

focus

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Emirates Natural History Group

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

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this long-awaited last regular issue of Focus for the 2014-2015 season. Thanks to new *Focus* Editor Furat for his help. Featured are an informative write-up of Mohammad Farhadinia's talk on the conservation of the Persian Leopard in Iran and a family visit to Kerala, India. Thanks to our keen, committed *Focus* Reporters, Laura and Claudia, for those and other write-ups this season and for others set for publication next season. And thanks to Arabella for putting in place such a successful lecture series for this season—and the next—based at the venue graciously provided by her employer, Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi, our Gold Level Corporate Sponsor. Thanks also to our Field Trip team of Denis, Ian, Yves and Athol for organizing some good trips this season. Please send in any suggestions or offers to help with field trips for the 2015-2016 season. A special thank-you goes to Nessrine for organizing a group discussion at one of our meetings during which she pooled expertise from those present to develop a set of guidelines for sustainable ecotourism and conservation in this region, in collaboration with her employer, the Environment Agency of AD. A draft will be sent round for your feedback next season. And thanks to all who filled out our end-of-season survey. Watch for results in September.

In Committee news, Moustafa has now stepped down after tending the Book Stall for most of this season, for which he has our thanks. That position has now been taken on by environmental professional Marieke, who has also very helpfully volunteered as Newsletter Assistant. In addition, we warmly welcome keen amateur conservationist Tatiana to the Committee as an ordinary member. Awards & Grants Coordinator Maggie Case has stepped down from the Committee, as she and her husband Charlie have moved back to the US for now; we thank Maggie for all her help, and we wish them the very best. Secretary Ian is also taking on that role for now, so any ENHG Research & Conservation grant applicants may contact him (see details on p. 8). Many thanks go out to new Corporate Sponsorship Coordinator Richard for diligently cultivating relationships with our sponsors, who assist us in making ENHG-AD R&C grants possible. Finally, for those with the time and inclination, there are still vacancies to fill in the coming season: Deputy Chair and an additional Field Trip Coordinator. Please let us know whether you can assist us in either of these roles.

See p. 7 for a link to an article on the official presentation of the 2014 ENHG Awards—the Sheikh Mubarak Prize to Dr. Richard Hornby and the Bish Brown Award to Sonja Lavrencic—by our Patron, H.E. Sheikh Nahayan. As for our ENHG Research & Conservation grants programme, grants recipient Rima Jabado is now conducting her “citizen scientists” program, training recreational divers to assist with her vital ongoing research on the status of the sharks and other elasmobranchs off the coasts of the UAE. NB: An inspection copy of *Sharks of the Arabian Seas: An Identification Guide*, co-authored by project leader Rima Jabado and Dave Ebert, can be downloaded via this link: <http://www.gulfelasmoproject.com/species-information.html>. A hard copy is on display at meetings.

At a brief Extraordinary General Meeting held at the start of our season-closing June 16th meeting, the current slate

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FRONT COVER PICTURE

Photograph: *Panthera pardus sexicolor*

Photographer: Mohammad Farhadinia

This Month's Contributors

Laura Conner, Claudia Steuber, Keith 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 Secretary or Asst. at the next meeting for a membership form. The membership year is now Sept. 1st – Aug 31st. 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 22 is now available at meetings.

of ENHG-AD Committee members (see p. 8) was formally elected by the membership—in a vote held over from the AGM in Feb. Our next AGM, setting a new pattern for our Sept-Aug membership year, will be held in Nov or Dec.

To streamline communication next season, we will be transferring from our use of Gmail and the YahooGroup site to a simpler one-stop website linked to our current <http://abudhabi.enhg.org> address on which all existing ENHG members will be asked to register. Details TBA.

Finally, thanks to all who've donated tents, tarps, medical supplies, etc. for Nepal earthquake victim relief. More donations are still urgently needed, as well as volunteers able to provide direct assistance using a tried and tested method of taking aid directly to the desperately needy. A trustworthy and reliable local young person meets aid carriers and offers his/her family home or a cheap hotel near the airport for accommodation. Translation and guiding to tent encampments and destroyed areas where the aid is most needed are in place, and visits can also be arranged to sites of historic & natural interest if desired. At the moment Etihad Airways are most graciously allowing 100 kg of aid for people willing to use this system. The cheapest possible ticket is available through Jeanette Green: mobile/whatsapp 0502385424.

