



UKOTCF

Wider Caribbean Working Group (WCWG) e-Newsletter

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Welcome There are several common conservation and environmental issues and challenges facing the Wider Caribbean UKOTs, for example alien invasive species, inappropriate development and destruction of habitat. This newsletter contains several examples of these, but also highlights some positive ways forward. The delay in the implementation of the Cayman National Conservation Law is clearly very disappointing. Continuing uncertainties over the Bermuda Tucker's Point development are also of concern. However, the news of significant funding for rat eradication on Dog Island, Anguilla, is very important and heartening. Having personally recently had the opportunity to census the breeding seabirds of Big Sand Cay (fortunately rat free), Turks and Caicos Islands, I can see clearly the potential for greatly increased seabird breeding on Dog Island after rat eradication. The signs of resolution of the BVI lemur introduction scenario, due to informed lobbying and the willingness of Sir Richard Branson to listen is a refreshing outcome. It is surprising how few people are prepared to listen, and change their plans! Raising public awareness alongside providing sustainable visitor opportunities are important initiatives in many Wider Caribbean UKOTs, for example the botanical and cultural gardens in Montserrat and TCI, trails for visitors in TCI and Cayman, development of sustainable visitor facilities in BVI, TCI and Cayman, as proposed for the EU-funded project Management of Protected Areas for Sustainable Economies.

I hope you find this eNewsletter of interest. Articles for future eNewsletters are very welcome, and can be sent to me at any time, as can any comments. Please contact me at apienkowski@ukotcf.org.

Ann Pienkowski, Secretary UKOTCF Wider Caribbean Working Group.

Cayman Conservation Law Delays

The consultation process on the Conservation Law (which took place over a 6-week period in summer 2010) was reported in WCWG eNewsletter 4 November 2010. The outcome of the consultation was that the majority of people wished for the law to go forward, with many expressing the view that it was long overdue. Indeed, a straw poll on Cayman News Service (CNS) resulted in 72% of voters wanting to see the law passed as soon as possible.

However, in early May 2011, the Minister with responsibility for the environment, Mark Scotland, was unable to give any information on the timetable for the passage of the Conservation Law, despite statements made just after the current government's election in 2009 that "unless the integrity of Cayman's natural resources was safeguarded, it would be the death-knell for the Islands" and "we simply must have comprehensive and updated environmental protection legislation."

There is great concern over the negative impact disappearing habitat is having on the Cayman Island's unique flora and fauna. Disappearing mangroves are a particular concern, as evidenced by the removal of several hundred feet of ocean front mangroves by the developer of the Ritz Carlton several years ago. Without the National Conservation Law there is nothing in law to formalize the environmental impact assessment process that could point to and warn of potential losses of natural resources, enabling developers to mitigate the impact.



Area of cleared mangroves, Grand Cayman

Photo by Dr Mike Pienkowski

Montserrat

Montserrat National Trust Botanic Garden update



Lady Eudora Fergus explaining the Botanic Garden Plan to Ann Penkowski

Photo by Dr Mike Pienkowski

Turks and Caicos Islands

Bird Walking and Driving Tours to open July 2011

Without the law, recent announcements by government regarding an array of proposed infrastructure projects could see, for example, the dredging of North Sound or the installation of an oil refinery happening without any compulsion for the developers to carry out an impact assessment.

[Editorial Note: As this eNewsletter was being finalised, Mark Scotland, the Minister of Health, Environment, Youth, Sports and Culture, said that the bill will be presented to legislators during the 2011/2012 financial year.

See <http://www.compasscayman.com/caycompass/2011/05/25/Conservation-Law--still-in-the-works/>]

Montserrat

Montserrat National Trust Botanic Garden update

The volcanic eruptions between 1995 and 1997 destroyed the Botanic Garden located in the agricultural station in Plymouth, then the capital (and only town). In 2005, the Montserrat National Trust decided to create a new botanic garden, to provide an educational and recreational resource for schools, residents and visitors. With support from OTEP, and Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, the garden was planned and established. (For further information see Forum News 35 <http://www.ukotcf.org/pdf/fNews/35.pdf>) The garden now comprises a nursery, an orchid house, terraced farming area, segmented areas to show plants of commercial significance to Montserrat, a pond and stream replicating flora and fauna of the ghauts and ravines, and areas for medicinal plants.

