

# focus



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Emirates Natural History Group

Patron: H.E. Sheikh Nahayan bin Mubarak Al Nahayan

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to this bumper issue of *Focus*, celebrating past and present achievements of UAE-based naturalists and recording the ENHG's on-going efforts to understand & appreciate aspects of the natural world and traditional heritage here. We begin with a tribute to DNHG life member Carolyn Lehman, the first recipient of the Bish Brown Award, courtesy of *The Gazelle*. Next, we reprint an article from *The National* based on an interview with Rima Jabado, who gave the ENHG an exceptionally informative talk on her shark research last month.

Our featured write-up details last month's very well attended trip to the EAD oryx relocation reserve in Umm az-Zamul, referenced by this issue's cover. And our Speakers panel shows all the great talks we're fortunate to have lined up this month: last week's concluding report from the ENHG-sponsored Khor Kalba kingfisher census team, this week's talk by a UNEP rep at the ground-breaking [Eye-on-Earth Summit Abu Dhabi 2011](#), and a talk on dolphins by a veterinarian-in-training.

On 10<sup>th</sup> December, many of us said a final farewell to ENHG life member Simon Aspinall at a fitting memorial service held at St Andrew's Church in Abu Dhabi, with brother Richard & many friends attending.

Finally, we congratulate UAE citizens on the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their country, whose hospitality we all enjoy.

**Keith Taylor**

## Natural History Award Nominations

Nominations are now invited from paid-up members of the ENHG-Abu Dhabi, ENHG-Ai Ain and Dubai NHG for the two annual ENHG awards: the Sheikh Mubarak bin Mohammed Prize for natural history and the Bish Brown Award—for 2011.

The Sheikh Mubarak bin Mohammed Prize for natural history is given to a person who has made a substantial, original contribution to knowledge of the history, natural history, culture, archaeology or palaeontology of the UAE, such contribution being reflected through means such as publications and lectures. The award was instituted by the ENHG Patron, HE Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, and comprises an inscribed silver dhow and a cash prize.

The Bish Brown Award is given to a person who has made a significant contribution to promoting wider interest in the objectives of the UAE's three natural history groups, through means such as educational activities, raising public consciousness in the media, playing a leading role in NHG activities etc. The award was endowed by former Vice Chairman, Terry Adams and former Secretary, Caroline Adams, to commemorate the founder of the ENHG, J.N.B. 'Bish' Brown.

The award comprises a silver mounted eagle, to be held for one year by the recipient. There is also a cash prize (at the discretion of our Patron).

Any individual, whether or not a member of one of the above three groups, can be nominated for either award—with the exception of current elected committee members (Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and

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## FRONT COVER PICTURE

*Photograph: Three Oryx at EAD Protected Area, Umm az-Zamul*

*Photographer: Angie Marles*

## This month's contributors

DNHG *Gazelle*, ENHG, Rich-Joseph Facun & Jonathan Gornall of *The National*, Feng Wen, Ronnie Gallagher, Steve James, Angie Marles, Wayne Oliver, Crista Rayner, James Rayner, Keith Taylor, May Yoke Taylor

## ENHG Membership Information

Annual membership in the Abu Dhabi chapter of the ENHG is 100 Dhs – for both individual and family membership. NB: 2011 membership is reduced to 50 Dhs from Oct - Dec. See Membership Sec. or Asst. at the next meeting for a membership form.

Members are entitled to join the group on all day trips and overnight camping trips. Each member is also entitled to a copy of the ENHG's normally annual peer-reviewed journal, *Tribulus*. Volume 19 is now available at meetings.

Treasurer) of the ENHG in Abu Dhabi.

In nominating a candidate, or candidates, please provide a brief summary (no more than 200 words) of justification for the nomination: i.e. an explanation of what the candidate(s) has achieved. Nominations can be sent either by post (to Keith Taylor, Acting Chairman, ENHG, PO Box 45553, Abu Dhabi, or by email or hand-delivered to any ENHG committee member. The closing date for nominations is **31 January 2012**, and winners will be selected by the ENHG (original Abu Dhabi branch) committee during the February meeting. The Committee's decision is final. Winners will be announced at the Inter-Emirates Weekend dinner, 24 Feb 2011.



