

focus



Abu Dhabi, May - June 2014

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Emirates Natural History Group

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

EDITORIAL

Welcome! Our cover photo of an Arabian tahr is by Dr. Steve Ross, to whom we give a special thanks for his informative, encouraging talk on this endangered animal.



Dr. Ross receiving a token of thanks. Photo: Amro Abu Kuhail

This bumper issue features a write-up of the equally wonderful talk last May by Arabella Willing, Park Hyatt marine biologist in residence (and also new ENHG Committee Lecture Coordinator!). Following IEW acceptance speeches of the 2013 ENHG Natural Award winners) we conclude with news of a lasting tribute to the late former ENHG Chairman Simon Aspinall.

Please consider coming along to our informal end-of-season dinner on June 17th to talk over this and next seasons' events and let us know if you can assist the Committee in any way (details on p 10). We give a huge "Thank-you!" to everyone who has stepped up and assisted this venerable voluntary society to move from strength to strength during the 2013-2014 season!

The ENHG now takes its summer recess and will resume regular twice-monthly lecture meetings hosted by Gold Level Sponsor Park Hyatt Hotel on Saadiyat in September. Finally, on a personal note, as my future employment in the UAE is still TBC, I'll simply say my participation with the ENHG has been a truly satisfying life's passage. See you all in September, Ensh'allah.

Keith Taylor

2013 Abu Dhabi Awards Winner Peter Hellyer

The Abu Dhabi Awards were established in 2005 by HH General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to recognize individuals "who have selflessly dedicated themselves to support and contribute to the Emirate of Abu Dhabi." We are pleased to report that one of the winners of the Abu Dhabi Awards for 2013 was former ENHG Chairman Peter Hellyer. We reprint below a short statement from the Abu Dhabi Awards website. –Ed.



Peter Hellyer, a UAE National originally from the UK, is the author of many books on the fragile ecology and rich

In this issue

Page 1: Front cover

Page 2: Editorial, 2013 Abu Dhabi Awards Winner
Peter Hellyer

Page 3: Why did the Park Hyatt Hire a Marine Biologist?

Page 4: IEW Acceptance Speeches for the 2013 ENHG Natural History Awards

Page 5: Cont'd.

Page 6: New Era for a Norfolk Nature Icon

Page 7: Cont'd

Page 8: Corporate Sponsors, In the News Media

Page 9: Websites of General Interest, ENHG Bookstall

Page 10: Committee Members, Lectures, Field Trips, Research & Conservation Fund, Equipment for Members' Use, Marine Life Rescue Contact Info, Newsletter Details

FRONT COVER PICTURE

Photograph: Male Arabian Tahr on Ledge

Photographer: Steve Ross

This Month's Contributors

Amro Abu Kuhail, Steve Ross, Keith Taylor; Abu Dhabi Awards, Claudia Steuber, Laura Conner, ENHG, David Edwards, Sabah Jasim, Norfolk Wildlife Trust (Andrew Bamforth, Lucy Denman, Barry Madden, Lawrie Webb, LSI Architects, Rebecca Worsfold)

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*. Volumes 20 and 21 are currently available at meetings.

archaeological legacy of the UAE, and has lived in the UAE for 40 years as a journalist and historian as well as an advisor to the petroleum industry. A passionate amateur archaeologist, Peter co-founded and led the Abu Dhabi Islands Archaeology Survey (ADIAS), which has since uncovered some of the most significant historical sites in the region, revealing the UAE's forgotten past. He was intimately involved in the excavation of the 1400-year old monastery on Sir Bani Yas Island, which received global recognition for its historical importance. A self-taught jack-of-all-trades, Peter's devotion to this land and its people is expressed through his commitment to protecting the country's fragile ecosystems and history in a time of rapid development.

Abu Dhabi Awards

Why did the Park Hyatt Hire a Marine Biologist?

On May 20th, Ms. Arabella Willing of the Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi, the first marine biologist hired by a hotel chain in Abu Dhabi, introduced herself to the Emirates Natural History Group. Her presentation outlining the principles of sustainable tourism and protection of the beach ecosystems on Saadiyat was as entertaining as it was informative.