The garden needs a lot of water to maintain the plants in dry weather, and to clean the ash off them when the volcano erupts. (Although the area of potential danger is monitored continually by geophysicists and the public are excluded from that, non-life-threatening ash can fall over the whole island during periods of volcanic activity.) However, in the rainy season, a great deal of water flows through the garden washing out soil and plants. The National Trust were very happy to receive a donation from the Royal Bank of Canada's Blue Water Scheme. This donation has enabled the National Trust to design a water harvesting and irrigation system for a section of the garden, and obtain some equipment. The National Trust is now seeking further funding to implement fully the water harvesting and irrigation system.

The botanic garden is well used and greatly appreciated by residents, schools and tourists. Recent visitors include the new Governor for Montserrat, H.E. Mr Adrian Davis, and a kindergarten group (ages 1-3 years) who were fascinated by the trees.

More information about the garden and the Blue Water Scheme can be found at:

http://www.montserratnationaltrust.ms/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=33&Itemid=41

http://www.kew.org/science/directory/projects/UKOT_MONbotgdn.html

<http://bluewater.rbc.com/>

Turks and Caicos Islands

Bird Walking and Driving Tours to open July 2011

After many years of planning, and just as many disappointments, the Turks and Caicos Grand Turk Bird Tours are becoming a reality, and are due to open in July, 2011.

Planning and design of the bird tours first started in 2005, after it had been realized that the salinas on Grand Turk were internationally important for both resident and migrating birds, and also provided exceptional bird watching opportunities. With



*Grand Turk Bird Walk Tour being tried out in February
Photo by Ann Pienkowski*

the development of the cruise ship dock on Grand Turk, and the need to raise local awareness of the importance of the salinas, the bird tours were seen as providing a facility for tourists, and well as raising local appreciation of their importance. Lack of completion was not due to shortage of enthusiasm, but simply of funding. There was never enough funding to get the project “off the ground” despite the donation of many days of work by UKOTCF.

In late 2010 a successful application was made to the TCIInvest-Carnival Corporation infrastructure fund by the TC National Museum and UKOTCF. These funds enabled the production of signage and interpretive materials for the bird tours (together with further work on the Botanic and Cultural Garden – see below).

Permission has been received from TCI Government to place posts cut from downed telephone poles left over from Hurricane Ike (demonstrating reclaim, re-use, recycle) along the tour as markers. The tours are along the Salinas, other wetlands and pertinent birding areas. Laminated bird tour cards will be for sale for both the walking and driving tours. Income from the sale of the cards will help to maintain the tours, which will become the responsibility of the Turks and Caicos National Museum. The bird tours will also be a valuable environmental education tool, providing a practical component of the Wonderful Water curriculum (featured in WCWG eNewsletter issue 5).

In a recent two day workshop titled “Wondrous West Indian Wetlands” (a project of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds – SCSCB – see below) it was acknowledged that Turks and Caicos Islands will have some of the first walking and driving bird trails in the Caribbean. This initiative could encourage other Caribbean Islands to see how developments such as this project can educate even the novice birder, and produce income. For more information, please contact Mike Pienkowski, UKOTCF at m@pienkowski.org or Pat Saxton from TCNM at pat.saxton@tcmuseum.org

New Botanical and Cultural Garden in Grand Turk



*The Ramada in the Botanic and Cultural Garden
Photo by Pat Saxton*

New Botanical and Cultural Garden in Grand Turk

The original Arboretum (next to the historic Guinep House, the location of Turks and Caicos National Museum in Grand Turk) was devastated by Hurricane Ike in September 2008, and was then left to fend for itself. However, in 2010 new plans to turn the neglected arboretum into a Botanic and Cultural Garden were made.