## In Remembrance: Carolyn Lehman

DNHG life member Carolyn Lehmann died in Germany on October 25 from complications following surgery and subsequent treatment for advanced ovarian cancer. After more than a decade in Dubai, Carolyn and her husband Dieter, a military pilot, retired in 1997 to Florida, where they kept a sailboat. Carolyn served the DNHG as newsletter editor and later as Librarian, and it was under her stewardship that the library amassed much of our eclectic collection of re-prints and photocopies of articles from scientific journals.



Carolyn was one of Dubai's early seashell collectors and contributed Arabian Gulf specimens and information to *Seashells of Eastern Arabia*. She also published articles in the Abu Dhabi ENHG's *Bulletin* on local marine algae and in early issues of *Tribulus* on the late Cretaceous echinoderm fossils of the UAE. In all of these endeavours, Carolyn was known for her attention to accuracy and detail and she encouraged the same standards from others.

In the mid-1990s Carolyn and Dieter were among the more adventurous explorers of the deserts of the Liwa region, which they crossed from end-to-end in the course of periodic trips. Dieter reports that it was a pleasure for Carolyn (through Dieter as an e-mail intermediary) to be able to recall her DNHG experiences with old friends in recent months, during what proved to be a very challenging medical ordeal. The DNHG extends its condolences to Dieter and to Carolyn's daughter Kristin Bikos and son-in-law Michael Bikos.

*Reprinted from DNHG Gazelle Nov 2011*

## Shark Population in Gulf Waters Higher Than Thought



Rima Jabado takes DNA samples from sharks at the Abu Dhabi Fish Market in January this year.

*Photo: Rich-Joseph Facun of The National*

The good news for anyone still haunted by the theme music to the film *Jaws* every time they step into the sea

is that there are almost certainly no Great White Sharks cruising in the Arabian Gulf waters off the UAE.

Nor, according to the results from a unique year-long survey of the Gulf's shark population, is one likely to run into the equally notorious Mako or Oceanic Whitetip - the species blamed for attacking five tourists, one fatally, in shallow water off the Red Sea resort of Sharm El Sheikh last December.

The even better news, from an ecological viewpoint, is that there are no fewer than 29 species of sharks out there, ranging in length from the White Cheek - at 36 centimetres the smallest found - to the frankly intimidating Great Hammerhead, the largest example of which caught off the UAE was 3.82 metres long.

Oh, and there is a slim chance that swimmers could encounter the notoriously tetchy Tiger, Sandbar, Grey Reef and Bull Sharks, and even the creature most feared by generations of pearl divers - the sawfish, a monstrous member of the ray family, aka the carpenter shark. It is listed as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) but is nevertheless clinging on to life in the Gulf.

Just over a year ago Rima Jabado, a Lebanese-born Canadian doctoral student at UAE University in Al Ain, embarked on the first scientific survey of the shark population of the Gulf, a scientific cul-de-sac that until then had been strangely ignored, despite worldwide concern about declining shark populations.

Popular wisdom, gleaned from fishermen, had it that there were probably about a dozen different species of shark out there - a number Ms Jabado found to be a wild underestimation within a few months of starting work.

The lack of knowledge, however, at least made designing her study a breeze.

"It was very easy," she says, laughing. "I needed to know everything; there was just no information."

But how to go about counting creatures few people ever see? Ms Jabado's ingenious if labour-intensive solution lay in the catches of the UAE's commercial fishermen. Since last October she and a team of volunteers have made more than 140 visits to the fish markets of the UAE, twice a month each to Abu Dhabi, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah and four times a month to Dubai.

In the process she has seen, identified, photographed and measured 14,627 individual sharks - among them 67 of the largest species of hammerhead (*Sphyrna mokarran*), capable of growing up to six metres in length and listed as endangered by the IUCN. More than half of these were caught by fishermen from Abu Dhabi.

Without a previously established baseline with which Ms Jabado can compare her results, she has no idea yet if the shark population is thriving or failing, but says she has been pleasantly surprised by the numbers she has seen "in these extreme environmental conditions".

"I didn't expect this number of sharks, or species, in the Arabian Gulf," she says.

"Everyone says it is low on biodiversity because the conditions don't allow a lot of species to survive, but the

diversity of sharks and rays I have found is comparable to the Red Sea, which is one of the seas with the highest biodiversity." Her key finding is that although there are at least 29 species present in the Gulf, just six types of shark account for just over 91 per cent of the total population.