Arabella's fascination for marine life developed during her late childhood while living in Oman. After four years in Muscat, Arabella turned her passion for the sea into a career by attending St. Andrew's University in Scotland. From Scotland, Arabella made her way to teach science in the Maldives. The islands of the Maldives are made up of 26 atolls with rich bio-diverse marine ecosystems. As these delicate ecosystems are the most valuable commodity in this island nation, the employment of a marine biologist at a hotel there is commonplace.

From the classroom, Arabella made the leap from one island to the next to become resident marine biologist at the Park Hyatt Maldives. Her involvement in the successful implementation and development of sustainable practices at the hotel led her to her current job here in Abu Dhabi. Here in Abu Dhabi, a hotel with a resident scientist was unheard of until Arabella arrived.

During the past year, Ms. Willing has collaborated with the Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi and TDIC, the developer of the Saadiyat Island, to enhance the properties' sustainability measures. The Park Hyatt was built using the silver LEED specifications and is awaiting its final LEED accreditation.

While working at the property in the Maldives, Ms. Willing was trained as an EarthCheck coordinator (see www.earthcheck.org), She then used ten holistic principles of sustainability to assess the management of resources used by the island hotel. Ms. Willing outlined the ten outcomes that are measured and assessed via this system, providing excellent examples of how each of the two Park Hyatt hotels has made accommodations to achieve a positive outcome in each category.

1. Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions
 - Using solar panels to manage or offset emissions
2. Energy Efficiency, Conservation and Management
 - Adapting architectural design and room management systems for lighting, air conditioning and shading of spaces and guest rooms in the hotel
3. Management of Freshwater Resources
 - Grey water recycling
4. Ecosystem Conservation
 - Protecting delicate turtle nesting areas and dune vegetation; serving only sustainable fish in the hotel restaurant, community education and outreach projects like assisting the UAE Dolphin Project
5. Management of Social and Cultural Issues
 - Hyatt Thrive projects; educational programs at local schools, at the hotel property or in conjunction with local businesses

6. Land Use, Planning and Management
 - Not removing trees and using native plants in the landscaping
7. Air Quality Protection and Noise Control
 - Instituting no motorized sport vehicles zones along the coastline
8. Solid Waste Management
 - Corporate sponsored 'Clean Up' days of beaches, mangroves and shoreline
9. Waste Water Management
 - Composting using high tech systems and water recycling
10. Storage of Harmful Substances
 - Careful record keeping and storage of caustic and chemical substances

An area of particular interest for Ms. Willing is Ecosystem Conservation and Management. During her time in the Maldives, reef protection was a primary responsibility and concern for her and her staff. Education for staff members and guests was vital to the preservation of the delicate coral that surrounded the island on which the hotel is located.

Here in Abu Dhabi, Saadiyat Island is one of the most beautiful beaches for residents and tourists to visit. It is also an important nesting site for the endangered Hawksbill Turtle. Due to the impact of human traffic in the form of construction and beachgoers, the Hawksbill is in vital need of protection.

In years past, there have been up to 11 nests on Saadiyat beaches. Currently there are 5 nests, an improvement from last year's 1 nest. Each nest may contain up to 100 eggs. The Hawksbill is a critically endangered species whose numbers have been reduced eighty percent in the last one hundred years. Today, only 1 in 1,000 Hawksbill Turtles reach sexual maturity.



Arabella by turtle nest in front of the Park Hyatt

Arabella and the members of the Saadiyat Beach committee take great care to protect the beaches and nests. Nests are marked; sand chairs removed at sunset and beachfront lights are not lit. The use of artificial light during hatching season can confuse emerging turtles and lead them in the wrong direction, since in natural areas the turtles are guided by moonlight on the sea. Hatchlings are monitored carefully while they make their first long and often treacherous trip to the water. In the end, the more turtles that survive helps guarantee the future of Saadiyat's turtle community. Turtles have an

incredible memory and will always return to breed on the beach where they were born.

