

# focus

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Emirates Natural History Group

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

## EDITORIAL

This issue of *Focus* continues the re-cap of this year's Inter-Emirates Weekend in Al Ain begun in the Feb issue, with three top-notch write-ups of IEW 2013 tours by associates in the Dubai NHG, reprinted by permission from the March issue of *The Gazelle*. The next *Focus* issue should include write-ups of three archaeologically focused ENHG-AD field trips.

In March, between guided tours of the birdlife close to home at the Al Wathba Reserve this season, Oscar Campbell gave us a fascinating glimpse of wildlife and rugged landscapes, interwoven with gripping adventure tales, from his recent journey to Antarctica. And in April we hear of discoveries made in two other exotic places – revelations about the historical Hanging Garden of Babylon (see Feb *Focus* for speaker details) and a travelogue of a trip along the route of the Silk Road in Western China.

Recent ENHG trips have included a boat-based birding jaunt with Capt. Maarten and a camping trip to Ras Al Khaimah in late March which combined an exploration of villages & field systems with a vigorous mountain hike—in an area definitely worth exploring further next season. Also, a camping trip to Dalma Island is set to go at the end of this week: April 12<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup>.

In March the ties between the Environmental Agency of Abu Dhabi grew stronger with an engaging presentation by an EAD team of the aims and methodologies of the Abu Dhabi Baseline Survey. On Fri. 3<sup>rd</sup> May, ENHG members will be invited to participate in an EAD training session after which they can conduct surveys of certain specified areas on their own. Full details on this training session will be sent out on our email system soon. NB: See Project Noah: [www.projectnoah.org](http://www.projectnoah.org) and EAD Online Library: <http://library.ead.ae>.

Finally, a delegation from the Ramsar Convention Secretariat is holding a conference in Abu Dhabi from April 27<sup>th</sup> to May 2<sup>nd</sup>, during which time they will officially announce two additional Ramsar wetlands sites in the UAE (See below for info. on one). We will arrange an extraordinary talk that week by a Ramsar delegate from—most likely on a day other than a Tues. (date TBA).

**Keith Taylor**

## The UAE Adds a Third Ramsar Site

The UAE has just added a third Ramsar site located in Sharjah. Under the management of the Environment and Protected Areas Authority of Sharjah, Khor Kalba, an important coastal area containing mangroves and mud flats, has been declared a Ramsar site. Internationally recognized, Ramsar status aids in recognition of important biodiversity hot spots, particularly wetland ecosystems which support a variety of migrant and breeding bird species. Although only one criteria needs to be recognized, Khor Kalba meets three criteria: old growth mangrove stands exist in the khor which are under threat in the region; the khor supports threatened species; and more than 1% of the global population of the vulnerable Socotra Cormorant has been recorded in the area. Additionally, the endemic Kalba White Collared Kingfisher resides and breeds only

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## FRONT COVER PICTURE

Photograph: Indian Roller in Wadi Shah, Ras Al Khaimah

Photographer: May Yoke Taylor

## This month's contributors

Tamsin Carlisle, Denis Cheng, DNHG, Gary Feulner, David Stanton, May Yoke Taylor

## ENHG Membership Information

Annual membership in the Abu Dhabi chapter of the ENHG is 100 Dhs per individual and now 150 Dhs per family membership. See Membership Sec. or Asst. at the next meeting for a membership form. Membership renewals for 2013 are due in January.

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 20 is now available at ENHG meetings.

in Khor Kalba within the entirety of the UAE. NB: See the first two links in News Media panel on p. 7 below.

For more information on Khor Kalba as a Ramsar site, visit: [The Ramsar Bulletin Board](#).

**DNHG**

## IEW Outing to Al Jazira Oasis

Al-Jazira Oasis is the most remote of the mountain oases in the Mahdhah area of Oman that are accessible by car. It is approached from a ridge to the south which gives dramatic views of the plantations (mostly date palms) and the large dammed lake (sometimes washed out after heavy rains). It was here that Jodie Healy of the Al-Ain ENHG chose a superb route for an introduction and survey of the mountain flora, descending a modest gully from the vehicle pass.

