



Monthly Newsletter from The Environmental Management Division November 2014

Key areas of work covered in EMD since August 2014

- Solid waste management project – phase 1: Horse Point landfill site redevelopment contract completed within scope and budget
- Solid waste management project – phase 2: Hazardous waste management started
- Airport wildlife hazard management plan – Bird strike report completed
- Climate change policy – Statement of intent, 'A sustainable living strategy for St. Helena' completed
- Pollution incident(s) management
- Recycling forum
- General ongoing environmental support to the airport project
- Environmental assessments of new/planned developments and projects

STAFF TRAINING

Lourans Malan and Graham Leo have been on a 3 week training programme with SANSPARK in Cape Town, which covered a wide range of issues, including managing protected areas, including invasive species, habitat management and guiding. EMD would like to thank St. Helena Tourism for funding this training.

Shayla Ellick is currently at the University of York studying for MRes in carbon sequestration. As part of this Shayla has been awarded the inaugural David Macdonald Fellowship, and will get the opportunity to visit the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit at Oxford University as well as visit the Darwin secretariat and attend the annual OT's reception in London.



Deputy Manager for the MET Office, Bottom Woods, Lorimar Bennett departed the Island on Friday 29th August 2014 to undertake training in Exeter and Camborne provided by the UK MET Office. Lorimar arrived back on Island on the 29th October 2014 having received training in Synoptic Surface Observations and Radiosonde Upper Air Ascents (weather balloon) at the MET Office HQ in Exeter. Lorimar said "I found the training beneficial to my role and I look forward to sharing my experience with current and future staff; the MET Office has a fantastic facility and it was great to see how our information is utilised in the global monitoring process".



Staff movements

Kayleigh Harris and Marayka Henry have commenced apprenticeships with the SHNT community forests project. As part of this they will spend at least one day per week working with Vanessa Thomas and her team in the Terrestrial Conservation section of EMD.

At the beginning of this month we welcomed Karl Martin who has taken up the post of Environmental Assistant (Monitoring and Assessment)

In October we said goodbye to Clint Scipio (Climate Change and Pollution Officer – part-time). We wish him well for his future.

At the end of November EMD will say goodbye to Liza White (Invertebrate Co-ordinator), we would like to say thank you to Liza for all her hard work and we wish her well in the future.

New apprentice in the Marine Section

Since June the Marine Section was joined by our new marine apprentice Dwayne-Eddie Joshua. Eddie as he likes to be called was interested in this area of work because he had previous experience in this field and enjoyed it. It also allows him to work closely with and see animals within the marine environment. Eddie has participated in all work areas which to date includes side scan sonar and drop down camera work as part of our habitat mapping and verification work through our Darwin bid. He has also participated in our monthly seabird colony and nest monitoring at various sites around the island using different techniques. With all fieldwork Eddie also gets an opportunity to enter or verify data brought back to help his understanding of reasons for collecting good reliable data and what data is used for. Eddie will shortly be learning to dive to allow him to participate in other areas of the Marine Section's work.



New Legislation for the marine environment

Two pieces of legislation have been approved relating to the marine environment. They are The Protection of Wrecks and Marine Archaeological Heritage Ordinance, 2014 and The Spear Guns Control Ordinance, 2014

The Protection of Wrecks and Marine Archaeological Heritage Ordinance, 2014 is aimed to protect all eight known wrecks and any marine artifacts. It is illegal to penetrate any protected wreck, tamper with, damage or remove any part of a protected wreck. It also provides a 100m buffer zone around the wreck which prohibits sand pumping, spearfishing and groundfish fishing with the exception of bait fishing.



Red-billed tropicbird monitoring on St. Helena – update 1

In August, in preparation for deploying the GPS data loggers onto red-billed tropicbirds, the Marine Section monitored the colonies of red-billed tropicbirds at Ladder Hill. In September the loggers were deployed.

The nesting cavities are being checked on a daily basis with some surprising results. We recorded 21 nesting attempts but unfortunately some nests that had chicks failed. It is thought the high predation risk from feral cats and rats may have played a part in their demise and as a consequence cat trapping was conducted in the area. Cat owners at Ladder Hill and Half Tree Hollow were encouraged to get their pet's micro chipped so that if their pets were caught they could have been returned to their owners.

Interestingly from the 31 recaptured birds that were ringed last year (fitted with a uniquely numbered metal ring onto their leg), an astonishing 74% were found in the same cavity. Also 78% of nesting adults this year were using the same cavity as last year suggesting they are very site faithful. For more information on this work watch this space or contact the Marine Section at Essex House.



DEADWOOD WALKING

In mid-2013 the last known wild population of She Cabbage Trees (*Lachanodes arborea*) died out at the area known as Osborne's. As tragic as this was, the legacy of this site lived on in the populations of invertebrates living on the deadwood.

Deadwood is an important habitat type for many invertebrate species. On St Helena in particular, many of the endemic fungus weevils require varying degrees of decaying wood and the fungi that grow on it to complete their life cycle.

As many of the invertebrates that rely on the deadwood are small and flightless, their ability to disperse to other areas is limited. Osborne's site is remote from other She Cabbage woodlands and so, once the deadwood is utilised at this site, the populations of invertebrates will die out before the newly planted She Cabbage Trees produce enough deadwood to maintain the invertebrate populations.

The decision was made to relocate the She Cabbage deadwood from Osborne's to another site at Beal's where She Cabbage Trees have been planted in the past, along with other endemic plants such as Rosemary (*Phylicapilifolia*) and Redwood (*Trochetiopsis erythroxylon*). At Beal's site there is a mixture of mature healthy living trees along with a few dead and dying trees. The deadwood taken from Osborne's is at varying stages of decay that will allow a gradual transition to the newly dead wood of the trees on site.

The team of five brought together Liza White and Dave Higgins of SHG's Environmental Management Division, David Pryce and Phil Lambdon of the St Helena National Trust and the land owner Rebecca Cairns-Wicks. The dead trees were cut into manageable sizes to be carried up the hill and put into the back of the Land Rover. They were then driven to the new site and carried down-hill to the new site. Here they were placed alongside the newly dead and dying trees with the hope that the invertebrate populations will establish on the new deadwood.

It is important to protect these invertebrate species, not only to conserve St Helena's unique biodiversity, but for the vital role they play in the ecosystem as deadwood composters, and providers of new soils.

Liza White

EMD Invertebrate Co-ordinator

Notice Board

Public Reminder

A reminder to Contractors that West Rocks is not a dumping ground – recently various contractors have been observed depositing wastes at West Rocks including; construction rubble, washing down cement trucks etc.

Contractors are reminded that the only designated area for waste is Horse Point Landfill Site and persons depositing wastes in other areas including West Rocks may be prosecuted.

Thank You.

'THANK YOU' ☺

"EMD would like to extend a very heartfelt 'thank you' to Mrs Sandra Sim, Mr Sean Burns and 'His Excellency The Governor' for considering and granting funding out of the 'Governor's dedicated Fund' to our dedicated 'Visitor and Educational Centre' here at Scotland Nursery. It is hoped that our enhanced facility will promote the work that we do and raise public awareness, for local people and visitors, of the importance of St Helena's endemic flora.