Other measures to protect the local ecosystem of Saadiyat are also on Ms. Willing's agenda. The hotel arranges educational and community outings to teach the residents of the UAE about conservation of delicate coastline areas, indigenous plants and animals. To support the UAE dolphin project, hotel staff have been trained to report dolphin sightings, guests are instructed to not disturb or try to swim with dolphins and any unusual circumstances (dead dolphins, sick turtles) are reported to the responsible authorities.

Arabella has made great strides in making the Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi and the surrounding properties on Saadiyat Island an environmentally friendly place for people the world over to visit and enjoy. She takes great pride in the fact that she has helped hundreds of employees, hotel guests and members of the community to appreciate nature and the local surroundings. One of Arabella's closing comments was very poignant and summarizes her commitment to conservation management of the Park Hyatt; "It's important to love nature; not to love nature to death."

Her job is to sustain, to protect and to educate. We wish her the best for the future.

Claudia Steuber / Laura Conner

IEW Acceptance Speeches for the 2013 ENHG Natural History Awards

We re-print here the announcements of these awards (See Jan-Feb 2014 Focus) – with the acceptance speeches delivered last February at Inter-Emirates Weekend 2014. We again thank these gentlemen for all their contributions to our understanding and appreciation of natural history and archaeology in the UAE, and we look forward to future collaborations with each. -Ed.

2013 Sheikh Mubarak bin Mohammed Prize: Dr. Sabah Jasim

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 Nahayan bin Mubarak Al Nahayan, and comprises an inscribed silver dhow and a cash prize.

Dr. Jasim has worked with the Sharjah Archaeology Directorate for over 20 years, during which time he has played a leading role in the investigation of the archaeology of this important part of the UAE. Under his leadership, the Sharjah Archaeology Directorate has made an enormous contribution to the knowledge of the UAE's ancient heritage.

Major sites investigated under his directorship have included those at Jebel Buhais (a Neolithic cemetery), Jebel Faya (a Palaeolithic settlement), Muwailah (an Iron Age village), Wadi Hilu (an early Bronze Age copper smelting site), Kalba (a large Bronze Age / Iron Age settlement), and Tell Abraq (a Bronze Age / Iron Age

settlement), as well as others in Sharjah city, in Dibba and elsewhere.

Through establishing successful co-operation agreements with numerous foreign teams, and through numerous publications of journal articles and book chapters in both English and Arabic, he has helped to ensure that the archaeology of Sharjah is well-known, both locally and internationally. In addition, he has also facilitated numerous visits by ENHG parties to important archaeological sites throughout Sharjah. These factors make Dr Sabah Jassim an especially deserving recipient of the Sheikh Mubarak Prize for Natural History.



I am pleased and privileged to have the honour of receiving this award.

I would like to express my deep thanks and gratitude to the Emirates Natural History Committee, and indeed to my friends and colleagues for their nomination and support.

I look forward to many more years of working closely with the Emirates Natural History Committee.

Thank you all for attending wishing you an enjoyable evening.

Dr. Sabah Jasim, Sharjah Archaeology Director

2013 Bish Brown Award: David Edwards

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 [now four] 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 falcon, to be held for one year by the recipient, and a cash prize.

David Edwards is the tenacious inaugurator, promoter, speaker, field trip leader and Acting Chair of the first new NHG in the UAE in many years: the small and slowly developing but very significant ENHG-Fujairah, which began in Jan 2012. With a wide range of natural history interests and a particular enthusiasm for archaeology, David has done a great deal to inspire others in Fujairah – expatriates and Emiratis alike – to explore and work on conserving the extensive natural and archaeological resources of Fujairah, offering residents and visitors to that region brilliant prospects for the future.

David's persistent pursuit of natural history exploration and his initiation of a new branch of the ENHG in an important region of the UAE puts David in the company of the ENHG's founding members, and we welcome him warmly to the company of its most active current promoters.



Thank you. I've prepared something here. I want to make sure I hit all the right notes.

