

GAZELLE

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مجموعة دبي للتاريخ الطبيعي

DUBAI NATURAL HISTORY GROUP

PO Box 9234, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Members' News

Sniffs – Goodbye Griffs

We are sad to say goodbye to **Peter** and **Anna Griffin**, who will be leaving Dubai in June to take up residence in France. Peter and Anna served on the DNHG Committee for most of their stay in Dubai, Peter serving as Treasurer and Anna as Membership Secretary and *Gazelle* Editor. They have also favored us with natural history news from spiders to whydahs and adventure stories from the Himalayas to Mt. Kilimanjaro. They will be greatly missed. We hope you will join us for their sendoff at the end-of-season dinner in June (details inside), which Peter will help to organize as usual.

And while Anna stalwartly produced your April *Gazelle*, **Peter van Amsterdam** and **the Ed.** went whale watching at Kaikoura last month and observed 3 humpbacks, many dolphins, a colony of (very smelly) fur seals and many large seabirds. Anne then spent two weeks in Australia, where she saw an echidna (probably *Tachyglossus aculeatus*), three graceful brolgas (f. *Gruidae*) and a few rare Major Mitchell cockatoos. These two isolated countries remain wonderlands of flora and fauna, though both are fighting up-hill battles to preserve their ecologies. Keeping an eye out for nature

where she can find it, **Christine Namour** reports a mother Grey Francolin and a train of chicks crossing the road on the attractively landscaped grounds of Emirates Towers. She's afraid they're in more danger from the traffic than the kestrels swooping from the towers.

Dr. Rosemary Leila is one of those who now makes a point to stop and "smell the roses" along the way – a good example for the rest of us. Most recently it wasn't roses but the neem tree (*Melia azederach*), a popular ornamental tree (and a mini-pharmacy in itself), that was flowering in late April. Rosemary drew friends' attention to it, and wondered why she herself was only now noticing the lovely perfumed scent after all these years.

Dr. Sandy Fowler, our Seashell Recorder and a longtime DNHG Committee member, lectured in early May to the ENHG in Abu Dhabi. Sandy describes his talk as "a visual wander through how seashells have been a part of the social fabric of mankind for centuries, how and where in the Emirates to collect and care for them, and how like us they are!" We hope to hear from Sandy ourselves in the autumn.

DNHG Membership – Impending Change

DNHG membership will be, from September 2001 when your next year's membership is due, Dhs. 50 for singles and Dhs. 100 for couples and families.

This is still the best bargain in town! You can join or renew at meetings (see Membership Secretary Fi Skennerton) or by sending us a cheque made out to Lloyds Bank account no. 173746. (Please note we cannot cash cheques made out to the DNHG.) Membership is valid from September 2001 to September 2002.

DNHG membership entitles you to participate in field trips and helps pay for our lecture hall, publication and distribution of our monthly newsletter, additions to our library, incidental expenses of speakers and occasional special projects. Our new fee will allow us to find a more permanent home for the library, and a more convenient venue for our meetings.

This month's Contributors

The Editor would like to thank the following for their reports:

Barbara Couldrey
Sandy Fowler
Marijcke Jongbloed
Gary Feulner
Peter Cunningham



Field Trips etc ...

Saiq Plateau 24 / 25 May

This trip, led by Peter van Amsterdam, is now full. Anne's advice: Those who are coming should check their bookings as I have slept in the desert on more than one occasion with a hotel booking.

June Special! Insect workshop 14 June at 7.30pm

Marijcke Jongbloed will hold a workshop on insects at her residence, and you are all invited to bring along your curiosities and questions.

For further information, contact Marijcke on 349 7963.

September events

Those that are already arranged will be advertised in our June issue of *Gazelle*. Prepare for a very interesting line-up for the new season!

Field Trip Report

Inter-Emirates Weekend

Inter-Emirates Weekend was hosted by the Al-Ain ENHG and was an excellent opportunity to enjoy some of the very many natural attractions of the Al-Ain area. It was also a chance to meet others visiting from Abu Dhabi and Muscat as well as Al-Ain and Dubai. Dinner on Thursday night was on carpets and cushions in a traditional style tent. The site was picturesque and well out-of-the-way, nestled in the foothills beneath Jebel Qatar, but the only people who got lost trying to find it after dark were two members of the Al-Ain organizing committee.

One of the after-dinner attractions was a terrarium full of insects on display, many of them furnished by the DNHG's James Pardoe. These included a specimen of the

UAE's largest tiger beetle, the emerald-green iridescent *Megacephala euphratica*, collected by James' brother William. Whereas most UAE tiger beetles are active by day (many even at high noon), *M. euphratica* is nocturnal. Dr. Mike Gillett of Al-Ain, who received the Abu Dhabi ENHG's Bish Brown Award this year for his continuing work on UAE insect taxonomy, remarked that he has been trying to collect such a specimen for years. Other finds, many of them made on the spot, were ground mantises (we learned to tell males from females – the males have little wings), ribbon wings and adult antlions (one of which fell victim to the tiger beetle).