At 33.59 and 31.73 per cent, the Spottail (*Carcharhinus sorrah*) and the Milk Shark (*Rhizoprionodon acutus*), which grow to a maximum of about 150cm and 100cm respectively, are by far the most numerous. Next is the common Black Tip (*Carcharhinus limbatus*), 11.06 per cent of the total), which can grow to 250 centimetres and is regarded as "near threatened" (and potentially threatening: according to the Shark Trust it "should be treated with respect when stimulated by food"), followed by the Slit-eye (*Loxodon macrorhinus*, 8.19 per cent), the Whitecheek (*Carcharhinus dussumieri*), 5.03 per cent and also threatened) and the Smooth-hound (*Mustelus mosis*), 1.41 per cent. None of these last three exceeds 150 centimetres in length.

Each one of the other 23 identified species accounts for less than 1% of the total population - and some are very rare indeed, including three Sandbar Sharks (*Carcharhinus plumbeus*) landed in Ras Al Khaimah; the solitary Tiger (*Galeocerdo cuvier*) and Green Sawfish (*Pristis zijsron*), both from Sharjah, where the only two Grey Reef Sharks (*Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*) were also landed.

Thanks to the DNA samples Ms Jabado has harvested from more than 8,000 sharks, that tally of 29 species could grow even larger.

"Morphologically similar sharks can be two completely different species, and this is something we are finding out only because of genetics," says Ms Jabado. Often, species can be told apart only by a single, obscure visual clue, "something missing morphologically, perhaps, and sometimes difficult to detect by eye in the field; or you might need fine measurements to determine, say, that the ratio between the first and second dorsal fin is less than 3:1, showing it is really a different species".

Ms Jabado now faces months of work in the lab, sequencing and analysing the 8,000 DNA samples. When the results are in they will be added to the online Fish Barcode of Life Initiative, a database run by the Canadian Centre for DNA Barcoding at the University of Guelph - and she is cautiously hopeful that some surprises will surface.

"There are a few sharks I haven't been able to identify, so maybe we have found a new species or two. I can't say definitely but hopefully the DNA work will be able to confirm that."

Some, however, such as the sawfish, are in danger of disappearing. "All the fishermen I talked to said 'Oh, it was all over the place, we used to use the saw for barbed wire for our houses', but now it's become so rare, not only here but across the world."

With 14 months of hands-on research, Ms Jabado now has data for two consecutive years from the months of October and November - and intends to press on at least for another year. What she has created already is a

vital baseline for future research. A similar study carried out a decade from now, for instance, would expose any significant changes in species numbers. But if she can get funding, she would like to continue sampling fish catches for another two years, "so I can start looking at trends and migratory patterns".

Why, for instance, did three particular species of shark landed in abundance during August, September and October suddenly disappear from catches? One theory is that these are migratory species, or sharks that come to the area only to breed, but only year-on-year data can confirm this, and indicate whether or not they should be protected at certain times.

Ms Jabado also hopes her work will help the UAE to fulfill its commitment to the International Plan of Action for Sharks, adopted by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). Under the scheme, all countries where fishermen catch commercial quantities of sharks were obliged to develop a National Shark Plan by 2001, but barely 10 per cent have. "Progress in most states," says the FAO, "remains disappointing".

Ms Jabado says: "The UAE was a signatory to this code of conduct but 12 years down the line there is still no national plan of action for sharks in the UAE or in any other country in the region, for that matter. There are different types of data that need to be collected to be able to put together a national plan.

"You need to assess shark stocks in a country by addressing what species are there, what are the main threats that they're facing and look at numbers and abundance. None of this information has been available for the UAE."

**Jonathan Gornall – The National**

## Umm az-Zamul Desert Camping Weekend – 25-26 Nov 2011

### Friday Day One – To a Pristine Desert Camping Ground

On Friday morning a large group of ENHG enthusiasts, adventurers and novices meet near Popeyes Restaurant in downtown Abu Dhabi. In total 15 cars set out in 2 groups to the first rendezvous point of Al Qua'a.

The outbound trip took the group through the desert region east of Abu Dhabi using the alternative less trafficked road away from the Al Ain Expressway. This first part was a pleasant drive passing varied dune and sabkha plains and dotted with camel and goat farms. Close to Al Qua'a we passed through a small district of irrigated farmland where we came across a local camel festival.

Once at Al Qua'a we re-grouped and re-filled with petrol. We continued our trip along the border and perimeter fence to the Umm az-Zamul protected area with the desert landscape growing in scale.