Keith Taylor

The Persian Leopard: Ecology and Conservation in Northern Iran

[Presentation on March 3, 2015 by Mohammad Farhadinia, Co-Founder, Iranian Cheetah Society and PhD candidate at Oxford University]

The Persian leopard (*Panthera pardus saxicolor*) is among the biggest leopard subspecies worldwide. It is highly endangered, and its population density is declining continuously. The natural environment of the majestic big cat extends from the Caucasus mountain range through Iran to Turkmenistan and Afghanistan.

Mohammad Farhadinia found his fascination for large Iranian cats at the age of 16. After finishing school, he started to study human medicine. But his passion for nature and wildlife continued to grow, so he decided to alter his path and pursue zoology.



Iran once had a high diversity of big cats. The Asiatic lion (*Panthera leo persica*), Caspian tigers (*Panthera tigris virgata*), Asiatic cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*), the Persian leopard (*Panthera pardus saxicolor*) and the Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*) once roamed Iran. Now, lions and tigers seem to be completely extinct due to hunting. Of the three big cats remaining, the Asiatic cheetah and Persian leopard have no chance of survival in Iran without intensive protection. However, the biology and life habits of both species are poorly known.

Given the threat to and lack of information about the big cats, it was an easy decision for Mohammad Farhadinia to concentrate his research on the ecology of Asiatic cheetahs and Persian leopards. In 2001, he co-founded the Iranian Cheetah Society (ICS, <http://wildlife.ir>). It is the oldest nonprofit organization for the conservation of cheetahs and other wild carnivores in Iran.

Mohammad is now the leader of Iran's Persian leopard conservation efforts in northeastern Iran, near the border with Turkmenistan. Mr. Farhadinia came to Abu Dhabi on the third of March 2015 to share the results of his scientific and conservation work with the ENHG. His visit was quite exciting as the Emirates and Oman are also working diligently to conserve the smaller Arabian leopard subspecies, *Panthera pardus nimr*.

Mohammed and his team have been observing the Persian leopard in Iran since 2005 to learn more about population genetics and species biology. Most of their detailed fieldwork is concentrated in the remote areas

of Northern and Northeastern National Parks such as the Tandoureh, Sarigol and Salouk National Parks. The land, approximately 815 km², has been protected since the late 1960s and early 1970s by decree of the late Shah.

Around 900-1300 Persian leopards are estimated to be living today with 65% (550-850 individuals) of the global population in Iran. This is quite a contrast to the Arabian leopard population, estimated at less than 200.

Mature male Persian leopards reach a body length of 220cm and around 67kg in contrast to the male Arabian leopard, which is only 90cm and 30 kg. Given that the Arabian leopard is only half the size of the Persian, it's a clear indication to the adaption to eating smaller sized prey, even though both subspecies live in arid, mountainous habitats.

As with most of the big cats worldwide, humans can be blamed for the mortality of the Persian subspecies due to habitat loss, killing and disease. 47 animals are killed every year by humans in Iran, which is equal to almost one on a weekly basis, and it is thought that this is only a small percentage: around 15% of the total deceased.

Mostly, only male leopards are killed. The reason for this is the different territorial behavior of males and females. The females are cautious and hide far away from human influence, which also makes it difficult for Mohammad and his team to catch, tag and study them. Males tend to move into areas that are more populated by humans and take trails; females protect their cubs by avoiding populated areas.

Northeastern Iran's national parks and conservation areas offer some of the most well-preserved leopard habitats with the highest number of the Persian leopards to be found there. For Mohammad, it is one of his favorite places to learn more about the leopard population parameters, behavior, habitat selection, and diet, especially prey supply. In the rare cases when a leopard attacks livestock, Mohammed and his team can intervene and find the cause of the attacks and teach farmers how to handle the situation without killing the leopard.

In order to study leopards in the wild, different devices must be used. Camera traps at special locations deliver useful, short-term insights into the animal's behavior and the population structures. They also deliver images of poachers hunting leopards in the parks, a constant and dangerous threat to all large cats. In most cases, it is necessary to catch the animals and place a transmitter on them to collect long-term data.

