



UKOTCF

Wider Caribbean Working Group (WCWG) eBulletin

November 2016

Number 18

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As winter approaches in the UK, and the days become cold, grey and damp, I look enviously at the bright photos from the Caribbean. This eBulletin again highlights some of the positive achievements by our hardworking friends in the Caribbean, and also gives some information which might be of interest.

The UKOTCF Facebook page

www.facebook.com/pages/UK-Overseas-Territories-Conservation-Forum/207211405984292

is a good way of finding out what is happening in the UKOTs (and not just the Caribbean). For example, here you can find the SOSNature Montserrat Newsletter no. 2, for the Darwin Plus funded project

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8JhneL91c1YcU0yenBQSmViQ2M/view>

Other recent posts are some early results of the coral restoration project conducted by Turks & Caicos Reef Fund and volunteers; and the start of the Cahow monitoring programme in Bermuda.

And don't forget to check UKOTCF's home page www.ukotcf.org. Recently available to download from here is Forum News 45. A new section is the Video Section (Left Hand Tab – Territories, Tours & Videos). Back copies of the eBulletins and eNewsletters for all the UKOTCF Working Groups are now available from the website at

www.ukotcf.org/WGnewsletterlist/WGNewsletterslinks.pdf

Please continue to send me your stories and comments (apienkowski@ukotcf.org)

Project Updates from National Parks Trust of the Virgin Island

For more information on any of these projects, please contact outreach@bvinpt.org

Vegetation Mapping and Plant Research

Ongoing field work with the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew is updating records of where endangered and invasive plant species are located. This project has made many new discoveries. For example *Bastardiopsis eggersii*, commonly called Jost Van Dykes Indian Mallow, is found in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, but in BVI it was previously only known from Jost Van Dyke. Its range has now been extended to 7 more islands in BVI.



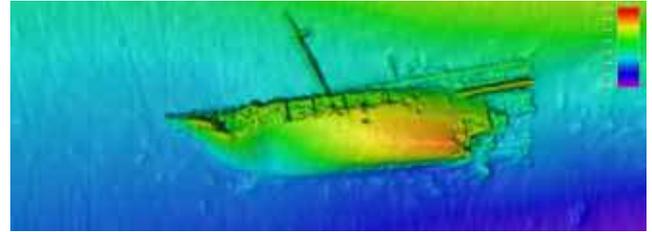
Some of the project outputs. Photo: NPTVI

See also: <https://www.facebook.com/lyn.romney/posts/10154720422958594>

Seabed Mapping

This project was undertaken to make navigation safer and enhance marine management.

From 2014 - 2016 NPTVI worked with UK based Cefas (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) with Darwin Plus funding, to map the seabed in a section of the Sir Francis Drake Channel, Road Harbour, Salt Island and the Wreck of the Rhone Marine Park.



The Wreck of the Rhone. Photo: Cefas and NPTVI

The project produced visualisations of the seabed around the British Virgin Islands from the first high resolution seabed survey to modern standards. Underwater cameras were used in certain areas to ground-truth, or confirm what the substrate was.

See these two videos for more information.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYsIF7IY9rQ> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bZF300ThyW>

The project mapping data can be found online at:

<http://defra.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=f22d9f621021465b8bf1969f5010c85d>

Turks & Caicos Islands Caicos Pine Week

The first annual Caicos Pine Awareness week will be held in December. The Department of Environment & Coastal Resources (DECR) have deemed the first week of December *Caicos Pine Awareness Week* in order to celebrate TCI's national tree and to draw attention to the plight of this unique pine species.

Brian Naqqi Manco leading students on a Caicos Pine Yard Ramble. Photo: Brian Naqqi Manco



More information can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/210894889283324/permalink/335950996777712/>

Cayman Flicker 28 - Green Iguanas and a New Ant Species

The Cayman Islands Terrestrial Research Unit's 28th issue of *Flicker* is available to download. This issue has articles on their latest projects and discoveries, including green iguana biosecurity and a new ant species (previously undescribed and known solely from the Cayman Islands).

This issue, and back issues, of *Flicker* are available on the DoE Website:

<http://www.doe.ky/information/newsletters/flicker/>



Cayman Reef Damage Settlement

Paul Allen, the owner of the luxury 300ft mega-yacht, the MV Tatoosh, has reportedly settled with the Cayman Islands Government over the damage caused by his boat's anchor chain to a section of coral off Seven Mile Beach earlier this year. Government has not said exactly how much the billionaire and former Microsoft owner has paid. Officials also revealed that no one has admitted any liability for the injured coral, which was discovered in January and covered around 14,000 square feet, according to Department of Environment staff, who assessed the damage alongside international experts.