At around mid-afternoon we stopped at gate 14 checkpoint. After some dialogue with the security guard, our Guide Ahmed Al Dhaheeri arrived. Andrew at this point explained the itinerary and gave a short introduction to sand driving, although emphasising that the drive would mostly be on hard tracks and should



present no problems. All of us lowered the pressure on the tyres and we set off.

After 10 minutes we stopped and Ahmed explained that in-order to make to the first stop to see an Arabian Oryx feeding station we would need to cross some small dunes. For those (like us) without any sand driving experience this was both a highlight and a challenge. After lining up and taking our turns racing and sliding across the dunes we all made it proudly to the other side into a broad sabkha plain.

At the feeding station Ahmed gave us a short introduction to the Arabian Oryx programme before suggesting we made a move to the camp site. There followed a great drive along desert tracks through a series of wide dune-edged sabkha. Our night-time stop was in a beautiful plain surrounded by majestic reddish dunes. We were the first to have the opportunity to camp in this more remote location. As the sun was setting we set up the tents under a moonless sky watching the stars and the milky-way gradually emerge. The stars were impressive stretching from horizon to horizon, as was the stillness. It was a fantastic site and a great privilege to be at this location.



Photo: Crista Rayner

### Saturday Day Two – The Umm az-Zamul Drive



Photo: Ronnie Gallagher

After a quiet night we had an early start, breaking and leaving camp at around 8.30. Our guide said we had a good chance of spotting the oryx at the feeding station we visited the previous day. He was correct and we observed the oryx from a distance so as not to scare them. We gradually made our way back to the feeding station where our guide gave us a further briefing on the oryx programme. The key facts explained covered:

*The Reserve: Umm az-Zamul Reserve covers over 8,000 km<sup>2</sup> of primarily rolling red, brown and yellow dunes and sabkha. There is very little vegetation, and within the entire area there are only 80 trees. There are four feeding stations within the reserve, as well as release pens. Historically, the area has been sparsely occupied. In the distant past (8,000 years ago) there is evidence of settlement. Over the last half century prospects of oil/gas attracted interest from local tribes who brought petroleum experts into the area. Part of the*

*reserve has recently been annexed for further exploration.*

*Oryx: A breeding group was introduced in 2007 and now comprises about 360 oryx, scattered in several herds, the largest up to 100 strong. The oryx have a lifespan of approx. 8 years. The harsh conditions means there are losses, especially of the young during the summer. The group is at the limit of the capacity of the reserve. Feeding of Alfalfa (imported from the Sudan or US) is needed. Although the Reserve has been offered more oryx from Sir Bani Yas Island Resort and Al Ain Zoo, no more can be accepted into the area.*

*Sand Gazelle: Roaming alongside the oryx are around 4000 Sand Gazelles. The Gazelles are better adapted to the desert conditions, and their numbers are continuing to increase, so overgrazing is a major concern.*



Photo: Crista Rayner

After the talk, there followed more sand, dune and track driving as the group bounced towards two further feeding stations, the last of which had many oryx and gazelle. Our official trip stopped at one of the release pens where we saw a small group of oryx with young waiting to be released. A presentation of books was made by Andrew, and we gave a big thanks to Ahmed.



Photo: Ronnie Gallagher

After a long drive we made it to the Qasar Al Sarab Desert Resort (with some overheating along the way). Some of us in need of luxurious surroundings and bathroom amenities made good use of the hotel.

The group dispersed and headed back to Abu Dhabi. For our family this was the first time we had experienced the more remote desert, and it was a superb experience that we would do again.

The following websites give further info. on the Reserve:  
[http://www.abudhabi.ae/egovPoolPortal\\_WAR/appmanager/ADeGP/Citizen?\\_nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=p\\_citizen\\_homepage\\_hiddenav&did=152020&lang=en](http://www.abudhabi.ae/egovPoolPortal_WAR/appmanager/ADeGP/Citizen?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=p_citizen_homepage_hiddenav&did=152020&lang=en)

For detailed program info. and maps of the area:

<http://www.adias-uae.com/khm.html>

Also see the following well-researched proposal, dated 2005: [Proposal to Establish The Umm Al Zummoul National Park](#)

*James & Crista Rayner*

## October RAK Dhow Yard Trip

Feng Wen, who has made a number of trips to the Ras Al Khaimah Dhow Yard with ENHG-Al Ain, led an outing to this location on Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> Oct for a group of about 15 members of ENHG-Abu Dhabi. On arrival, we examined the large wooden dhow propped up by truss work at the water's edge. Wayne, who has made monthly trips to watch the progress of this particular boat, told us the work began around April 2010, and it should take over two years for the three labourers still engaged in this work to complete.