I would like to thank His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Hamed Al Sharqi, Crown Prince of Fujairah and Patron for our Fujairah chapter for his support, and His Excellency Sheikh Nahayan Mubarak Al Nahayan, long-serving Patron and supporter of the 'other tribes' of the Emirates Natural History Group.

I became interested in natural history through meeting Brien Holmes. I was taking a class trip of students from Abu Dhabi; we were living in Abu Dhabi at the time, and we took them to Wadi Kutwa in Oman, just outside of Al Ain. Brien really got me hooked on natural history, showing us the copper smelting sites and the diversity of the wildlife that's in that oasis. Of course, you come up through the mountains and the moonscape and suddenly there's all this life.

I also had the good fortune of meeting Getrude Dyck, or *Doctora Latifa* (peace be upon her) midwife, missionary and author who was responsible for some 90,000 births in Al Ain, and some notable names at that. We have our own legend in Fujairah, Wilhemina or *Minie Van de Weg*, another midwife who's responsible for a good deal of our Fujairah inhabitants. She's also published a wonderful book that's for sale called 'Through Minie's Lense' and it's a marvelous collection of photographs of old Fujairah and Fujairah as it has grown, and grown it has.

So it was through Brien Holmes that I learned about the ENHG and we left the UAE, we left Abu Dhabi and went back to Canada and suffered four tremendous winters before we decided to head overseas again. Rather than go somewhere exotic, we said, "Why don't we return to the UAE? And this time let's go to Fujairah", because many of our friends would come up and vacation in Fujairah and had wonderful things to say about it. My daughter Manelle and I (she is my most intrepid supporter and explorer or co-adventurer, if you will) were going out and going to farms and the mountains. We took a large group of teachers to a camel farm (I had made some fast friends in Bithnah) and afterward we went for a lunch. It was Mr. Geoff Pound (who was responsible for Fujairah in Focus, which was our Internet newspaper for a good spell until Geoff returned to Australia) who said to me, "There's obviously an interest

and a need for things like this. It's too bad that there's not a group like this." I said, "Oh yes, there is actually, and I think we need to be aligned with that group." It was with the support of Brien and the other chairs of the Emirates Natural History Group that we able to start a fledgling chapter in Fujairah.

It was a seed planted by Bish Brown and the other founders of the Emirates Natural History Group, but what I'm nurturing is really a seedling, a sprout that is that common curiosity and fellowship of like-minded individuals. I'm very grateful to receive this award and I'm also grateful to count all of you as part of my learning community and I'm just staggered by the amount of knowledge that's in this room; I'm staggered by the amount of knowledge that went into making that quiz!

I tell my students at the Higher Colleges of Technology at Fujairah Men's College that reading is the key, and often wondering aloud about some of the mysteries in our world – it's by reading and wondering that those mysteries become like glass. Of course, there are still many mysteries here; we haven't answered everything there is to answer here.

As for the future for our chapter, Brien Holmes was asked "How significant is this new chapter?" and he was right in saying that, "It's as significant as the members choose to make it." I often remind our members that, 'without you, there is no we'. We have some challenges for time, of course, because we're volunteering in these roles and have busy professional lives. We've had many challenges in the Higher Colleges because we've had an iPad rollout and now we have a Pre-foundations rollout and every new academic year there seems to be another initiative, so we have a lot of challenges for our free time.

This semester we'll be looking for a new home for our meetings and we're looking for new methods for communication and a way to information out to the wider ENHG membership to help you to come and explore what's available in Fujairah and there's much to see. I think in the future we would like to host the Inter-Emirates Weekend as well, and I think we could put on some wonderful field trips. If you haven't seen Fujairah and the north Emirates there's quite a lot to do. The inclusion of more Emiratis is also very important to us, and, to that end, my Honorary Chair is Sheikh Abdulla bin Suhail Al Sharqi. He is not simply an Honorary Chair in title; he is very active in our group. His wife is Dr. Michele Ziolkowski, who has been a long-time contributor in the field of archaeology and other cultural studies in the United Arab Emirates and particularly in Fujairah. Their (Emirati) voices and their energies can't continue to go unheard or untapped any longer.

