



# November 2012

## Monthly Newsletter From The Environmental Management Directorate

### Introducing Dr. Judith Brown

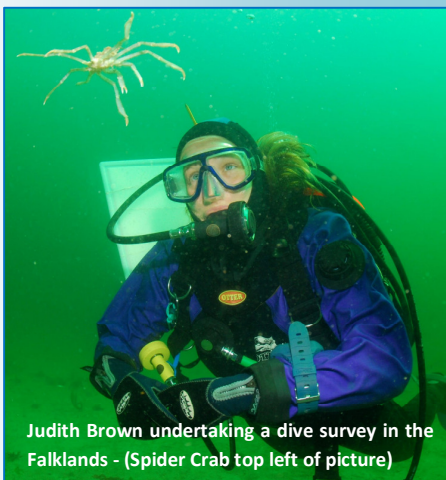
The Nature Conservation Division is pleased to announce the official start of its Marine Mapping and Biodiversity Project with the arrival of Dr. Judith Brown. Currently, there is virtually no information available on the range, extent or distribution of shallow marine species of which a number are endemic to the island, nor the habitats which provide shelter, food and nurseries to both resident and migrating species.

This project aims to collate existing and collect new baseline data of the marine species and shallow marine habitats around St. Helena.

Dr. Nikki Chapman, head of the Nature Conservation Division designed the Darwin Project and is also the Project Lead. Nikki commented:

*'Potentially some of these species and habitats are threatened by destructive human activities, for example aggregation, port development and increased marine activities associated with increased tourism. Furthermore, as with many islands, shallow water marine resources are an important source of revenue and subsistence and need to be supported and sustainably managed, the data from this project will help to provide the necessary information.'*

Judith joins the project as the Darwin Project Manager after spending six years on the Falklands working on the commercial fish species around the Falkland Islands and South Georgia. She is also a key member of the Shallow Marine



Judith Brown undertaking a dive survey in the Falklands - (Spider Crab top left of picture)

Surveys Group who are involved in identifying and surveying the shallow marine life of these Islands. The group has also recently conducted a three week survey of the marine life around Ascension Island, discovering many new records and some new species. Judith said of her new role *'I am delighted to be involved in this project and am very excited about discovering all about the St Helena underwater world and studying its rich marine biodiversity. Comparing the marine life on the exposed and more sheltered sides of the island and investigating the different species associated with different habitats, including artificial reefs, will be fascinating'*. Moving to the island with her husband Steve, they are both looking forward to exploring all that St Helena has to offer both above and below water.

### Nature Conservation Division



The project is funded by the Darwin Initiative and JNCC are the UK Project Lead.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### FLYTIPPING AT WEST ROCKS

**A REMINDER** to the public that any kind of waste is **NOT** allowed to be dumped at West Rocks. This is **ILLEGAL** and offenders risk prosecution and a fine of up to £10,000 if convicted.

### ANNUAL CLOSED SPEAR FISHING SEASON

**A REMINDER** to the public that during the period from the 1<sup>ST</sup> of **JANUARY 2013** to 31<sup>ST</sup> of **MARCH 2013**, **SPEAR FISHING** is **NOT ALLOWED** at any time or place in St Helenian waters.

The Spear Guns (Control) Ordinance CAP 91

### Staff Achievements

Congratulations to Mike Durnford, Climate Change and Pollution Officer, on achieving a Distinction for a Level 4 Diploma on an Environmental Aspects and Impacts course.



## Overseas Staff Training

From the 25<sup>th</sup> of November to the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, two members of staff from the Marine Section will undertake seabird ringing training on Ascension Island. The training is necessary to ensure that all staff are equipped with the skills required to facilitate the continuation and evolution of the Marine Sections seabird work. At the end of the training, staff will be assessed and will attain their appropriate permits and will be internationally recognised as persons with the skills required to safely ring and handle seabirds. This training has been funded by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). The trainer is Mr Colin Wearn from the Army Ornithology Society.



Picture of Colin Wearn Jan 2012

### What is ringing and why do it?

Basically, special lightweight metal rings with unique numbers are attached to a seabird's leg. The rings are specially made so that they do not affect the bird in any way; the rings design is able to withstand the rigours of the bird's way of life and allows for them to sustain total freedom of movement. The rings can only be put on by persons with the appropriate British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) bird ringing permit as it requires the use of specialist equipment and acquired skills. When ringing, the welfare of the bird is always the first priority of the ringer.



Picture of ring on seabird's

During the ringing process, various body measurements are recorded including its head, wings, legs and weight. The ring number and all the birds' measurements are registered with BTO. Birds have almost scheduled lifestyles i.e. set breeding seasons, set migration patterns etc. As the world changes, so do the birds patterns and lifestyles. By ringing them, it allows us to monitor their movements locally and internationally and notice any changes. In addition, we will also be able to gauge how long seabirds live on St Helena.

**Nature Conservation Division**

## Solid Waste Management on St Helena

There are only three options for the management of waste on St Helena. Waste can be reused/recycled, it can be sent offshore or it can be landfilled.

The Solid Waste Management strategy which was launched on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November builds on previous work to address the problems of waste management. It also incorporates specific measures to reduce the pigeon numbers at the landfill as they create a birdstrike risk for the airport.

The first phase of the Waste Management Strategy involves improvements at Horse Point so that waste is not left out in the open for birds to eat. There will also be a Civic Amenity Area to encourage the reuse of unwanted items by creating an area where people can deposit unwanted items that other people might find useful.

To return to the three options:

1. **Reuse/recycle** – EMD is actively looking at ways to encourage recycling on St Helena. SHAPE recycles paper and card, The Salvation Army takes clothes and household goods for resale but there are many more opportunities for budding recycling entrepreneurs.
2. **Export** – at first this seems like a good option especially for waste that can be recycled overseas. However freight costs make most exports uneconomic and transshipment of waste is often subject to international protocols and permits. This can make it difficult to find someone to receive the waste to process it.
3. **Landfill** – this is where most of the waste goes, into the ground at Horse Point. There will always be a need to landfill waste but there is only limited land available and some waste should not be landfilled as it damages the environment.

It seems likely that in the future all three of these options will feature in the management of solid waste. We do not have all the answers but we are working with other stakeholders to find the most sustainable solutions for our waste.

### Environmental Risk Management Division

EMD wishes to extend their deepest sympathy to the family of the late Michael Benjamin. Michael worked with EMD in the past and was an influential figure in regards to recycling on the island.