Funding for the new garden was provided by a Wilmington Grant, and the TCIInvest-Carnival Corporation Infrastructure Fund. Plants and seeds came from the Department of Coastal Resources (DECR) biodiversity conservation nursery. The DECR is managing a seed collection project with the Royal Botanic Garden Kew’s Millennium Seed Bank in England. Some of these plants were near extinction, and have been saved due to this project. The Botanical Garden will also establish a nursery so the work of the plant biodiversity conservation program will be sustained, ensuring that native plants continue to thrive in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The Garden is divided into habitats found throughout the Turks and Caicos Islands. Sand dunes, coastal coppice, scrubland, and the dry tropical forest (which is more endangered than tropical rainforest), are represented in the new garden plan. Strategic use of native plants showcase their landscaping potential, to encourage homeowners and businesses to choose landscaping schemes which include TCI’s botanical heritage. Additionally, the Garden will provide a valuable educational tool for teachers.

This peaceful garden is already proving popular with residents and tourists. It is a tranquil place to enjoy the many different plants, and is also an important stop on the bird tour walk. The bird tour and the garden complement one another. Within the garden there are many resident birds and, when on the bird tour, one can see many of the indigenous trees and plants showcased in the Garden. All of these come together to guarantee awareness of the natural, national treasures of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

For more information about the garden, email info@tcmuseum.org or see <http://www.tcmuseum.org/nature-and-environment/botanical-and-cultural-garden/>



*The pools on the Provo Golf Course provide good bird watching opportunities
Photo by Dr Mike Pienkowski*

Seabird Counts



*Roseate Terns were found breeding on Big Sand Cay on the Turks Bank
Photo by Dr Mike Pienkowski*

Anguilla

Rat eradication on Dog Island

Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB) Wetland Workshop

For many years, UKOTCF has worked to raise awareness of the importance of TCI wetlands. So when Lisa Sorenson discussed with UKOTCF in 2010 the possibility of conducting the Wondrous Wetlands workshops in TCI, this was enthusiastically welcomed. In late April and early May Lisa (president of SCSCB) and Michele Kading (Oak Hammock Marsh interpretive centre) held 2-day workshops in each of Providenciales and Grand Turk. They were ably supported by staff from the Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR)

Many participants at the workshop have reported how valuable, interesting and fun the workshop sessions were, especially the field trips. The bird watching activities were especially enjoyable, and many people reported that they had no idea that bird watching could be so interesting!

More information about the SCSCB Wondrous West Indian Wetlands project can be found at

<http://www.whistlingduck.org/outreach.html>

A personal account by one participant at the workshop held in Providenciales, which contains further links, can be found at

<http://pepperandpikey.blogspot.com/2011/05/wondrous-west-indian-wetlands-workshop.html>

Seabird Counts

Nine years ago, UKOTCF (Mike and Ann Pienkowski and TCI naturalist Bryan Naqqi Manco) conducted breeding seabird counts on the isolated outer cays of the Caicos and Turks Banks. These established the area as Important Bird Areas (**Refs: Pienkowski, M.W.; Pienkowski, A.E. and Manco, B.N (2005) Birds on the outer cays of the Turks and Caicos Islands. Journal of Caribbean Ornithology 18:31-43 and Important Bird Areas of the Americas: Priority sites for biodiversity conservation (2009): pages 357- 368– Birdlife Conservation Series No. 16**). The MPASSE meeting in BVI in May 2011 (see later in this newsletter) coincided with the timing of the previous counts, so Ann and Mike took the opportunity (with Bryan Naqqi Manco and Eric Salamanca from DECR joining for one of the days) to repeat these counts. The counts on the Caicos Bank were made possible by Mark Parrish, of Big Blue Unlimited (<http://www.bigblueunlimited.com>) and on the Turks Bank by Debbie and Ollie Manos, Salt Cay Divers (<http://www.saltcaydivers.tc>). Both Big Blue and Salt Cay Divers donated staff and boat time to the project. Although detailed analyses still have to be done, preliminary findings are that the areas maintain their importance. It was pleasing to find Frigate Birds in the area. One of the main breeding colonies, Man O'War Bush – a large mangrove tree on the Caicos Bank, was destroyed by the hurricanes of 2008, and the previous count had revealed dead Frigate Birds on the ground on their breeding cay on the Turks Bank. However, it was concerning to hear accounts of illegal seabird and turtle egg collections continuing, despite all these areas being protected.