Catching a mature leopard is a dangerous challenge that is only possible with a lot of experience, passion for the animals and a lot of patience. Cage traps have been proven to be potentially dangerous for the animal. Animals often break teeth or claws before sedation, and death is often the result of such trapping. Mohammed showed us one film where a leopard was released from a cage and immediately started to attack someone in a parked car.

Recently, foot-snare traps have proven much more effective; the animals try to reach the bait and step into a sling that holds one of their paws. The conservationist team must arrive as quickly as possible to the trapping spot to deliver a quick sedative shot. Once the leopard is

asleep, it's ready for the ultimate in technology: an Iridium telemetry collar, which allows 2-way communication with the animal, is placed carefully around the leopard's neck. Mohammad explained to us that the collar represents no risk for the animal and has a planned obsolescence; it will fall off after 52 weeks. The collar does not change the animal's behavior; we were shown a video of a collared male mating with a female.

We were then treated to a movie showing the capture of a large male leopard. We felt that we had become part of Mohammad's team when the auditorium was darkened. Imagine hiding in the dark behind a rock waiting for a predator to come and attack a helpless animal fixed to the ground. Suddenly, you feel the situation changing...who will be the prey and who the predator? A big male leopard is stalking up to the fixed animal. Suddenly, he cannot move, the paw is caught and he is upset! A quick shot and the beautiful big cat is lying on the ground. The team is nimble; there is very little time in which to take blood samples, attach the transmitter collar, and assess the animal's health condition and age. Hopefully the sedation is strong enough! This leopard was named Bardia, which means 'the exalted' and was the name of a Persian king, showing the team's admiration for the big cat.

Everything went well for the humans and leopard this time. Now Mohammed will follow the male's journey through the mountains with 8 daily GPS fixes that are sent from the Iridium collar to computer via satellite.

Trapping leopards takes time and patience. Recently, Mohammad's research team spent 28 days and nights on rugged mountains locating kill sites, checking traps and collecting data. In all this time, only three leopards were caught. Besides Bardia who is between 8 and 10 years of age, the team caught Borzou, a male of more than ten years and Borna, a 4 to 6 year old male. Once the leopards are collared, the team is able to determine the extent of their ranges; the youngest of the three, Borna, has consistently traveled the farthest in search of food.

Once the data analyses started for all three leopards, it was noted that Bardia and Borna hunt in adjacent areas. Each leopard appears to stay exactly in his area, leaving scent markings and rarely crossing the invisible boundary between territories. Territorial roaring is another way of establishing a particular area. Will there be territorial fighting? Mohammad's tracking results show that Borna, who seems to have less prey in his area, prefers to extend his range away from Bardia's. This territorial behavior is very interesting and hardly ever documented. It will be a focus for Mohammad's future research, along with attempting to trap an elusive female leopard.

Besides the scientific research, it has become very important to educate the local communities in and around the national parks. Most individuals regard the leopards as a life-threatening enemy when in fact other predators, like the gray wolf (*Canis lupus pallipes*) are responsible for attacking sheep, boar and dogs. Disease is actually the number one killer of livestock in this part of Iran--not wild animals.

In locations where overhunting of the leopard's prey by humans is documented, the leopards come too close to settlements and attack sheep, dogs and in rare cases, people. Mohammad reported that in some small villages

people are so afraid of leopard attacks that they refuse to leave their homes after dark. It's necessary to find a way to keep the leopards away from settlements so people, livestock or pets won't be harmed if the surrounding area does not provide enough natural prey for the leopards. Besides being killed by guns or cars, the leopard itself is also in danger of contracting feline diseases, such as FHV, rabies and canine distemper virus.

To reduce the interaction of humans and leopards it is important to look at the leopard's diet. Humans and dogs are not on the list of a leopard's favorite foods! When living in a well-balanced natural environment, ungulates (hoofed animals) such as bezoar goat, roe deer, goitered gazelle, and urial sheep are prey for the large cats. Unfortunately, these are also preferred targets of Iranian hunters.

Hare and porcupine are also amongst the leopard's most desired foods. We were surprised to learn that leopards hunt porcupines. Mohammad told us that the sharp quills are not a problem for leopards. Of the dead leopards studied, none showed internal injuries, even when quills were found in the leopard's stomach.