The boat under construction at the RAK dhow yard  
*Photo: Wayne Oliver*



Construction details  
*Photos: Keith Taylor*

As we were admiring the handiwork inside the dhow, the boat-builder himself showed up on his daily inspection tour, and through his grandson's translation, told us that he builds his dhows on commission for Gulf merchants. They showed us how, when it's done, the dhow will be pulled out into the water with a strong rope looped through a pulley attached to an anchor in the bay, then back to an onshore windlass operated by manpower!



Boat-builder Mohammed Bu Haji and his family  
*Photo: May Yoke Taylor*

Following a visit to a next-door where long sleek wooden racing boats were under construction, we drove further down along the coast, past the Emirates Road turnoff, to the abandoned village of Jazirat al Hamra, where crumbling walls incorporating shells and coral\*.



Fort tower at abandoned RAK village, Jazirat al Hamra  
*Photo: Feng Wen*

An added bonus was an encounter with a retired man, an Al Za'abi, who recounted being evicted from this village in the middle of the night during tribal fighting in the late 60s & welcomed to Abu Dhabi by Sheikh Zayed, with whom he remembered kicking a ball on the grounds of the Al Manhal Palace when he was a boy. He has now built a second home in RAK, where we met him taking his grandchildren on a tour around his old village.

\* For more photos of the dhow yard & Jazirat al Hamra, from ENHG-Al Ain's visit to those sites in RAK & others: <http://www.enhg.org/field/rak03/rak03.htm#rakdhow>.

NB: Feng is organizing another ENHG-AD trip to the RAK dhow yards on 13th Jan 2012. Details forthcoming.

*Keith Taylor*

## Recent Speakers

On December 6th, **Oscar Campbell** gave us a presentation titled *The Birds of Khor Kalba*—illustrated mainly by superb photographs by **Ahmed Al Ali**, while Ahmed showed his DVD—illustrating the great variety of bird life to be found at Khor Kalba. The presentation also included the results the recently completed census of the resident breeding population of the endangered *kalbaensis* subspecies of Collared Kingfisher (limited



mainly to the mangroves of Khor Kalba). This survey, funded by an ENHG Research and Conservation grant, revealed that with an estimated 28 to 36 breeding pairs at Khor Kalba, contrasted with the estimate of 44 to 50 from Simon Aspinall's census done fifteen years previously. Destruction of 30% of their mangrove habitat and others stresses have led to a decline in their numbers, but they seem to be hanging tough for now. For a full report, see the following: The National. Dec 11: [Rare kingfisher threatened by demise of mangroves.](#)



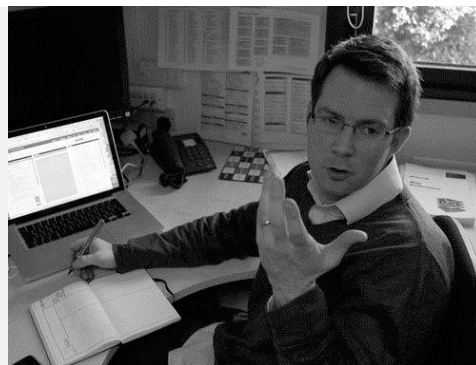
**Oscar Campbell**, 36 years young, is from Northern Ireland, where as a boy he began bird-watching - still his strongest avocational interest, although he is keen on other aspects of natural history as well. He teaches chemistry at Al Khubairat School in Abu Dhabi, and in his free time he serves as a guide for visiting birders, contributes to ornithological publications, submits bird records online and serves as the Chairman of the Emirates Bird Records Committee (EBRC).



**Ahmed al Ali**, 29 years young, is from the UAE. He is deeply interested in all aspect of natural history, including that best seen with a scuba tank, and is also an avid photographer. His superb images have been utilised online and in various ornithological publications. He works at the Center Of Waste Management in Abu Dhabi and has recently become the Ornithological Society of the Middle East (OSME) Regional Representative for the UAE.