Anguilla

Funds awarded for Rat Eradication on Dog Island, Anguilla

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has committed US\$205,000 from its Seabirds Keystone Initiative to a rat eradication project on Dog Island. Matching funding and in-kind support, worth at least US\$238,000, will be provided by the project partners: Fauna and Flora International, Anguilla National Trust, Anguilla Department of Environment and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Dog Island is a low lying, uninhabited rocky island 13km northwest of the main island



*Sooty Tern on Dog Island
Photo by Dr Mike Pienkowski*

Bermuda

Update on Tucker's Point SDO

Bermuda Audubon Society News



*Jeremy Madeiros with Cahow chick on
Nonsuch Island
Photo by Dr Mike Pienkowski*

Marine Protection - The Sargasso Sea Alliance

of Anguilla. It is one of the Caribbean's most important seabird islands, with nine breeding species of seabirds, as well as being significant for Hawksbill, Leatherback and Green Turtles, and endemic terrestrial reptiles. Introduced black rats and feral goats have had an enormous impact on the native flora and fauna. A rat eradication feasibility study was conducted in 2007, with funding from OTEP. It is great news that the significant funding now available will enable the rat eradication to go ahead.

The full article about this project was published in the May 2011 newsletter of the Caribbean Seabird Initiatives: Invasives project. (CSI: Invasives is a project that seeks to increase regional capacity, support, and funding for invasive species work to benefit seabirds in the Caribbean region.)

This newsletter is available at <http://wicbirds.net>

Bermuda

Update on Tucker's Point SDO

Concern about a Special Development Order (SDO) for Tucker's Point was featured in the WCWG eNewsletter issue 5, February 2011. News items were also posted on the UKOTCF website.

An amended SDO was passed by the Senate on 25 March. A map showing the amendments can be seen at

<http://www.royalgazette.com/article/20110325/NEWS04/703259916>

Conservationists in Bermuda are concerned that the minor concessions made in the amended SDO do not address the fundamental problem of allowing further development in this area, especially considering the strength of feeling of local people against the development.

Bermuda Audubon Society News

The Spring 2011 Bermuda Audubon Society Newsletter (available to download at http://www.audubon.bm/Newsletters_files/Vol.%202022%20No.1.pdf) has many interesting articles, including a report on a very successful year for the Cahow Recovery Programme and an item raising the issue of cats and birds in Bermuda. The full report for the Cahow Recovery Programme Breeding Season 2010 can be downloaded from the Bermuda Department of Conservation Services (<http://www.conservation.bm>) The cats and birds item is thought provoking, and references an article from the Washington Post (http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/no-good-for-the-birds-but-also-no-good-for-the-cats/2011/03/17/ABLGkvr_story.html) which is very much in line with the Bermuda Audubon Society's thinking. The Environment Section of the society's website (<http://www.audubon.bm/>) also carries an article about feral cats.

Marine Protection - The Sargasso Sea Alliance

Bermuda Government and the Pew Environment Trust are working together with others (in a partnership named the Sargasso Sea Alliance), to establish a large marine reserve somewhere within Bermuda's 200 mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ). This would be an important first step towards protection of the wider Sargasso Sea. An interesting short video about the Sargasso Sea can be viewed at <http://www.bamz.org/>. This would complement efforts by Bermuda partners, supported by UKOTCF, to establish more Ramsar Convention Wetlands of International Importance in Bermuda's inshore waters and other wetlands.