We encountered such abundance and diversity (some 60 species in only about 200 meters) that we were ultimately unable to complete the transit of the wadi



before the appointed hour to depart. Yet a quick perusal of the lower slopes and the gorge area made it clear that there were many more species that could have been recorded.

One highlight of Al Jazira is the tall sedge *Cladium mariscus* that grows adjacent to the lake. This species is otherwise known in our area from only a single additional site, in Wadi Wurayah on the East Coast of the UAE, where it was first recorded by DNHG Vice Chairman Valerie Chalmers on an IEW field trip in 2009.



Gary Feulner

Photograph by the author

## IEW Bird-watching at Green Mubazzarah & Zakher Pools

Trip led by Diane Evans, Huw Roberts & Leslie Butler on February 22, 2013

Staying at the One-to-One Al-Fayda Hotel instead of the full-up Danat Resort had its advantages: I was able to walk to Green Mubazzarah and was early enough to catch the rising sun sending out spectacular rays from behind mist-clad Jebel Hafit and the earliest doves, bulbuls and quail stirring in nearby plantations.

Still pre-trip, in the manicured parkland just outside Green Mubazzarah proper, I was greeted by Sacred Ibis (*Threskiornis aethiopicus*), Chukar Partidge (*Alectoris chukar*) and Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) – all old-hat to the locals, as the ibis and chukar are introduced species and the Cattle Egrets are common winter visitors to cultivated/landscaped habitats, but I enjoyed the close encounters. The chukar, which is the national bird of Pakistan, was introduced to southern Arabia in the 17th century. The Sacred Ibises have been breeding independently in and around Al Ain for nearly two decades, after 70 individuals were introduced in 1993.

My next sighting, still in the landscaped area, was a Red-wattled Lapwing (*Vanellus indicus*) hanging out with the ibises and egrets. That was soon followed in the Green Mubazzarah camp ground by the discovery of an active pale crag martin nest on the exterior wall of the Oasis coffee shop. The parents flitted in and out, keeping an eye on things but too nervous to land. This was where I met up with the rest of the IEW birding group.

From the coffee shop, we walked to rocky, hill-flanked ground at the mouth of Wadi Nahyan, on our way

observing the two locally abundant bulbul species - Red-vented (*Pycnonotus cafer*) and White-eared (*Pycnonotus leucotis*) - as well as Collared Doves (*Streptopelia decaocto*). We also saw a Blue Rock Thrush (*Monticola solitarius*) perched atop the decorative roof-top concrete of a park building and a few of the local mountain subspecies of Desert Lark (*Ammomanes deserti taimuri*) in the adjacent parking lot.



Blue Rock Thrush



Desert Lark

The un-landscaped wadi entrance lived up to its local reputation as an easily accessible place to encounter typical avian inhabitants of the Hajar Mountains. In addition to more Blue Rock Thrushes and Desert Larks, we saw Rufous-tailed Thrushes (*Monticola saxatilis*), the small but striking Black-and-White Hume's Wheatear (*Oenanthe albonigra*), a Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) and Rock Pigeons (*Columba livia*) – wild antecedents of the ubiquitous urban pigeon. Purple Sunbirds (*Cynniris asiaticus brevirostris*) were heard and spotted in a profusely flowering mesquite tree, which is among these nectar-feeding birds' favourite seasonal food sources.



Rufous-tailed Rock Thrush



For me, the morning's standout observation was a Desert Lark energetically bashing a sunflower seed on an anvil stone in an effort to crack it open. I have posted a short video clip with public accessibility on my Facebook page here:

<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=10151797514069951>.

A final treat was in store for us as we returned to the cars: an Indian Roller (*Coracias benghalensis*) performing its dramatic aerial courtship display, looping the loop and indulging in the diving rolls from which it derives its colloquial English name. A pair of chukar also put in an appearance.