I have many roles to fill currently because of the turnover that we have within our expatriate community – it's not easy. I'm currently looking for a Membership Secretary (and I have the form with me), a Press Secretary, Field Trip Coordinators, but for stability I am very comforted to have Sheikh Abdulla as my Honorary Chair, because he will be here for some time. I'm going to be the Acting Chair for the foreseeable future and dedicated to being worthy of this award, and I thank you all very much.

David Edwards, Acting Chairman, ENHG-Fujairah

New Era for a Norfolk Nature Icon

In memory of the late Simon Aspinall, former ENHG Chairman and pre-eminent ornithologist and conservationist both here in the UAE and back home in the UK, we re-print this article, courtesy of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, on the new Simon Aspinall Wildlife Education Centre in Cley Marshes reserve, Norfolk, highlighting the passion for conservation that Simon exemplified in both countries. – Ed.



Cley Marshes. Photo by Barry Madden

Rebecca Worsfold, of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, reports how its iconic Cley Marshes reserve is looking to the future with two exciting projects under way - including a tribute to a local conservationist.



A young boy enjoys the view at Cley Marshes.
Photo by Lucy Denman

There are few who can say they are not affected by a visit to Cley Marshes. A place where the wild inspires the human, and where humans protect the wild. Its landscape, wildlife, sounds and seasons, migrant birds and vast skies are a source of delight and inspiration to as many bird watchers as there are birds, from all over the UK and abroad.

It was Dr Sydney Long who in 1926 secured the purchase of Cley Marshes at auction for £5,160 and a week later held a lunch meeting at the George Hotel which led to the establishment of the Norfolk Naturalists Trust, now Norfolk Wildlife Trust. His vision is worth quoting: "one is anxious to protect for future generations areas of marsh, heath, woods and undrained fenland ... with their natural wealth of flora and fauna." For from his vision has grown the Wildlife Trust movement we see today, with Norfolk Wildlife Trust the very first Wildlife Trust, and Cley Marshes the very first Wildlife Trust reserve.

The variety of habitats at Cley make it an unusual and important site for wildlife. The marshes are winter habitat for wigeon, teal and dark-bellied brent geese, breeding habitat for redshank and lapwing, and a stopover for many wildfowl and waders. Among the grazing marshes are areas of reedbed which are home to marsh harriers, bearded tits, water rails, reed buntings, wainscot moths and numerous warblers.

To the north, along the shore, are Norfolk's most important area of coastal shingle and small areas of brackish marsh and saltmarsh. In summer the shingle blazes with the blooms of yellow horned poppy, common cat's-ear, sea campion and bird's-foot trefoil while in winter it is the foraging habitat of snow buntings, Lapland buntings and linnet. The brackish habitats are home to one of the UK's only populations of the starlet sea anemone and the haunt of little egret, redshank, shelduck and oystercatcher.



A Marsh Harrier. Photo by Lawrie Webb

When Norfolk Wildlife Trust launched an appeal two years ago, to purchase and restore land at Pope's Marsh which sits in between Cley and Salthouse Marshes, and to build a new education centre, we also wanted to gather members' and local people's affection for Cley and the influence it has had on people's lives. We called it 'My Cley' and received many memories, here are just a few:

"What had been only a passing interest in birds, in my teens, took on a whole new meaning after my introduction to the North Norfolk Coast." (John Boarder)

"The pleasure of visiting this fine reserve goes beyond seeking rarities - the sight of a party of black-tailed godwits in full summer plumage, a group of avocets wheeling against a blue sky, long may it continue." (Don Dorling)

"I first visited Cley during a rare childhood holiday in the 1950s and was captivated by this hauntingly beautiful landscape. I have returned as an adult with my own children to watch terns and oystercatchers, lapwings and harriers. Soon, I hope to bring my grandchild. Above all, Cley is a landscape in my mind and in my heart." (Jenny Faulkner)



The proposed Simon Aspinall Wildlife Education Centre.
LSI Architects

"Once seen never forgotten' is the best way for me to sum up Cley." (Richard Stone)

The responses were displayed at the visitor centre, on NWT's website and at a special film created for the Fusion gallery in Norwich. These and many more personal testimonials show beyond doubt that Cley Marshes is loved by people from all over the UK, and

beyond. People who come back time after time to visit this place – a place that holds special meaning to each one.