The Bermuda Director of Environmental Protection, Dr Frederick Ming, represented Bermuda in part of Selfridges' 'Ocean Talks' in London – one of a number of events being held in aid of Selfridges' Project Ocean. Spearheaded by Selfridges and the Zoological Society of London (ZSL), Project Ocean is a call-to-action marine conservation campaign aimed at raising awareness about overfishing and celebrating

British Virgin Islands

MPASSE



Joseph Smith Abbott (Director, NPTVI) explains the plans for development of Sage Mountain NP under the MPASSE project

Photo by Dr Mike Pienkowski

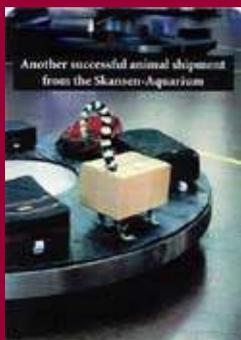
Jost Van Dyke's Preservation Society



Island Sloop Endeavour II as seen from the stern

Photo by Dr Mike Pienkowski

Sir Richard Branson's Lemurs - a positive outcome



the beauty of the sea. For the period May 11th to June 12th the London-based retailer showcased the campaign in its stores, windows, online and via an integrated digital platform. See <http://www.selfridges.com/en/StaticPage/ProjectOcean/>

British Virgin Islands

Management of Protected Areas to Support Sustainable Economies (MPASSE)

This EU funded project was reported fully in Forum News 37 <http://www.ukotcf.org/pdf/fNews/37.pdf>

The second physical meeting of the project steering group, with partners from BVI, TCI, Cayman and UKOTCF, was held in BVI in May 2011. This was a very productive and useful meeting. Of particular value were the two field trips. One day was spent on Virgin Gorda, where project partners climbed Gorda Peak, and visited Copper Mine and the Baths, on the wettest day in Virgin Gorda for several months! (At least the rain was warm.) Another visit was made to Sage Mountain National Park. Seeing the different sites put into context the project's aims and objectives, and revealed some of the many challenges to be overcome. This first-hand experience fed into very useful discussions on how to achieve project aims whilst putting into place best practice for developments in protected and sensitive areas.

Visit to Jost Van Dyke's Preservation Society

The Jost Van Dyke's Preservation Society (JVDPS) is an Associate of the Forum, and whilst in BVI for the MPASSE meeting, Ann and Mike Pienkowski took the opportunity to visit Jost Van Dyke, and the executive director of JVDPS, Susan Zaluski. The work being done by the small but dedicated JVDPS team is very impressive. Endeavour II, being constructed by the Island Sloop Project, is a fine piece of work. The anticipated UNESCO funds should allow completion of this ambitious project. Field work for the control of feral cats and mongooses had recently finished (with support from the UK's Food and Environment Research Agency FERA, whose availability to advise the UKOTs was one result of UKOTCF's long-running campaign to increase UK Government's support for the UKOTs). This challenging project had been very successful, particularly in raising awareness and concern amongst the school children, and had established the feasibility of eradicating mongooses, and highlighted the need for Little Jost Van Dyke to become a protected area.

Sir Richard Branson and the Lemurs - a positive outcome

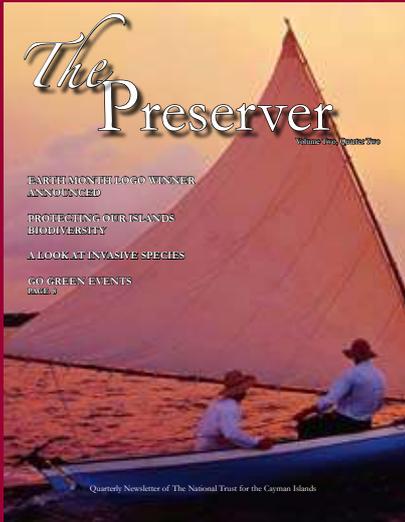
Sir Richard Branson's plans to import zoo-bred lemurs to his BVI island, Moskito, caused a great deal of consternation, and generated a heated email chain amongst environmentalists. At the heart of the argument were two parties who wanted to do the right thing – Sir Richard is passionate about saving lemurs (which are greatly endangered in their native Madagascar), but the introduction of lemurs (which would then become an introduced alien species) into the fragile and endangered Caribbean dry tropical forest was clearly not the answer, and contravened IUCN guidelines.

Sir Richard listened to the arguments against his initial plans, and changed them. He deserves much credit for this. The lemurs will now be kept in large open-air fenced enclosures, which should enable breeding, to avoid impacting native Caribbean species in any way. Sir Richard has also announced his intention to increase his commitment to lemur conservation in Madagascar, as well as to support conservation in the Caribbean.