## Upcoming Speakers

**Craig Mills** works for the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre, as Head of the Biodiversity Informatics Programme. He will be here for the Eye-on Earth Summit, jointly sponsored by UNEP-WCMC, EAD and AGIT, in Abu Dhabi from 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2011. This summit conference is devoted to promoting environmentally sustainable solutions in the developing world.



Invited to give a presentation at an extra-ordinary the ENHG meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> Dec, **Craig Mills** will be speaking to us about UNEP-WCMC's global projects featured at the Eye on Earth Summit, focusing on the Protected Planet project (<http://protectedplanet.net>).



**Kaiulani Creamer Shorey** is a second year veterinary student at the Royal Veterinary College of London. She spent many years working as a Marine Mammal and Exotic Animal Trainer and Handler in her hometown of Isla Mujeres, Mexico where she worked with a large spectrum of species from dolphins and sea lions to sharks, macaws and sloths. All in all, she has spent 16 years of summers, weekends and after school periods with dolphins.

Kai has spent years learning and practicing the art of training through Operant Conditioning using Positive Reinforcement and is particularly passionate about working on husbandry or "voluntary medical" behaviours with the animals in her care.

Kai also worked and volunteered at a veterinary practice in Mexico for over 11 years where she had the opportunity to aid in the rehabilitation of an unusual spider monkey patient, as well as volunteering in 2009 at the WRSAN Wildlife Division veterinary practice in the UAE.

Though her main passions are veterinary medicine and training, she is a great advocate of education for conservation and jumps at any opportunity to educate the public about her work, most recently giving a lecture to final year high school students in Mexico.

On 20th December, Kai will give the ENHG an illustrated presentation titled: Dolphins: Basic Anatomy, Morphology, Physiology and Behaviour. Kai's talk is mainly focused on the Common Atlantic Bottlenose (*Turciops truncatus truncatus*) as most of her experience is with this species, but it also touches on general facts on all members of the Delphinidae family. The talk is basically a collection of all the interesting, valuable facts and answers to the most common questions Kai has

been asked about dolphins over the years: from their body shape and colour to their fins and eyes to their mating behaviour and intelligence.

*The Editor thanks the above speakers for providing autobiographical information & photos for Focus.*

## IEW 2012 Details Forthcoming

Hotel booking and programme details for this event—to be based at a hotel in Dubai and set for 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, will be sent out by host DNHG and passed along on our email system by the last week of December. Stay tuned!

## Holiday Bungalow in South Africa



Charming thatched bungalow, situated in a secure private nature reserve, on the banks of the Sabie River, overlooking Kruger National Park in South Africa.

Fully furnished. Sleeps eight in comfort, in four bedrooms (three bathrooms). Wonderful verandah for entertaining while bird/game watching. Over 300 species of birds & 42 species of mammal seen from the property. Elephant; Buffalo; Hippo; Crocodile; Giraffe & a host of smaller game seen daily. Lion sometimes seen, Leopard always present but difficult to see. Hyaena seen at night.

Makes a fantastic base for exploring KNP & the Drakensburg Mountains. KNP entrance 1km away.

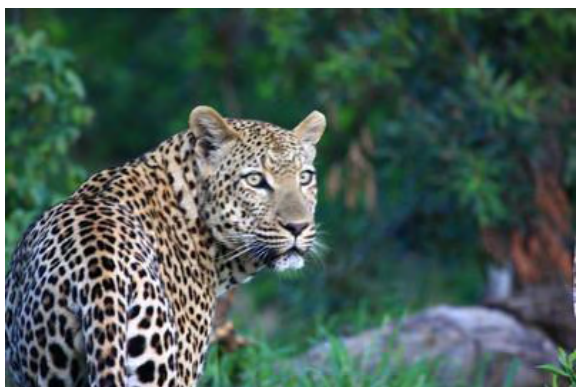
120 pounds sterling a night for eight people

100 pounds a night for six

90 pounds a night for fewer than six people

Contact Steve James via e-mail: [sjames055@gmail.com](mailto:sjames055@gmail.com)

Also see website: <http://www.krugerholidays.com/> for further information and an excellent photo gallery.