It was a constant source of inspiration for the Cley-based naturalist and conservationist Simon Aspinall. He began bird watching at the age of five, and was encouraged in this by his family, as well as by a succession of teachers and schools. After graduating in environmental science from UEA, Simon dedicated his life and career to working for the conservation of wildlife and environments throughout the UK and across the Middle East.

He travelled to many of the world's most remote places and saw over 7,000 of the world's 10,000 bird species in their natural habitats. He spent 19 years in the United Arab Emirates advancing the international importance and reputation of the region for environmental conservation. And he wrote several books, notably the *Status and Conservation of the Breeding Birds of the United Arab Emirates*, and with his colleague and fellow Cley resident, Richard Porter, published the second edition of *Field Guide to the Birds of the Middle East* and *Field Guide to the Birds of the United Arab Emirates*, the first country guide to any of the Gulf States.



Wigeon at Cley Marshes. Photo: Andrew Bamforth

"Simon loved nature," said Richard Porter, "and loved being in the field. We did a lot together at Cley, on Blakeney Point and in the Middle East. Rarely a day goes by without me 'hearing' his voice. His ears and eyes were the sharpest and I clearly remember the last time I was out with him, he was the first to pick up all the good birds."

Simon and his family have a strong connection with Norfolk Wildlife Trust, having been life-long members and regular visitors to Cley Marshes. When Simon died in 2011 following a four-year battle with motor neurone disease, NWT's plans for a new education centre at the nature reserve became a fitting tribute to this great naturalist.

Richard Aspinall, Simon's brother said, "Simon's love of the natural world, his dedication to conservation of wildlife and wild places, and, in particular, his generosity in sharing experiences, ideas and knowledge about wildlife are recognised and reflected in the goals of Norfolk Wildlife Trust's new education centre.

"As he fought the incurable Motor Neurone Disease from his home in Cley, he continued to visit Cley Marshes and Blakeney Point, enjoying the company of wildlife and his many friends, and showing the good humour, determination and dedication to natural history, conservation and people that had marked his entire life."

NWT's plans for the new education centre began several

years ago. Chief Executive of Norfolk Wildlife Trust, Brendan Joyce explained, "the visitor centre had over half a million visitors in its first five years of operation. It quickly became clear that it was attracting a greater mix of visitors than before, many of whom wanted to discover more about the marshes, wildlife and coastline. Alongside this, we wanted to be able to offer a flexible space for community groups, local businesses and others in which they could develop their knowledge and interest in wildlife and conservation. This will all now be possible thanks to Simon's family, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the incredible support of so many people and organisations through our fundraising appeal."

New state of the art interactive interpretation will be incorporated in the centre on key conservation themes such as biodiversity, coastal conservation and the creation of Living Landscapes. 'Taster' and special interest events will sit alongside a new education programme for schools.

Ian Leatherbarrow is managing the project for NWT, working with LSI Architects who designed the current visitor centre. He said, "it will be a light and modern building that can be divided into two rooms, giving flexibility for general visitors to learn more about the reserve and its wildlife and for formal and informal education events, workshops and exhibitions.

"As part of the build we are creating a striking 90m² observation deck outside next to the current visitor centre, with breath-taking views of the marshes. A revamped courtyard will then link the three together."

Construction will start in early June and is expected to be finished by Easter 2015. The visitor centre will be open as usual, with disruption kept to a minimum.

Simon's friend and colleague Richard Porter added, "whilst conservation has lost a powerful advocate, Simon's memory will be captured in the new education centre - he will be with all those who continue to marvel at the incredible views across the marshes to the North Sea."