Sir Richard also demonstrated his sense of humour by posting these 2 photos: A t-shirt for sale in BVI and a possible delivery mode for the lemurs to BVI. See: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-13502222>

Cayman

National Trust for the Cayman Islands - news update



Hammerhead Shark meat sale causes concern



*Hammerhead shark head in Cayman market
Photo courtesy of Cayman News Service*

Cayman

National Trust for the Cayman Islands - news update

The latest newsletter <http://www.nationaltrust.org.ky/documents/Q211NewsletterSMALL.pdf> as ever highlights the dynamic working of the National Trust for the Cayman Island (NTCI).

Guided tours on the Mastic Trail (at 750 acres, the largest NTCI property) are the most popular tour with both locals and tourists. Visitors here can see rare orchids, all 13 of the endemic birds of the Cayman Islands, scores of migratory birds, and experience a historic footpath which for over 100 years was the main artery through the middle of the island.

NTCI are responsible for many historic properties, including the Mission House (with archaeological remains dating back as far as the 1700s).

Their most famous programme is the Blue Iguana Recovery Programme (BIRP), one of the partners in the EU funded MPASSE project referred to earlier in this newsletter. Under the directorship of Fred Burton, the approximately 30 Blue Iguanas estimated to be surviving in the wild at the start of BIRP have now increased to about 1000. Significantly, as a consequence of the MPASSE project a new reserve area has been leased to the BIRP, and during the recent MPASSE meeting in BVI, news was received that the re-alignment of the road access to the new area had been approved, so the next stages of the project could commence.

And NTCI continues to show the way in innovative fund raising initiatives. A Land Reserve Fund Appreciation Dinner and other events have raised almost \$90,000 for the purchase of land that was deemed environmentally significant by the National Trust. This year the National Trust would like to focus on expanding the Mastic Reserve and Rock Iguana habitat in the sister islands, and to date has raised almost \$73,000 towards this goal. Other fund raising initiatives have included a 1950s themed fundraiser at the Mission House.

Alien invasive species are perhaps the greatest threat to biodiversity. This issue of The Preserver contains a very interesting article by Paul Watler, NTCI Environmental Programmes Manager Designate, who was able to attend a workshop hosted by another UKOTCF Associate, Jost Van Dyke's Preservation Society (the FERA sponsored feral cat and mongoose control project mentioned earlier in this Newsletter).

The NTCI Newsletter reports an impressive number of Earth Month (April) events, and a schedule of other activities carried out in April and May.

Congratulations to NTCI for all these achievements.

Hammerhead Shark meat sale causes concern

When a hammerhead shark was sold for meat in the market, many people voiced their concerns.

Despite the fact that globally shark populations are severely threatened with over-fishing, there are currently no laws in Cayman prohibiting the capture or sale of any sharks in the Cayman Islands. However there is legislation prohibiting the baiting (or "chumming") of water with the intent of attracting sharks, but this is primarily aimed at shark feeding activities. Sharks are protected within local Marine Parks and the Environmental Zones, but as most species range over much larger areas than the boundaries of the parks, marine protected areas offer little protection for sharks generally.

It was stated that sharks that are accidentally caught are often sold for meat so as not to waste the animal. However, it is a rare occurrence that a shark is killed just for the sake of it, and it was noted that sharks are protected in marine zones. Additionally

Cross Territory and General

Successful OTEP applications
2011



it was explained that there is a potential health risk in eating shark. Shark meat can contain high levels of trace metals such as mercury which if ingested frequently can become toxic to humans. Furthermore sharks build up a concentration of ammonia in their flesh.

Given the importance of a robust shark population in a healthy marine ecosystem, the Department of Environment is currently involved in a 2-year collaborative study with Marine Conservation International (MCI), the Guy Harvey Research Institute (GHRI) at Nova Southeastern University and the Save Our Seas Foundation to better understand the current status of sharks in Cayman waters. This project is funded by the UK's Overseas Territory Environment Programme (OTEP) and the Save Our Seas Foundation and will result in comprehensive management recommendations to ensure sharks receive the protection and recognition required.