The future of the Persian leopard lies in the education of the Iranian people to become more tolerant and sensitive to the leopard's plight. Teaching people about the importance of respecting natural reserves, the risks of poaching, overhunting the leopard's natural prey and avoiding contact with the big cats are steps in the right direction. Mohammad and his team have trained over 300 rangers on how to approach leopards and what to do if a large cat is caught or injured. An important goal of Mr. Farhadinia's work is educating others about these majestic creatures, both in Iran and worldwide.

One of Mohammad's final photos was of a rocky landscape. He asked us to count how many leopards we could spot. It was difficult to find the three cats as their colors camouflaged them perfectly with their environment. We finally found them and further understood Mr. Farhadinia's hope to draw more international attention to understanding and saving the dwindling population of one of Iran's most elusive big cats. We look forward to hearing about the results of Mohammad's research.

Please follow Mohammad Farhadinia's progress on Facebook: My Journey with Persian Leopards.

You can read more about the project on University of Oxford's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU) where Mohammad is conducting his PhD on the leopard (www.wildcru.org).

Laura Connor / Claudia Steuber

Short Trip to Kerala

This spring break, my family and I went to Kovalam in Kerala. It was our first visit to India. The hotel struck us as being surrounded by a botanical garden, including several trees with labels and botanical names on them. One was the Hong Kong Orchid Tree (*Bauhinia blakeana*) and I was pleased to finally find out the name of these beautiful trees with big purple-pink flowers. They can be found in Abu Dhabi's gardens too. The frangipani, coconut palms, traveller's palm

(*Ravenalla madagascariensis*), golden shower (*Cassia fistula*) (the national flower of Kerala), flame of the jungle (*Ixora coccinea*), golden trumpet (*Allamanda cathartica*) and water lilies were all a pleasure to see. Also, many more plants with healing properties could be found in the hotel's small Ayurvedic garden.

The best and completely unexpected surprise was a 'free' bird of prey show in front of our hotel room balcony. Our vantage point offered us a view of the granite cliffs where the waves of the Arabian Sea brought dead fish, most probably discarded from fishing boats.

It was the perfect place for kites to feed. Kites are a very common Indian bird of prey, and are known to follow dolphins that herd fish.

Two species of kites displayed their acrobatic flight in front of our balcony. The Brahminy kite (*Haliastur indus*), also known as Red-backed sea eagle, and the Black kite (*Milvus migrans*). Both are from the family Accipitridae.

My personal favorite was the Brahminy kite with his golden-brown plumage and its white neck and head. With his impressive colors, he looks very different from other birds of prey. This bird has a special place in Hindu mythology, and is considered to be the contemporary representation of Garuda, the humanoid bird who carries Vishnu and Laxmi.



I spent hours just watching the birds—sometimes it was three Brahminy kites together gliding up and down the cliffs, sometimes with a fish in their claws. In between dives, one or two black kites appeared and it seemed the two species tolerated each other. Black and Brahminy kites are approximately the same size with angled wings, and are easy to distinguish by their different colors. The next day the black kites dominated and sometimes I could count ten of them together in the air. I have never seen such a high density of birds of prey so close to each other in Europe. It was simply amazing!



But the population density wasn't only high in the air; it was also high on the hotel terrace below our balcony. Here there lived a troop of India palm squirrels

(*Funambulus palmarum*) busy stealing food from the tables. Packs of sugar were on their list of favorite things to eat. The hotel employs a security guard whose sole responsibility was chasing the squirrels away! Even though the squirrels were potential prey for the kites right above the hotel terrace, I did not see any bird targeting them, although I did witness a curious young squirrel being carried away by its mum to a safe hiding place in the eaves.

One afternoon we planned a boat trip that took us to the Karraikattu backwaters close to the Arabian Sea. Kerala is famous for its backwaters where small boats drift slowly through the labyrinthine inland waters, ending in different shaped lagoons.

The boat took us to a broad coastal lagoon that was separated from the Arabian Sea by a sand barrier, indicating just a limited water exchange of salt and fresh water.

Our Indian boat guide knew most of the common bird names and with his experience it was easy to find some spectacular birds like the Snakebird, Oriental or Indian darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*) and the kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis taporbana*).