NWT recently met its £2.6million target for the appeal, thanks to a Heritage Grant of £1.5million from the Heritage Lottery Fund and an incredible £900,000 donated by members of NWT, the general public, businesses and charitable trusts.

Brendan Joyce continued: "It goes to emphasise just how important Cley is, to people local to Cley like Simon was, and all around the world. It seems highly appropriate that the new land and the new education centre will become fully operational as the Trust – and Cley Marshes as the first of over 50 nature reserves in our care – reaches its 90th anniversary. Let's make sure that the legacy passed to us by Sydney Long and his contemporaries continues to be protected and enhanced by us so that future generations can marvel at skies full of geese, hear the call of the curlew and be inspired by Cley Marshes."

The visitor centre is open 10am to 5pm. Café closes at 4.30pm. Contact Number: 01263 740008. For updates on the project at NWT Cley Marshes, please visit www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/living-coast

Rebecca Worsfold, Norfolk Wildlife Trust

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In the News Media

The National, May 1: [Corals in Musandam are thriving, report finds](#)

The National, May 1: [Video: Nature conservation tourism beneficial to region](#)

The National, May 6: [Largest ever release of Houbara takes UAE conservation programme to new level](#)

The National, May 7: [Al Ain Zoo forms partnership to protect arid-land wildlife](#)

The National, May 8: [Mers mystery at the camel farm](#)

Gulf New, May 8: [Hatta's dam lakes a home to rare species](#)

The National, May 9: [Four Abu Dhabi nature reserves get royal seal of approval](#)

The National, May 10: [Wildlife poaching goes hi-tech](#)

Gulf News, May 12: [New frog species found in troubled Indian habitat](#)

The National, May 29: [Six natural reserves declared in Dubai](#)

The National, June 1: [Dh294m pledge to save the wild cats](#)

The National, June 7: [Wildlife photographer's shock at damage to RAK beauty spot](#)

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>

ITEMS ON SALE

AT THE ENHG BOOK STALL

All prices are in dirhams.

- 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
- Native Plants of Oman, 80
- Field Guide: Wild Plants in Oman, 300
- Natural History of Oman, 50
- Exploring Oman, 120
- Little O in Oman, 25Butterflies 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

Watch for an updated list of books in September! - Ed.

Committee Members

Required for 2013-2014:

Lecture Coordinator

Newsletter Editor

NEW: R&C Grants Director

NEW: General Assistant

Contact Denis if interested!

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Committee Adjunct

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(General Handyman)
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Lectures

Regular meeting venue provided by **Park Hyatt Resort Hotel – Abu Dhabi, Gold Level Sponsor (on Saadiyat Island)**

Exact room announced prior to each meeting.

3rd June
The Arabian Tahr Ecosystem Research Project
Dr Steve Ross

Social Events

17th June: **7:00 PM**
ENHG Informal End-of-season Dinner at Le Terrace Lebanese Restaurant, Mushrif Mall

Field Trips

NB: No more ENHG field trips will be scheduled till Sept. However, if you would like to organise a trip with fellow ENHG members this summer, you can post a message to the YahooGroups website shown below. -Ed.

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 Committee Member Ian Townson Ian.Townson@adia.ae.

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: Ian Townson, Ian.Townson@adia.ae

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

Enquiries: Denis Cheng, spacemandc@gmail.com.

Marine Life Rescue Contact Info.

In Abu Dhabi:

EAD Customer Service: 800555 (or) 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@emege.ae)

Dubai Municipality: Main number: 800900. Marine Environment & Sanctuaries Unit (Tel: +9714 606 6818, Fax +9714 703 3532), Email: 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 To post Facebook message triggering an after-hours SMS alert: www.facebook.com/turtle.rehabilitation

Newsletter Contributions / Newsletter Index

Send newsletter contributions to:
newsletter.abudhabi@enhg.org

Searchable index of focus issues 2007-2013:
<http://www.enhg.org> (Abu Dhabi/ Index to focus)

ENHG-AD Postal Address / YahooGroups Website

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

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