A fuller article and accompanying reader comments can be read at <http://www.caymannewsservice.com/science-and-nature/2011/04/12/sharks-not-protected-despite-endangered-status>

Cross-Territory and General

Successful OTEP applications for 2011 for the Caribbean

Building a Foundation for Anguilla's Wetland Future (ANG801)

The purpose of the project is to build an information and capacity base for Anguilla's Globally Important wetlands by the publication of a wetland inventory; development of a National Wetland Conservation Plan; revision of Important Bird Area (IBA) designations and submission of sites for Ramsar designation and the enhancement of local capacity (knowledge resources, skill development and institutional strengthening).

Farah Mukhida, Anguilla National Trust antpam@anguillanet.com

Enhancing capacity for fisheries enforcement and management in Anguilla (ANG803)

The purpose of this project is to improve fisheries enforcement and management capabilities. This will be achieved through the enhancement of local capacity (knowledge resources, skill development, and institutional strengthening); the strengthening of the long-term fisheries monitoring system in Anguilla; the creation of an on-going fisheries enforcement programme.

James C Gumbs, Government of Anguilla james.gumbs@gov.ai

Implementation of the Anguilla Energy Policy 2008-2020: Phase Two – Building The Anguilla Model (ANG807)

The project is a 10 year plan for achieving carbon neutrality as a replicable model for small island nations worldwide as described in The Anguilla Model. Successful implementation of Anguilla's climate change mitigation strategy will impact livelihoods and employment, economic development, environmental management - including waste stream management and local food production, human resource development and education.

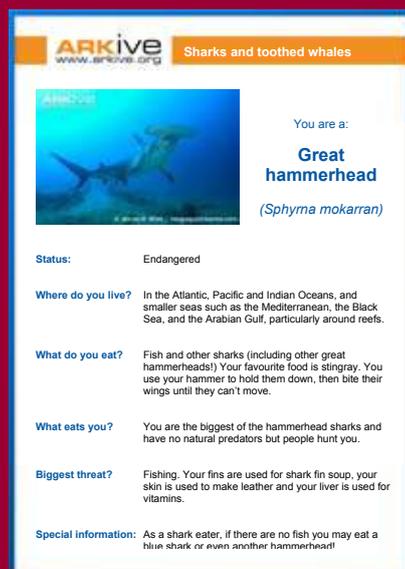
Beth Barry, The Anguilla Renewable Energy Office beth@anguillareo.org

British Virgin Islands Environmental Profile Programme: Phase 2, Anegada and Virgin Gorda (BVI801)

Environmental Profiles are recognised as an effective means to ensure that environmental issues are included in development planning and public policy decision-making. The British Virgin Islands Environmental Profile Programme will provide an expanded information base—informed by the application of sound science—to guide the choices of public and private sector stakeholders and decision-makers. The Programme will take a retrospective look at environmental change, assess priority environmental issues, and place these within a forward-looking context that supports sustainable growth. As a result, BVI Islanders and their Government will better understand the need to balance how they want to grow with what they want to protect.

Judith A. Towle, Island Resources Foundation jtowle@irf.org

ARKive UKOT Educational Resources



Dinner at the Reef Hammerhead Shark card

Conserving the Centre Hills in Montserrat through effective control of feral livestock populations (MNT802)

The project will deliver enhanced biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in and around Montserrat's proposed Centre Hills National Park through the implementation of a feral animal control programme and the identification of a number of indicators that can be measured, monitored and quantified to show the effectiveness of this programme. It will result in the reduction of feral animal populations; underpin the Species Action Plans for Montserrat oriole, Montserrat galliwasps and mountain chicken, and support the implementation of the Centre Hills management plan. In addition, it will benefit both the people of Montserrat and the wider Caribbean OT region.

Gerard Gray, Department of Environment gray@gov.ms

Raising Montserrat's Marine Ecosystem from the Ashes: The Montserrat Reef Project - Stage 2 (MNT803)

The Montserrat Reef Project is designed to replace lost and damaged marine habitat resulting from the Soufriere Hills Volcano eruptions. The new reefs created will be ideal fish nursery habitat, capable of strengthening the fisheries population. Additionally, the reefs will provide a growth base for propagating imperilled corals. The new marine habitat(s) will be configured as an interactive educational snorkelling trail to facilitate programs on the importance of marine habitats.