The inland rivers were surrounded by tropical greenery. In one of the nearby trees, a group of four kites was sitting showing the plumage typical for young birds. The black kites breed in Kerala during the wintertime and are ready to fledge before the monsoon season.



The Indian pond heron (*Ardeola grayii*) that was looking for food at the riverside was also still wearing his breeding plumage as we were still in the time before the monsoon, which arrives in Kerala in late May.

Around the lagoon the number of water birds increased hinting at the fertility of the feeding grounds. Different species of egrets, herons, bittern and also cormorants were common.

A group of Asian open bill storks (*Anastomus oscitans*), which are winter visitors in Kerala, were busy wading and looking for food in the shallows.

We thoroughly enjoyed our short trip, and we found the backwaters to be a fascinating ecosystem, which can be highly recommended to every nature lover.

The Keralans describe their area as God's own country, and it offers a lot of nature that we would like to go back and see again one day.

Claudia Steuber

All photographs by the author

Websites of General Interest

I. Websites of regional NHGs (&HA) & members:

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

ENHG-AA forum: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ENHG>

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

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

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

Hanne & Jens Eriksen's website: www.BirdsOman.com

Roy Richards's mountain website: www.chirri2000.com

II. Websites of UAE-based affiliated organisations:

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

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

Emirates Diving Association:

<http://www.emiratesdiving.com/index.php>

Emirates Wildlife Society – World Wildlife Fund:

http://wwf.panda.org/who_we_are/wwf_offices/united_arab_emirates/

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

[EAD Online Library: <http://library.ead.ae>]

Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority

<http://www.adach.ae/en/> (Still using ADACH website)

Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund:

<http://www.mbzspeciesconservation.org/>

Al Mahara Diving Center: <http://www.divemahara.com/>

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

Dubai Astronomy Group:

<http://www.dubaiastronomy.com>

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

Abu Dhabi Green Drinks:

<http://www.greendrinks.org/Abu%20Dhabi>

III. UAE-based & regional informational websites:

Environmental Atlas of Abu Dhabi Emirate:

<http://www.environmentalatlas.ae>

An outline of Systematic Conservation Planning

<http://dev.grida.no/rob/Hyder/index.html#/1/> [by AGEDI]

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

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>

The Rock Art of the Hajar Mountains:

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>

Websites of General Interest, Cont'd.

IV. International informational websites:

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/>]

EDGE: Evolutionarily Distinct & Globally Endangered:

<http://www.edgeofexistence.org>

Protected Planet: IUCN & UNEP-WCMC database:

<http://www.protectedplanet.net>

Project Noah: www.projectnoah.org "digital butterfly net"

Cheetah Conservation Fund: <http://www.cheetah.org>

[Bushblok: <http://www.bushblok.com>]

Fish base: <http://www.fishbase.org>

Gulf Elasmobranch Project: <http://www.gulfelasmobranchproject.com>

ITEMS ON SALE

AT THE ENHG BOOK STALL

All prices are in dirhams.

In stock:

- Jebel Hafit – A Natural History, 100
An attractive, encyclopaedic presentation of the natural resources of this national landmark. (Free copies available for schools donations.)
- Focus on Fujairah: Through Minie's lens 1964-2001, 150
- Abu Dhabi 8 Million Years Ago, 15
- Wildflowers of the UAE, 100
- Birds of the UAE - Helm field guide, 70
- Exploring Oman, 60
- Falconry, 225
- Snorkeling and Diving, 75
- Wilfred Thesiger, 185
- Guinness Book of Records 2014, 75
- Various maps, guides & atlases from the region
- Tribulus, our annual Journal - see for details

On order:

- Birds of the UAE - A guide to common and important species
- Native Plants of Oman

NB: This list shows some new titles and some old favourites, but not all may be in stock. Visit the book table at meetings and watch for an update in Jan Focus.

Enquiries: Marieke: Mobile: 056-722-4288 / Email: marieke.vd.vlugt@gmail.com

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These companies are supporting ENHG activities in the region, making possible our Research & Conservation grants and the publication of our annual journal, *Tribulus*. 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.

Sponsorship Levels:

We thank our sponsors for their In-Cash or In-Kind contributions at one of the four following levels:

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The Park Hyatt AD is our regular venue host, providing rooms and refreshments for our lecture meetings.