*Photographs by Steve James*

## In the Local News Media

The National, Nov 2: [Ancient settlements detected at Dalma Island and Al Khan](#)

The National, Nov 12: [Canadian woman captures RAK beauty before it disappears](#)

Gulf News, Nov 19: [Forum to discuss ways to protect marine ecology](#)

Khaleej Times, Nov 19: [Saviour of marine lives](#)

The National, Nov 19: [Founder's conservation vision flourishes on Sir Bani Yas Island](#)

Gulf News, Nov 20: [Dugong conservation gets support](#)

The National, Nov 20: [Raging bulls connect with past](#)

The National, Nov 24: [Nakheel swaps man-made islands to create artificial reefs](#)

The National, Nov 26: [Hundreds cheer as Emerald heads home](#)

The National, Dec 8: [Rescue efforts release 700 bustards into wild](#)

## Websites of General Interest

Emirates Natural History Group – Al Ain (Archives: newsletters of 3 NHGs, *Tribulus*): <http://www.enhg.org>

Dubai Natural History Group: <http://dnhg.org>

Qatar Natural History Group: <http://www.qnhg.com>

Fujairah in Focus: <http://fujairahinfocus.blogspot.com/>

Tommy Pedersen's UAE Birding / UAE Nature Forum: <http://www.uaebirding.com>

Hanne & Jens Eriksen's website: [www.BirdsOman.com](http://www.BirdsOman.com)

Emirates Soc. of Geoscience: <http://www.esg-uae.org>

UAE archaeology website: <http://www.adias-uae.com>

Abu Dhabi Authority for Culture and Heritage <http://www.adach.ae/en>

Environment Agency Abu Dhabi: <http://www.ead.ae/en>

Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund: <http://www.mbzspeciesconservation.org/>

Emirates Marine Environmental Group: [www.emeg.ae](http://www.emeg.ae)

Emirates Diving Association: <http://www.emiratesdiving.com/index.php>

Noukhada Adventure Co.: <http://noukhada.ae>

Sharjah Museums: <http://www.sharjahmuseums.ae>

Wildlife Middle East News: <http://www.wmenews.com>

Arabian Wildlife: <http://www.arabianwildlife.com/main.htm>

Sharkwatch Arabia: <http://www.sharkwatcharabia.com>

Foundation for the Protection of the Arabian Leopard in Yemen: <http://www.yemenileopard.org>

EDGE: Evolutionarily Distinct and Globally Endangered: <http://www.edgeofexistence.org>


















ARKive Images of Life on Earth: <http://www.arkive.org>

Wikispecies: <http://species.wikimedia.org/wiki>



### Corporate Sponsors of the ENHG - 2011

These companies are supporting the ENHG activities in the region. We hope you as ENHG members will in turn support these companies whenever you can. Click on the links below for information about the sponsors.

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<b>Exova</b>	
<b>ExxonMobil</b>	
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<b>Kharafi National</b>	
<b>Al Masaood Group</b>	
<b>Mott MacDonald, Ltd.</b>	
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<b>Partex Oil and Gas</b>	
<b>Readymix Abu Dhabi Limited L.L.C.</b> (Scroll down to 7 <sup>th</sup> entry)	
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<b>Ultra Dascam (Shaheen)</b>	
<b>URS</b>	
<b>Wave Craft, Ltd. (Auditor Nick Benghe's Co.)</b>	
<b>WSP Group</b>	

### ITEMS ON SALE

#### AT THE ENHG BOOK STALL

*All prices are in dirhams.*

- The Emirates – A Natural History, 350  
*The first complete referencing guide to the wildlife of the UAE. 580 colour photos*
- Jebel Hafit – A Natural History, 100  
*An attractive, encyclopaedic presentation of the natural resources of this local landmark. (Free copies available for schools donations.)*
- Wild about Mammals, 40
- Wild about Reptiles, 40
- Breeding Birds of the United Arab Emirates, 100
- Abu Dhabi Bird checklist, 10
- Sandgrouse checklist of the birds of the United Arab Emirates, 25
- Emirates Bird Report, 20
- Birdwatching guide to Oman, 2nd edition, 100  
*Guide to bird watching spots in Oman.*
- Common Birds in Oman, 2nd ed, 120
- Butterflies of Saudi Arabia & its neighbours, 90
- UAE in Focus, 100
- Natural History of Oman, 50
- Field Guide to the Geology of Oman, 75
- Abu Dhabi 8 Million Years ago, 15
- Arabian Wildlife Encyclopedia, 120
- Sulphur, Camels and Gunpowder, 100
- Native Plants of Oman, 80
- Little O in Oman, 25
- Wild Flowers of the UAE, 110
- Marine Environment, Resource of the UAE, 140
- Flowering Plants of the UAE, 60
- Socotra Calendar – 2012, 35
- Wild Flower Cards (Pack of 5), 60

## Committee Members

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**Required: Lecture Coordinator to contact and follow up with speakers. Can you do this?**

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## Lectures

**Venue: HCT / Abu Dhabi Men's College**

Press CTRL+click [here](#) to view map/directions.