Andrew Myers, Montserrat Reef Society montserrat.reef.project@gmail.com

Achieving GSPC Target 2: the UKOTS Plant Species Red List (XOT802)

An assessment of the conservation status of all known UKOT plant species to guide conservation action will be achieved through this project. Results will be uploaded to the IUCN Red List thus raising the profile of these unique UKOT species. This will provide a platform for conservation action and aid prioritising resources effectively. These data will provide a baseline for suitability modelling for adaptations to climate change. Selected threatened species from a range of different territories will be used to produce models highlighting species' ability to adapt to climate change. All UKOTs will be in a better position to implement plant conservation.

Martin Hamilton, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, m.hamilton@kew.org

ARKive UKOT Educational Resources

As part of ARKive's OTEP project (see article in Forum News 36 <http://www.ukotcf.org/pdf/fNews/36.pdf>) themed teaching resources have been produced and are available on line. These resources use the rich and diverse species of the Territories, the threats they face and in-situ conservation initiatives as illustrative examples.

The three resources cover key science topics taught within the UK, the UKOTs and globally. By making these resources accessible to educators worldwide (as well as being of great use to educators within the territories) the intention is that the importance of the Territories' biodiversity will be recognised by young people across the globe.

The three new UKOT resources are available here:

Dinner at the Reef (7-11 years)

<http://www.arkive.org/education/resources#resources7-11>

Biodiversity Hospital (11-14 years)

<http://www.arkive.org/education/resources#resources11-14>

Design a Conservation Programme (14-16 years) <http://www.arkive.org/education/resources#resources14-16>

As well as being available online, it is intended that materials will be made available to teachers and education departments across the territories in the best way for that territory. This could be DVD/CD, USB or printouts. If you would like further information about these materials, or wish to have them made available to you in an alternative format, please contact: lucie.muir@wildscreen.org.uk

BEST Scheme pilot fund for Protected Areas: Call for Proposals

SCSCB Meeting Bahamas July 2011 - informal UKOTCF meeting

Latin America and Caribbean Regional Coverage Programme (LARC) website

BEST Scheme pilot fund for Protected Areas: Call for proposals

The European Commission has announced an open call for proposals in the framework of the Preparatory Action 'BEST' (Voluntary scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in Territories of the EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories).

For background on this scheme, see "EU announces €2 million pilot scheme for biodiversity projects in Overseas Territories", 02/03/2011, on <http://www.ukotcf.org>. The deadline for applications is the 9th September 2011.

Further details are available from the European Commission Website:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ngos/finansup_11_best.htm

UKOTCF is pleased to have been able to give advice to several Member and Associate organisations and others on proposals, and is ready to explore partnerships with others.

UKOTCF informal meeting during SCSCB Meeting in Bahamas

SCSCB's 18th Regional Meeting will be held in Freeport, Grand Bahama, July 21-25, 2011. UKOTCF will hold an informal meeting of the WCWG at this conference (time and date yet to be confirmed). We will let colleagues know as soon as we have this information. Information on the meeting available at

<https://sites.google.com/site/scscbmeeting2011/home>

Latin America and Caribbean Regional Coverage Programme (LARC) website

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) reporting services has launched a new version of the website for the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Coverage Programme (LARC).

Features of the new LARC site include:

- A searchable knowledgebase of summaries of activities (publications, meetings, statement or projects)
- An archive of all posts on the site, organized by date posted;
- A clickable map of the region, enabling you to view sustainable development policy news by subregion (Caribbean, Mexico and Central America, South America);
- A link to subscribe to LARC-L, a moderated community announcement listserve for policy-makers and practitioners involved in sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- A link to the most recent Latin America & Caribbean Regional Update, a periodic feed of recent posts to the LARC Regional Coverage knowledgebase;
- A Calendar of upcoming international events related to sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean;

The new LARC site is at <http://larc.iisd.org/>.