From Green Mubazzarah, our large convoy proceeded to the nearby Zakher Pools, an artificial wetland at a water-treatment site that has become one of the bird-watching hot spots of the inland UAE. There we saw a number of typical wetland species including Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*), Great Egret (*Ardea alba*), Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*), Coot (*Fulica atra*), Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*), Great Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*), Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*), Red-wattled Lapwing, Stint (*Calidris* sp.), some smallish gulls in winter plumage (probably *Croico-cephalus ridibundus*), a Western Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) and several wild duck species: Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), the similar but smaller Garganey (*Anas querquedula*), teal (*Anas crecca*) and northern shoveler (*Anas clypeata*). We also saw a group of five Egyptian Geese (*Alopochen aegytiacus*), which arrived a few weeks ago and are infrequent visitors to this location. Among the smaller birds I spotted were a Water Pipit (*Anthus spinoletta*) and a Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus* sp.).



Grey Heron



Egyptian Goose



Water Pipit

Shortly after 11 a.m., with the wind picking up and already two hours after the trip was scheduled to end, we decided to call it a day. Many thanks to our Al Ain hosts for sharing these wonderful birding locations!

Postscript: The following morning, while travelling as a passenger in a convoy headed through Green Mubazzarah for the IEW Wadi Nahyan walk, I saw a Demoiselle Crane (*Anthropoides virgo*) on the grass. Initially I thought this must be another introduced species, on a par with the Sacred Ibis, but there have been other documented late February sightings of wild cranes near Al Ain at the Al Qa'aa fodder feed. It is therefore possible that the bird I saw was a wild migrant.

For additional photos of IEW bird sightings (but unfortunately not the crane), please visit the publicly accessible album on my Facebook site at this URL:

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151758538244951.1073741826.681524950&type=3>

**Tamsin Carlisle**

*All photographs by the author*

## IEW Wadi Nahyan Canyon Walk

Trip led by Leslie Butler, assisted by Brigitte Howarth, on February 23, 2013



Wadi Nahyan

Ensconced as I was in lodgings near Green Mubazzarah, the Wadi Nahyan canyon walk offered a welcome chance to explore the natural environment beyond the landscaping of the popular park. Indeed, the walk started exactly where the previous day's birdwatching trip had left off. The focus, however, wasn't

birds, even though several Indian silverbills presented themselves on a profusely flowering mesquite tree near the wadi entrance. Rather, it was on the locality's spectacular geomorphology and many plants in flower in the wake of spring rains. The first indigenous plant to catch my attention was *Aerva javanica*, a member of the amaranth family with cottony flower heads that were traditionally used to stuff mattresses, cushions and camel saddles. Other notable herbs included the pretty lilac-flowered crucifer *Physorrhycus chamaerapistrum*, which in other locations is usually grazed to ground level by feral goats – but no evidence of such goats in Wadi Nahyan.

Further up the wadi, we encountered *Heliotropium lasiocarpum*, a member of the borage/forget-me-not family with sharply defined double rows of tiny white flowers. This uncommon species occurs only in a few scattered locations in the UAE, of which Wadi Nahyan is evidently one. Plant cover thinned out as we climbed the steep head-wall at the far end of the wadi, but the notable species we saw at higher elevation included the shrub *Rumex limoniastrium*. The buckwheat/knotweed family member is not commonly encountered, but that may be simply because it typically grows on cliffs and steep rocky slopes at moderate to high elevations in the forbidding Hajar Mountains.



*Rumex limoniastrium*

As for fauna, in addition to the silver bills we spotted rock doves, at least one jumpy lizard – provisionally identified as a juvenile banded ground gecko – and a few arthropods including a pitted darkling beetle, an assassin bug and an unidentified black spider. Such modest biosphere pickings paled in the face of spectacular geology-in-the-raw, framing impressive panoramic views from higher elevations looking back towards Green Mubazzarah. In Wadi Nahyan, it is possible to observe on the surface the effects of the upheaval in the earth's crust caused by the subduction of the Nubian beneath the Arabian shield that created the Hajar Mountains. Exposed here are uplifted layers of petrified sediment, formed beneath the floor of the ancient Tethys Sea, crisscrossed by faults that acted as conduits for magma upwellings from beneath the earth's crust. Many of the faults became heavily mineralized, now visible as exposed calcite veins. Extensive surface

weathering by water and wind have contributed to complex geomorphology that in places resembles the ruins of man-made stone walls. This is a location to which petroleum geologists flock as they attempt to understand and model underground events that elsewhere in the region created traps for oil and natural gas. Otherwise it has been largely undisturbed by man or invasive feral species, creating a refuge for indigenous flora and fauna.

