



EMD

Environmental Management Division

"Our Island. Our Environment. Our Responsibility."

May 2013

Monthly Newsletter from The Environmental &
Natural Resources Directorate,
Environmental Management Division.

THE LAUNCH OF THE ST HELENA RINGING SCHEME

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 (*Oceanodromacastro*) and red-billed tropicbirds (*Phaethon aethereus*). Over the last month 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. Each bird is fitted with a uniquely numbered metal ring on their right leg and an orange colour ring with a black two alpha-numeric code on their left leg. This will allow birds to be easily identified from a distance. To date 50 birds have been ringed including 32 colour ringed. The information gathered from ringing data will allow us to answer



important questions such as how big is the masked booby population on St Helena. In the long term it will also allow us to provide more effective conservation advice.

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. photos.

How to contact us

Please contact the project manager Miss Annalea Beard directly or any member of the Marine Team at the Environmental Management Division, Environmental & Natural Resources Directorate, Essex House, Jamestown. Tel: 2270, E-mail: annalea-beard@enrd.gov.sh

STAFF TRAINING

Environmental Introductory Training Courses:

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

Project Management (Beginners) Level 5:

- Mike Durnford



April 2013

DARWIN MARINE BIODIVERSITY AND MAPPING PROJECT - ASTROPECTENVARIEGATUS

A new species of sea star, *Astropectenvariegatus* was identified in 1930 by Dr. Theodore Mortensen from six specimens he dredged up from Ruperts Bay in 20m, off Sugarloaf in 40m and off Jamestown in 50m. The old scientific report from his expedition shows some black and white images of a preserved specimen and he gives a detailed description of its morphology (that is what it looks like). Dr. Mortensen recorded eleven species of starfish from St Helena, three of which were endemic including *Astropectenvariegatus* and *Astropectensanctahelenae*. Of the eleven species of starfish four are commonly seen, the others are generally in deeper water below the depths which are safe for divers to go. On Thursday, during one of the marine dive surveys, the second survey team descended to 20m for the deeper of the two surveys. The team (Judith Brown, Annalea Beard, Keith Yon and Steve Brown) were expecting a sand site (which usually doesn't have as many species to count) but the seabed was instead sand and cobble. Juvenile St Helena Gregory hid below the cobbles and gold spot gobies darted across the sand patches. At the end of the transect line as the team prepared to begin the fish counts, Annalea called the other divers over as she had spotted a different starfish, well camouflaged on a sandy area. Keith took a photo of it in situ and we brought the sample back to the laboratory for identification. Using Dr. Mortensen's description Judith Brown and Leeann Henry were able to identify this beautiful sea star as the endemic *Astropectenvariegatus* – one of its distinguishing features being the number of supero-marginals (that is lumpy bits on the side of its arms).

Judith Brown

Darwin Marine Biodiversity and Mapping Project Manager



The variegated sea star
Astropectenvariegatus



INTRODUCTORY TRAINING COURSES

During the months of March and April, a series of five introductory training courses were run at the AVES Education Learning Centre. The courses were run by Glen Westmore, the Environmental Risk Management Trainer and Advisor from EMD and were intended to give the participants an overview of each of the issues as well as some practical examples of how the principles relate to St Helena's environment. Some of the key messages throughout the sessions were: taking time for effective planning and design, preparing for emergencies and pollution prevention being better than clearing up. The 5 courses were:

- Introduction to Water Pollution
- Building Efficiency and Energy Use
- Introduction to Waste Management
- Air Pollution, Noise and Nuisance
- Pollution Control & Environmental Good Practice on Construction Sites

The sessions were fairly well attended with EMD staff Ian Rummery, Mike Durnford, Shayla Ellick, Dave Higgins and Gareth Johnson benefiting from the training, as well as representatives from Environmental Health, Planning, Solomon's and the Halcrow PMU attending on one or more of the days. The training presentations are available on a CD: for a copy or more information on the training or any relevant issues please contact Glen at EMD in Essex House, Jamestown on telephone number 2270, or via email at glen-westmore@enrd.gov.sh.

Glen Westmore
Environmental Risk Management Advisor

ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE

EMD have set up a new answer phone for reporting of species sightings and environmental incidents.

TELEPHONE **2790** 24HRS 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.

Glen Westmore
Environmental Risk Management Advisor

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