The Cayman News article about this can be read at

<https://caymannewsservice.com/2016/10/billionaire-yacht-owner-settles-up-for-reef-damage/>

Anguilla: Project to Restore and Manage Prickly Pear Cays and Marine Park



Photo: Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Government of Anguilla

The Anguilla Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources, in partnership with the Anguilla National Trust, Fauna and Flora International, and the University of Roehampton, have been awarded a Darwin Plus grant for a project entitled *Pioneering a new model of Marine Park management in Anguilla*. The project will work with the private landowners of the Prickly Pear Cays and aims to demonstrate best practice for participatory coastal ecosystem management.

More information on this project is available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/axanationaltrust/?fref=ts>

Climate Change Toolkit for Teachers

The Government of Grenada has developed a variety of different school materials, among them the climate change toolkit *How to become a Greenz Climate Champion*. The toolkit aims to introduce the topic of climate change and adaptation in eight activity-based and interactive units to primary school teachers and students. The toolkit consists of a teacher manual, a worksheet collection, student passports, stickers and posters.



Explaining the often rather scientific topic of climate change in a simple and hands-on manner, the toolkit provides the base of climate change teaching for children at young age. Students will for example go on a scavenger hunt in the mangrove forest, make their own reusable shopping bags out of old T-shirts or build their own solar oven.

All materials can be downloaded from

<http://www.gov.gd/articles/greenz-champion/greenz-climate-champions.html>

Green Infrastructure: Protect Your Oceanfront with a Coral Reef

An interesting article, aimed at the development community. The article points out that natural ecosystems,



Turks & Caicos Reef Fund (TCRF) installing coral ladders as part of their coral nursery project. Coral reef protection and restoration has positive economic value as well as biodiversity value. Photo: TCRF

like coastal vegetation, mangroves and coral reefs, offer tangible benefits when taken into account in the planning stages of infrastructure developments. Coral reefs, for example, can reduce the energy of waves by 97%, protecting beaches for recreational use and tourism. Similarly, mangroves provide a natural barrier filtering pollutants and stabilizing sediments to protect shorelines from erosion. In some cases, nature-based solutions are even cheaper than their artificial counterparts. A study by Nature Communications

(<http://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms4794>), for example, found that the median cost of building artificial breakwaters is approximately \$20 per meter. Restoring one meter of coral reef, by contrast, is estimated to cost a mere \$1.30.

The article can be found at

<http://blog.iic.org/2016/10/28/green-infrastructure-protect-oceanfront-coral-reef/>

Mangrove coastal protection demonstration

Mangrove forests are an essential component of the coastal defense systems in many places. This model demonstration took place in Vietnam, but it is applicable everywhere with mangrove forests. This simple model from Dutch research institute Deltares makes it very easy to understand how mangroves protect the coast from the impact of waves. This means that you need to invest less in hard structures for protection, and you need to spend less on maintenance of such structures. Besides this, mangroves provide important ecosystem services, for instance for fisheries, as well.

View the video of the model demonstration at:

<https://www.facebook.com/HollandinVietnam/videos/1336012163076583/>



Screen grabs from the model mangrove demonstration video.

Sargassum– Technical Session at the GCFI 69th Meeting

Understanding and management of the pelagic Sargassum influx in the Caribbean was the subject of a technical session at the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) 69th annual meeting held in Grand Cayman in November.

Nine presentations were given:

1. Ramlongan et. al, Fisher Impacts and Responses to Sargassum Influx Events
2. Johns & Smith, Sargassum accumulation in the Caribbean Sea in response to anomalous oceanographic and meteorological forcing in the North Atlantic Ocean
3. Siuda et. al, Genetic Variation Among Morphological Forms Of Pelagic Sargassum And Associated Hydroids
4. Taylor et. al, Biogeographic and temporal changes in mobile fauna community pelagic Sargassum in the Caribbean Sea 2015-2016
5. Martinelli et al., The floating Sargassum in the Amazon coast and associated invertebrate community
6. Feibel & Lapointe, Productivity and Nutrition of Sargassum: A Comparative Ecophysiological Study of Benthic and Pelagic Species in Florida
7. Marechal and Hu 2016 Predicting Sargassum Washing Ashore in the Lesser Antilles
8. Johnson et. al, Pelagic Sargassum in the North Tropical Atlantic: Efforts at predicting coastal invasions
9. Oxenford et al. Management Recommendations : Coping with Sargassum strandings

These presentations are downloadable from:

<http://www.car-spaw-rac.org/?!lang=en> (then search for 69 GCFI and choose GCFI 69th Session from the search results to access the Sargassum presentation page)

Cambridge Masters in Conservation Leadership

Applications and scholarship support for October 2017

The MPhil degree in Conservation Leadership at the University of Cambridge is a full-time, eleven month course aimed at graduates of leadership potential with at least three to five years of relevant experience in biodiversity conservation.

For further details on how to apply (closing date 7 December 2016), please visit the course website:

<http://www.geog.cam.ac.uk/graduate/mphil/conservation/>