Additional photos from the canyon walk are publicly accessible on my Facebook page at the following URL: <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10151776515679951.1073741830.681524950&type=3>.

**Tamsin Carlisle**

*All photographs by the author*

## March 2013 FEW-FPALY Update

Three-times ENHG R&C grant recipient David Stanton has sent in a March update on the Foundation for Endangered Wildlife/Foundation to Protect the Arabian Leopard in Yemen, from which the below is extracted & abridged. Having now rejoined the Sanaa International School as a full-time teacher, David is relieved to see FEW-FPALY thriving under the capable stewardship of its new director, Dr. Mohammed Al Duais. – Ed.

1) FEW-FPALY and Save Yemen Flora and Fauna (SYFF) jointly administer "Plant it Project" (PIP): a project funded by wedding gifts to Riaz Ingar and Sarah Oakley of Ontario, Canada. This project aims to help alleviate hunger in an impoverished area in Yemen (Wadi Sharis in Hajjah) by planting food and/or income-generating trees of various types.

2) Dr. Mohammed Al-Duais will represent FEW at the Sixteenth Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna from March 8 – 13.

3) Hawf Project Temporarily Halted: In mid-Jan 2013 we packed up our cameras and left Hawf after more than 26 months of continuous mammal research. The funding for this project has finally dried up but not before we obtained thousands of images and reams of data which are being written up by Dr. Igor Khorozyan, of Göttingen, Germany. The *Hawf Mammal Survey* was funded by the *Mohammed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund* and the *Abu Dhabi Chapter of the Emirates Natural History Group*. We have left some equipment in Hawf in the hopes, once additional funding is secured, of returning to continue the monitoring of mammals in and around Hawf Protected Area. In an alarming footnote, we have learned that the Government of Oman is taking bids on the construction of a security fence along the Yemen-Oman border. If constructed, this fence will effectively cut the Hawf-Dhofar leopard population in two and will likely hasten the extinction of this most important population.

4) We have finally initiated the field portion of the *Prince Barnard Nature Fund* supported leopard surveys in Wadi Sharis and Jebel Bura'. Following workshops at both locations, we have installed and trained local field researchers in both locations. In Wadi Sharis Mr. Mohammed Al-Qudami is currently managing eight trail cameras. At Jebel Bura' Mr. Abdullah Al-Eishy also has



eight cameras which he is deploying at Wadi Rijjaf within the protected area.

5) Collaboration is underway between FEW & the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (BSPB) to monitor the movements of an Egyptian Vulture satellite-tagged in Bulgaria, currently wintering in Yemen.

6) From March 14 – 19, Mr. Osama Al-Nouri and Mr. Ibrahim Al-Hasani of the BirdLife International Middle East office are planning to visit Yemen to discuss the Migratory Soaring Bird Project with FEW.

7) FEW/FPALY has reached more than 640 “Likes” on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/yemenileopard>.

8) Remarkably without ever charging membership fees, FEW/FPALY has been kept alive by the tireless efforts of Mr. Mohammed Shaia & his father Mr. Ahmed Abdulkader Shaia, resulting in significant contributions from several sources within the oil sector in Yemen, meeting operating expenses of \$1,500/month—good for the next four or five months. Additionally, a proud, new father in the Netherlands who wishes to remain anonymous asked friends and relatives to donate to FEW/FPALY (over \$900) rather than giving his newborn son toys and money. Such generosity is a testimony to the confidence that our friends feel about our transparent and honest way of going about our business of conserving endangered wildlife in Yemen.