SILVER LEVEL SPONSORSHIP (Annual Contribution = 15,000 Dhs)

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[Nautica Environmental Associates L.L.C.](#)



[Shell](#)



In the News Media

The National, May 3: [The Arabian Falcon in Pictures](#)

The National, May 12: [Artificial Rainfall Programme](#)

The National, May 13: [Sheikh Nahyan awards naturalists for environmental work](#)

The National, May 16: [UAE Mango Crop](#)

The National, May 17: [Birds Released into the Wild](#)

The National, May 21: [Dubai Lapwing Rescue](#)

The National, May 22: [Dubai Bicycle Masterplan](#)

The National, May 26: [Protected Marine and Coastal Sites Named](#)

The National, June 7: [Abu Dhabi Fund Declaration](#)

The National, June 21: [Women of the UAE: Amna Al Otaiba](#)

The National, June 23: [Two million mangrove trees planted in Abu Dhabi](#)

The National, June 24: [Dr Jane Goodall hails Sheikh Zayed for saving the oryx](#)

The National, June 28: [Marawah marine biosphere reserve is protected and preserved](#)

The National, June 28: [Dugongs were once on the menu for fishermen in Abu Dhabi](#)

The National, June 28: [Thousands of Houbaras released across the UAE](#)

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Vacancies: Deputy Chair,
additional Field Trip Coordinator
& Newsletter Assistant.

Lectures

Venue provided by
**Park Hyatt Resort
Hotel – Abu Dhabi**

March 3rd: Iranian Big
Cat Conservation &
Research
Mohamad Farhadinia

March 17th
DVD: Wild Arabia Pt 2

April 7th
DVD: Wild Arabia Pt 3

April 21st: AD Marine
Conservation Group
**Maitha & Shamsa
Al Hameli**

May 5th: Discussion:
Responsible Outdoor
Activities

Nessrine Zahlawi

May 19th: Overview of
Greater Kruger National
Park; Focus: Leopards
Sean Parker

June 2nd:
An Introduction to the
History of Abu Dhabi –
Palaeolithic to Present
Peter Hellyer

June 16th
Abu Dhabi Falcon
Hospital & its Services
Margit Muller

Field Trips

March 7th
Al Wathba Reserve
Ian Townson

April 24th/25th
Diving: Damaniyat
Islands, Oman

May 15th
Astronomy Evening

July 10th-29th
Trans-Siberian Railway
Adventure
Denis Cheng

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
Secretary and Awards & Grants Coordinator Ian
Townson at ian_townson@hotmail.com.

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 & mats, one old '5-man' tent, camping stove & pots, misc.
- Birding telescope
- GPS unit – GARMIN GPSMAP 60CSx
Enquiries: Keith Taylor: kjtaylor13@yahoo.com
Liz Sowinska: lizchirri@gmail.com
- First-Aid Kit
- Two satellite phones
Enquiries: Yves Queromain: queromain@gmail.com
- Celestron NexStar telescope (on field trips only)
- Sky Scout astronomical object locator/identifier
Enquiries: Denis Cheng: spacemancd@gmail.com.

Emergency Response Contact Info.

In Abu Dhabi:

Environment Authority of Abu Dhabi (EAD) Customer
Service: 800555 (24 hours) / customerservice@ead.ae
for any enquiries, complaints incident reports or
emergencies related to the environment in the Emirate
of Abu Dhabi

In Dubai:

Emirates Marine Environment Group (EMEG) (Tel: 04
363 0581/Fax: 04 363 0460; Email: info@emeg.ae)

Dubai Municipality: Main number: 800900. Marine
Environment & Sanctuaries Unit (Tel: 04 606 6818, Fax
04 703 3532), Email: marabdulla@dm.gov.ae.

Dubai Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at the Burj al Arab
Aquarium. Tel: 04 301 7198. 24-hour email contact,
Attn. Mr Warren Baverstock, Manager of Operations,
BAA Aquarium: warren.baverstock@jumeirah.com To
post Facebook message triggering an after-hours SMS
alert: www.facebook.com/turtle.rehabilitation

Facebook Page

ENHG-AD public Facebook page:
www.facebook.com/ENHGAD

ENHG-AD Website

www.enhg.org/AbuDhabi

Postal Address

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

Email Address

Send enquiries & contributions to:
abudhabi@enhg.org