6<sup>th</sup> Dec.  
Birds of Khor Kalba  
**Oscar Campbell & Ahmed Al Ali**

*Extra-ordinary Lecture*

13<sup>th</sup> Dec. **7:30 PM**  
UNEP's Protected Planet Project  
**Craig Mills**

20<sup>th</sup> Dec. **7:30 PM**  
Dolphins: Basic Anatomy, Morphology, Physiology and Behaviour

**Kailani Creamer-Shorey**

3<sup>rd</sup> Jan. **7:30 PM**  
Life in the Sands  
**Drew Gardner**

## Field Trips

9<sup>th</sup> Dec.  
Hike up Jebel Hafit  
**Feng**

13<sup>th</sup> Jan.  
Return trip to RAK Dhow yards  
**Feng**

21<sup>st</sup> Jan.  
Al Wathba Lakes Birding Trip  
**Oscar Campbell & Andrew Bean**

21<sup>st</sup> Jan.  
Mountain hike day trip and/or camping trip  
**Stefan Beck**

4<sup>th</sup> Feb.  
Al Wathba Lakes Birding Trip  
**Oscar Campbell & Andrew Bean**

## ENHG-AD Research & Conservation Fund Grant Application Information

For background on this fund, see **Dec 2009 Focus**, p5.  
For research & grant application guidelines, click [here](#).  
For grant application form, click [here](#).  
For further enquiries, contact ENHG Acting Chairman Keith Taylor at [kjtaylor13@yahoo.com](mailto:kjtaylor13@yahoo.com).

## ENHG Equipment for Members' Use

The following ENHG equipment is available for members' use during field trips or on request:

- Birding Telescope
  - GPS unit – GARMIN GPSMAP 60CSx
  - First-Aid Kit
  - Sky Scout astronomical object locator/identifier
  - Celestron NexStar telescope (on field trips only)
  - Two satellite phones, taken on camping trips.
- Phone numbers: No. 1: 008821644400956  
No. 2: 008821644400965

Enquiries: Andrew Bean, [rexabean@emirates.net.ae](mailto:rexabean@emirates.net.ae)

## Marine Life Rescue Contact Info.

In Abu Dhabi:

EAD Hotline for reporting environmental emergencies including pollution and injured wildlife: 8009990. Email: [envirocomplaint@ead.ae](mailto:envirocomplaint@ead.ae)

EAD Emergency response manager: Mr. Abdul Rahman. Mob: 0506674171 (contactable 24 hours/day)

EAD contact for sea turtles, dugongs and dolphins: Dr. Himansu Das, Biodiversity Management Sector. Tel: 26934654; Mob: 0504465125; Email: [hsdas@ead.ae](mailto:hsdas@ead.ae)

In Dubai:

Emirates Marine Environment Group (EMEG) (Tel: 043630581/Fax:043630460; Email: [info@emeg.ae](mailto:info@emeg.ae))

Dubai Municipality: Main number: 800900. Marine Environment & Sanctuaries Unit (Tel: +9714 606 6818, Fax +9714 703 3532), Email: [marabdulla@dm.gov.ae](mailto:marabdulla@dm.gov.ae).

Dubai Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at the Burj al Arab Aquarium. Tel: 043017198. 24-hour email contact, Attn. Mr Warren Baverstock, Manager of Operations, BAA Aquarium: [warren.baverstock@jumeirah.com](mailto:warren.baverstock@jumeirah.com)  
To post Facebook message triggering an after-hours SMS alert: [www.facebook.com/turtle.rehabilitation](http://www.facebook.com/turtle.rehabilitation)

## Newsletter Details

Newsletter contributions to:  
[newsletter@chirri2000.com](mailto:newsletter@chirri2000.com)

## Postal Address

ENHG c/o Environment Agency -  
Abu Dhabi, PO Box 45553, Abu Dhabi

## Members' Items for sale

Please send small ads to:  
[newsletter@chirri2000.com](mailto:newsletter@chirri2000.com)

## Yahoo Groups website

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/AUHENHG>  
(Click Join button to sign up for ENHG info.)