9) Ever since 1996 students at Sanaa International School (SIS) have walked to raise money in support of endangered species. In fact, the annual *Walk for Wildlife* led to the formation of what has become FEW/FPALY. On Wednesday, March 13, students at SIS will once again walk – to raise donations for the meager administrative costs of the Foundation. Anyone else wishing to send donations may contact me, David Stanton, at [fewyemen@gmail.com](mailto:fewyemen@gmail.com).

**David Stanton**

spend the rest of his life traveling and living abroad. He went to graduate school at San Francisco State University and attained an M.A. in English language teaching and, eventually, a second M.A. in Instructional Design and Technologies. In his long career as an instructor and trainer of English language, educational technology, language teaching methodology, anthropology and European and American history and popular culture, Denis has realized a large portion of his life's objective of traveling to the far reaches of the planet by having been around it three times, travelled to five of the seven continents and lived and worked in seven different countries outside of his home country of the United States.

A major segment of the Old Silk Road passed through China's Xinjiang Province, which made it a hub of east-west economic and cultural exchange in ancient times. Today, the province is still populated by not only Han Chinese but many other diverse ethnic groups such as the Mongols, Kazaks, Kyrgyzs and especially Uighurs, who are also known as “eastern Turks.” The Old Silk Road's eastern terminus was the ancient Chinese capital of Chang'an, now known as Xi'an. When it reached Xianjiang, the road split and crossed both north and south of the Taklamakan Desert. In Kashgar, the main routes re-joined, crossed the Tian Shan or Karakoram to Samarkand, Persia and ultimately the Mediterranean. The ruins of many ancient “lost cities of the Old Silk Road” still exist throughout the province. This talk will be the presentation of one person's month-long journey through Xinjiang in search of the Old Silk Road and some of its fabled “lost cities.”

*The Editor thanks the above speaker for providing autobiographical information & photo for Focus.*

## Upcoming Speaker



ENHG member & intrepid member of the Field Trip Coordinators team **Denis Cheng** grew up “on the move” from Washington, D.C., to New York City and, then, Los Angeles, CA. He attended the University of California, Berkeley (near San Francisco), where he studied geology, palaeontology, anthropology and archaeology and graduated with a B.A. in anthropology. During a two-year backpacking trip through Europe, Denis visited 17 of the then 22 countries and decided he wanted to

## Corporate Sponsors of the ENHG - 2012

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.

<b>Dolphin Energy</b>	
<b>Dome International L.L.C.</b>	
<b>Fugro Survey (Middle East) Ltd.</b>	
<b>Al Masood Group</b>	
<b>Nautica Environmental Associates L.L.C.</b>	
<b>Shell</b>	
<b>URS</b>	

## In the Local News Media

Gulf News, March 17: [Al Qaram Trees and Al Hafiya Protected area on Ramsar List](#)

The National, March 21: [Khor Kalba becomes 3<sup>rd</sup> UAE site hailed as globally significant wetland](#)

The National, March 22: [Red tide havoc on UAE coastline 'has no lasting effect', says ministry](#)

Gulf News, March 24: [Bird species in Dubai is on increase](#)

The National, March 24: [First nests mark start of nesting season at Ras Al Khor Wildlife Sanctuary](#)

Gulf News, March 28: [Badah fishing banned for two months](#)

Gulf News, March 28: [Hissing snake is harmless, says Dubai zoo official](#)

Khaleej Times, March 29: [Animals released to natural habitat](#)

