endangered	<50
Diana's peak bogmoss	Critically endangered	Area smaller than a sofa
Spiky yellow woodlouse	Critically endangered	Area smaller than a kitchen
Golden sail spider	Endangered or CE	Unsure

Graph showing the Number of Endemic Species occurring on each UKOT Island





INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The International Day for Biological Diversity was celebrated for the first time on St Helena as part of our St Helena's Day celebrations. The International Day for Biological Diversity is celebrated worldwide on the 22nd May and is used to increase awareness and understanding of biodiversity issues.

This year's theme: Island Biodiversity was relevant to our Island; St Helena has a rich biodiversity, and is home to hundreds of endemic species.

On St Helena's Day, EMD displayed an array of information on our endemics, promoting the biodiversity of our island. In addition to this there was a fancy dress competition with the Island Biodiversity theme. The winners of this were: Tatelyn Royles & Kyla Hopkins.

The theme of the float competition was also 'Island Biodiversity.' The float parade, was colourful and showcased everyone's creative skills. The winning float was: New Horizons Lemon Valley Float.

To further promote the International Day for Biological Diversity, radio quizzes were held at both SAMS and Saint FM radio stations. The prizes were specially made International Biological Diversity Day Gift Bags. Congratulations to all of the winners!

EMD would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for supporting the International Day for Biological Diversity.





World Environment Day

5th June

Every year. Everywhere. Everyone.

World Environment Day (WED) is used by the United Nations to promote worldwide awareness of environmental issues, encouraging us all to take action for the benefit of our environment.

World Environment Day is the biggest and most widely celebrated day for positive environmental action. It is a day when people around the world are reminded of their responsibility and power as individuals to make a cleaner, greener environment.

This year in support of the United Nations designation of 2014 as the International Year of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), WED will focus on **Small Islands and climate change**; encouraging a greater understanding of the importance of small islands and how we can protect them from the growing risks that will result from climate change.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY ON ST HELENA

World Environment Day has been celebrated on St Helena since 2001.

This year EMD promoted World Environment Day 2014, and its theme 'Small Islands and Climate Change' via Saint FM and SAMS Radio 1.

On Saint FM a panel discussion and radio phone in was held to discuss issues related to climate change. During this time the panel received phone calls from the general public. The panel consisted Ben Sansom of EMD, Jeremy Harris of SHNT, Barry Hubbard of Connect St Helena, and Councillors Tony Duncan and Ian Rummery and Economist, Ian Smyth.

At SAMS Radio 1 an informal talk was held on air with Isabel Peters from EMD and Jeremy Harris from the St Helena National Trust. During the talk, issues relating to climate change both locally and globally were discussed.

Both radio programmes were successful, in relaying information to the general public; raising awareness of what we can do as individuals to make our island a greener place and reduce our contribution to climate change.

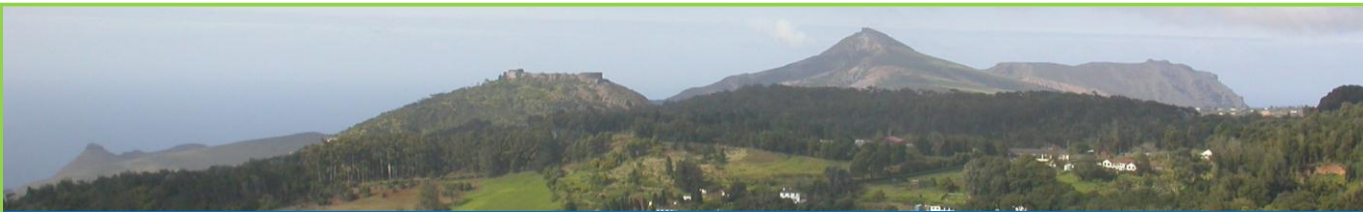
Reduce your contribution to climate change:

Remember the 3 R's:

Reduce, reuse, and recycle

You can:

- Use energy-saving light bulbs
- Switch off the lights when not in use
- Compost your food waste
- Plant a tree



ST HELENA BIRD RINGING SCHEME UPDATE

So far, this year has been exceptionally busy for the scheme. Whilst conducting some path maintenance work on Egg Island for survey work planned for later in the year, the Marine Section managed to ring 34 brown noddy chicks and 6 adults. The masked booby colony at Lot's Wife has had a peak of productivity and many pairs have successfully managed to hatch eggs and are currently rearing chicks. In January the Marine Section did some intensive tracking work on the masked boobies at the colony which also allowed us time to focus on identifying pairs through ringing. As a result as of March this year we have ringed 196 masked boobies, this included 89 adults of which 88 were colour ringed and 93 chicks. There have also been 97 re-traps, these are birds that are ringed and re-caught at a later date and 763 observations of ringed masked boobies on the colony. So if you are visiting the Lot's Wife and Blue Point area please keep an eye out for colour ringed masked boobies and report your sightings back to us.

**Annalea Beard,
Marine Assistant**

St Helena Sightings Reminder

Remember to report your sightings of ringed seabirds, whale, dolphin, turtle, unusual seabird and unusual land 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. If leaving a message remember to leave your contact details should we have additional questions.

Your sightings and any pictures of your sighting can also now be posted on our facebook page:
www.facebook.com/sthelenaconservation

You should:

1. Note the date and time of your sighting.
2. Note the species and how many were present— remember a description or photo can be useful if you don't know the name.
3. Note the location of your sighting.
4. Leave your name and contact details should we have additional questions.

This information is continually being used to further our scientific knowledge of seasonal visitors and occurrences of different species. This data allows better informed conservation measures to be put in place for the various species.

**Leeann Henry
Marine Assistant**



FISHY GOINGS ON IN ST HELENA WATERS

There are 167 different species of fish found in the waters around St Helena. They range from the largest fish in the oceans, the Whale Shark at up to 12m, to the small Baird's Dragonet which is only 40mm! They can be completely camouflaged with their surroundings, like the sand coloured Flounder, to some amazingly beautifully coloured fish, like the purple and yellow Flame Backed Angelfish. Some are endemic, like the elusive silver eel – only seen on night dives in sandy environments, others are found in many of the oceans around the globe, like the Almaco Jack. Some are carnivorous feeding on other fish, like the Diamond Lizardfish (locally called Rockspear), whilst others feed on marine plants, Algae growing on the rocks, like the St Helena Parrotfish (locally called Rockfish/Blue Dad). Several species make good eating, like the wahoo or Glasseye Snapper (locally called Bullseye), whilst the Soapfish produce a poisonous soapy mucus from its skin which it uses to deter predators.

If you look along the tideline at the wharf you'll sometimes see the small endemic Springers Blenny, whilst other species live in such deep water (down to 1800m) that you are unlikely to ever see one, for example, the odd prehistoric looking Crested Bigscale.

The marine section as part of the Darwin Marine Biodiversity and Mapping Project have pulled together information from historical scientific records to get a full fish species list for the island. Of the 167 species, 25 are new records, that is they haven't been recorded in the scientific literature as being found at St Helena before now. Thanks go to the fishermen, divers and general public who have reported interesting finds and have made this list possible... Please keep letting us know.

Dr Judith Brown

Darwin Marine Biodiversity and Mapping Project and Marine Section Manager



Endemic Silver Eel



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