DNHG members seen in conversation around the insect table until closing time included James and his mother Mary Ann, Ian McGregor and Chairman Gary Feulner, along with hosts and experts Drs. Brigitte Howarth and Michael Gillett. The conversation was informative and provocative. One lady speculated that antlion larvae (which dig those familiar conical pits) may be venomous. She had seen one grasp and hold onto a much larger hairy caterpillar that had fallen into its pit. The antlion larva was pulled from its lair, but within about five minutes the caterpillar was dead.

Friday programs were a diverse set of options, although from the Dubai contingent only Gary Feulner and David Snelling got up early for birdwatching. We have heard glowing reports about Phil Iddison's guided tour of the Al-Ain oasis, an extensive plantation area now somewhat refurbished for tourism, but still very "authentic". Phil literally wrote the book on this one – a pamphlet and map published with official support -- and provided a lot of information about palm horticulture and traditional crafts. Copies of the pamphlet are available through the DNHG. The basic tour is child friendly, but some of Phil's customized detours

required a 4WD stroller.

Also very popular was the tour of Khutwah, a mountain front plantation in Oman with a deep, narrow gorge. The group divided by magic into fearless and athletic "goats" who reck naught of fording wadi pools and scaling sheer rocky slopes while the timid "sheep" held nervously back, bleating piteously at every crevasse and spending an unusually long time in the sun watching kids catch insects in Dr Bridget's butterfly nets. Purple sunbirds were everywhere among the palms, and the catch of the day was a toss-up between a fearsome wolf spider and a mighty date-sized palm weevil.

Thanks to our friends in Al-Ain for all their time and efforts towards organizing such a delightful weekend!

Report by Gary Feulner

Our Next Speakers

Our Members' Night speakers:

Helen Emery, who has travelled extensively in South East Asia will present "Minority Tribes of North East Burma".

John Fox, who is both an anthropologist and an archeologist will give us "An Introduction to the Mayas of Gautemala".

Elizabeth Craig-Maley, author of *Gardening in the Gulf*, will speak about using wild plants in your garden and how to make the best use of water in gardening.

David Snelling, member of the UK's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and of the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust will talk about birding in the UAE.



New Plants

On April 4, Marijcke Jongbloed spent a day on the East coast and found no less than three new plants in one day. The first two were in a plantation along the edge of the wadi that runs through the Omani village of Murbad between Fujeirah and Khor Fakkan. One was a legume, with a very large yellow flower and inflated bean. Although it looked as if it might be an introduced crop plant, it was growing quite "wild" and in good numbers underneath the palms in one of the fields. It looks like *Crotalaria retusa* in Collette's book. In another patch of undergrowth there was a very fine prostrate plant with small clusters of very tiny pink flowers, which might be a *Commelina*. Along the wadi bank, there was a fine stand of the *Dalechampia scandens* that Gary reported last month from the high mountains. It had nice flowers, fruits and seeds on it.

The third new plant of the day was found along the main road in front of Northstar's adventure camp in Dadnah. It was a meter high woody bush with spikes of very small brick-red flowers and thin curved seeds. The flowers were reminiscent of *Indigofera arabica*, but the seeds were more like those of an *Astragalus* species. Specimens of all the new plants for this winter have been sent off to Professor Loufy Boulous in Egypt.

.... and Ants

On my daily dog walk I came across an "ant-highway" that had appeared across the track that I walk every day. A steady stream of ants had trampled an inch-wide path into the sand. I followed the main stream to the nest and then paced the entire length of the path: over 50 meters! I have done this several times in the past, and usually the path peters out in an area where the ants are harvesting. This time however, the path led to another smaller nest. About one in three ants disappeared into this nest. Initially I thought there were two sizes of ants. The most numerous were about 2 mm long, but others were almost twice as

big with a large shiny oval head. Then I realised that this was not a head but a seed they were carrying! The vegetation around was very limited: *Zygophyllum qatarense* and *Salsola imbricata*. The *Zygophyllum* was past flowering but the seeds did not seem ripe yet. I searched for a long time to see where those glossy oval seeds came from but could not find any source. The next day the path only had a few ants on it and the day after that it had vanished. At the nests there was little or no activity.

It just left me wondering what had inspired the enormous activity of these ants. What seed was it that they were collecting? Did they stop because the supply had dwindled or because their stores were full? What was the relationship between the two nests? The more you see the more questions you have! This was one of at least four species of ants I saw in the same area on those three days. The other three species were seen only as single specimens.

Urban Fox?

I got a call one afternoon from a lady who said a red fox had strayed into her compound near the Satwa flower shops. Local boys were tormenting it. What should they do? We decided to try and catch the fox and if it was not injured, release it back into the desert. Another resident of the compound managed to catch the fox in a large birdcage and loaded it into the back of his car. I met up with them outside Dubai and together we drove to the sandy desert behind Al Bwardy's polo club, where we let it go. It turned out to be a vixen, in reasonably good shape although a little stressed by the day's events. She wasted no time putting distance between us and herself and disappeared across the sand dunes. Unfortunately it was already too dark to take any photographs. Now what was a red fox doing in the middle of the city? Was it a stray visitor or an escapee from one of the pet

shops? A few months ago I found fox droppings in the field next to the Khor Dubai nature reserve, which is also within city limits, but still in a fairly natural habitat.