## ITEMS ON SALE

### AT THE ENHG BOOK STALL

*All prices are in dirhams.*

- 2013 Calendar – *Birds of Oman*, 30
- *Jebel Hafit – A Natural History*, 100  
*An attractive, encyclopaedic presentation of the natural resources of this national landmark. (Free copies available for schools donations.)*
- Abu Dhabi 8 Million Years Ago, 15
- *Birds of the UAE- - A guide to common and important species*, 60
- *Birds of the UAE--Helm field guide*, 70
- *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
- *Exploring Oman*, 120
- *Native Plants of Oman*, 80
- *Natural History of Oman*, 50
- *Native Plants of Oman*, 80
- *Little O in Oman*, 25
- *Butterflies of Saudi Arabia & its neighbours*, 90
- *Sulphur, Camels and Gunpowder*, 100
- *Tribulus*, our annual Journal, see for details
- *Wild about mammals*, 40
- *Focus on Fujairah: Through Minie's lens 1964-2001*, 150
- *Field Guide: Wild Plants in Oman*, 300

## 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.org>

Historical Association of Oman: <http://www.hao.org.om/>

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

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

Roy & Liz's website: [www.chirri2000.com](http://www.chirri2000.com)

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

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

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

Emirates Wildlife Society – World Wildlife Fund:  
[http://www.panda.org/who\\_we\\_are/wwf\\_offices/united\\_arab\\_emirates/](http://www.panda.org/who_we_are/wwf_offices/united_arab_emirates/)

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

UAE Environmental Atlas:  
<http://www.environmentalatlas.ae/>

Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority  
<http://www.adach.ae/en/> (Still using ADACH website)

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

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

NYUAD Events Calendar:  
<http://nyuad.nyu.edu/news.events/events.ad.html>

Khalifa University Events Calendar:  
<http://www.kustar.ac.ae/campus/dss/schedules/default.aspx>

Dubai Astronomy Group:  
<http://www.dubaiastronomy.com>

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

The Rock Art of the Hajar Mountains:  
[http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/uae/hajar\\_mountains/index.php](http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/uae/hajar_mountains/index.php)

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

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

Zoology in the Middle East (Peer-reviewed ISI Journal):  
<http://www.kasperek-verlag.de/ZME-allgem.htm>

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

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

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

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

Protected Planet: IUCN & UNEP-WCMC Database:  
<http://www.protectedplanet.net>

Encyclopedia of Life: <http://eol.org/>

ARKive Images of Life on Earth: <http://www.arkive.org>  
Jewels of the UAE: <http://www.arkive.org/uae/en/>

NHBS Environment Bookstore: <http://www.nhbs.com/>

## Committee Members

Andrew Bean (Outgoing Chairman)  
Mobile: 050-322-1327  
[rexabeau@ozemail.com.au](mailto:rexabeau@ozemail.com.au)

Keith Taylor  
(Deputy Chairman / Focus Editor / Field Trip Coordinator)  
Mobile: 050-820-4938  
[kjtaylor13@yahoo.com](mailto:kjtaylor13@yahoo.com)

Julie Bird (Secretary)  
Mobile: 050-615-4757  
[julieinad@yahoo.com](mailto:julieinad@yahoo.com)

Rex Sartain (Treasurer & Asst. Membership Sec.)  
Mobile: 050-526-5112  
[rexsartain@hotmail.com](mailto:rexsartain@hotmail.com)

Claudia Gehre  
(‘Out-station’ Public Relations Secretary)  
Mobile: 050-526-3026  
[ccgehre@gmail.com](mailto:ccgehre@gmail.com)

Avra Theophanous  
(Corporate Sponsorship Secretary & Membership Records Sec.)  
[avra.theophanous@gmail.com](mailto:avra.theophanous@gmail.com)  
Also: [css.abudhabi@enhg.org](mailto:css.abudhabi@enhg.org)

Peter Hellyer  
(Editor of *Tribulus* / Librarian)  
Mobile: 050-642-4357  
[hellyer@emirates.net.ae](mailto:hellyer@emirates.net.ae)

Denis Cheng  
(Field Trip Coordinator)  
Mobile: 055-776-8785  
[spacemandc@gmail.com](mailto:spacemandc@gmail.com)

Ian Townson  
(Field Trip Coordinator)  
Mobile: 050-111-4598  
[ian\\_townson@hotmail.com](mailto:ian_townson@hotmail.com)

Ronnie Gallagher  
(Field Trip Coordinator)  
Mobile: 050-446-3887  
[gallagher\\_ronnie@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gallagher_ronnie@yahoo.co.uk)

Gordon Higgs  
(Book Stall Coordinator)  
056-127-1320  
[gord2u@googlemail.com](mailto:gord2u@googlemail.com)

Dick Hornby (Member)  
Mobile: 050-662-4501  
[dnahornby@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dnahornby@yahoo.co.uk)

Barbara Barton Smith (Member)  
Mobile: 050-761-6880  
[barbbartonsmith@yahoo.com](mailto:barbbartonsmith@yahoo.com)

Amanda Smyton (Member)  
Mobile: 050-727-5781  
[amandasmyton@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:amandasmyton@yahoo.co.uk)

## Committee Adjunct

Michael Creamer  
(Trophy Maintenance Handyman)  
Mobile: 050-821-5204  
[michaellacreamer@hotmail.com](mailto:michaellacreamer@hotmail.com)

## Lectures

### Meeting Venue: Abu Dhabi Women's College, City Campus Emirates Hall

March 5<sup>th</sup>  
Antarctica: The Best Journey in the World?  
**Oscar Campbell**

March 19<sup>th</sup>  
EAD Overview of Abu Dhabi Baseline Survey Project  
**Anil Kumar & Pritpal Soorae**

April 2<sup>nd</sup> NO LECTURE

April 9<sup>th</sup> **7:30 PM**  
The Mystery of the Hanging Garden of Babylon: An Elusive World Wonder Traced  
**Dr. Stephanie Dalley**

April 16<sup>th</sup> **7:30 PM**  
A Journey through the Lost Cities of the Ancient Silk Road  
**Denis Cheng**

## Field Trips

March 9<sup>th</sup>  
Al Wathba Lakes Birding  
**Oscar Campbell & Ian Townson**

March 16<sup>th</sup>  
Musaffah Channel Birding Boat Trip  
**Maarten Verhage & Ian Townson**

March 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup>  
Camping Trip: Wadi Biah  
**Ronnie Gallagher & Keith Taylor**

April 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>  
Dalma Island Camping  
**Ian Townson & Keith Taylor**

April 20<sup>th</sup> (TRIP FULL)  
Al Wathba Lakes Birding  
**Oscar Campbell & Keith Taylor**

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

For background on this fund, see [Dec 2009 Focus](#), p5.

For further enquiries and for grant application guidelines and application form, contact ENHG Chairman Andrew Bean at [rexabeau@ozemail.com.au](mailto:rexabeau@ozemail.com.au)

NB: These documents are posted in the Files section of the AUHENHG YahooGroup (see address below).

## ENHG Equipment for Members' Use

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

- Starter camping set: 2 new sleeping bags & maps, medium-sized cool box, old Coleman '5-man' tent
- GPS unit – GARMIN GPSMAP 60CSx
- First-Aid Kit
- Birding Telescope
- Two satellite phones, taken on camping trips.

Phone numbers: No. 1: 008821644400956

No. 2: 008821644400965

Enquiries: Keith Taylor, [kjtaylor13@yahoo.com](mailto:kjtaylor13@yahoo.com)

- Celestron NexStar telescope (on field trips only)
- Sky Scout astronomical object locator/identifier

Enquiries: Denis Cheng, [spacemandc@gmail.com](mailto:spacemandc@gmail.com)

## Marine Life Rescue Contact Info.

In Abu Dhabi:

EAD Customer Service: 800555 (or)  
[customerservice@ead.ae](mailto:customerservice@ead.ae)

EAD Emergency Response (pollution and wildlife) available 24 hours/day: Mob 050 6674171 (or) 050 6178218

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

Please send newsletter contributions to:  
[newsletter.abudhabi@enhg.org](mailto:newsletter.abudhabi@enhg.org)

## Members' Items for sale

Please send small ads to:  
[newsletter.abudhabi@enhg.org](mailto:newsletter.abudhabi@enhg.org)

## Postal Address

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

## Yahoo Groups website

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