HOOPOES

The kitchen window of DNHG member Helena Reichert looks out over the neighbour's house and backyard. Last year a family of hoopoes was raised in a large tree in that backyard. Helena saw the mother and five fledged young foraging near the garbage container last year in May. The large tree fell during one of the storms, and this year the hoopoes nested under a tile on the roof of the neighbour's house. Soon it became apparent that two mynahs were very interested in what was going on under that tile. Even though the hoopoe mother was very careful, sitting for long periods of time on the rooftop waiting until the coast was clear, the mynahs figured out what was going on. Helena became a second Hoopoe-mother, chasing off the mynahs whenever she saw them getting too close. But she could not be there all the time and the real hoopoe mother took her own measures. She moved her young. I have known of mammals moving their young from one nest or burrow to another, but a bird...! The move was facilitated by the fact that the young bird could probably walk around in the space between the tiles and the ceiling of the roof. In any case, the feeding now took place via a ventilation hole in the wall of the house. The mynahs must either not have figured out what had happened or lost interest, for at least one baby grew up. It was being fed "on the wing" with the mother only hovering in front of the hole for a split second. The baby looked fine, with a cute little crest, swiveling its head with the long bill every which way to see if mom was coming yet with more food. I hope to show slides of it at one of the meetings.

Reports by Marijcke Jongbloed



Field Clips ...

E.mail your reports to pvana@emirates.net.ae (Arial 10 justified) or deliver them to Anne Millen on floppy disk at monthly meetings.

NE Musandam Recce

With two Omani friends, Gary Feulner and Peter Cunningham mounted a mini-expedition in March to traverse the seldom visited area of the Ru'us al-Jibal to the NE of Jebel Harim, building on earlier exploratory sorties and on Gary's 1995 crossing eastwards to the coast at Limah. They planned to descend to the flats near Sal al-'Ala, using a traditional Bedu trail that follows the ridges overlooking the coast, but they were careful to take the precaution – critical in the rugged Ru'us al-Jibal – of learning exactly where the trail descended.

One purpose of the visit was to inspect a small area of rocks, mapped by helicopter more than 25 years ago, that are considered to represent one of the only two remnants of the deep water sediments believed to have once been thrust over the rocks of the Ru'us al-Jibal. The area has since been uplifted so high that all other traces of the overthrust sheet (including deep water sediments and, presumably, the "ophiolite" or oceanic crust and mantle) have been eroded. The outcrops in question are inconveniently situated high on the side of a steep ravine, and the age and genesis of the sediments cannot be positively determined by field inspection in any case, but it was confirmed that they appear to resemble the deep water sediments of the Hawasina nappe much more than any of the shallow water limestone and dolomite that makes up the overwhelming majority of the Musandam rock units.

As usual when visiting new areas, there were other "discoveries" as

well. A Chukar nest and Loew's Blue butterfly are being separately reported in the *Gazelle*. In addition, Gary and Peter found:

- A purple lily "new" to the area, tentatively identified by Marijcke Jongbloed as *Muscari comosum*, a species known from the Sinai desert. It has a showy spray of sterile flowers at the top of the stem, apparently to help attract insects.

- Gazelle droppings, consistent with intermittent reports that gazelle and even tahr continue to survive in this uninhabited region of the Ru'us al-Jibal.

- An odd-colored basking agama, presumptively the Sinai agama *Pseudotrapelus sinaitus*. No other mountain agama has been reported from the UAE or Oman and no Iranian species have been suggested to be present. But reports of any agamas at all are very scarce from the Ru'us al-Jibal and most of the few that have been seen exhibit color patterns different from those seen further south in the Hajar Mountains.

- Suspected mongoose tracks below Jebel Harim.

- Two steel-frame cage traps, confirmed by local people to have been brought in by donkey and intended for caracal. Both traps were closed: they are baited and set only when there is reason to suspect an animal in the area.

- A number of plants that have not been reported or collected since a helicopter reconnaissance by Mandaville et al. in the early 1970s, as well as some apparent "unknowns." Marijcke Jongbloed has arranged for these and others to be identified by Prof. Loutfy Boulou.

Any lessons? Well, as noted above, don't go up if you don't know how and where you're going to come down. In the Ru'us al-Jibal, there aren't always many alternatives. Also, don't count on finding water enroute. Plan to carry everything you'll need. This was a disappointing lesson for Gary and Peter's Omani friends, who were accustomed to travel

light, but areas away from the roads are now largely uninhabited for most of the year. There may be cisterns in abandoned settlements, but cisterns that are not kept in good repair do not always collect or retain water, and if they do it may be unpalatable.

The Omanis both brought mobile phones along. Gary and Peter were more "traditional" in this regard, but it's clear that in areas where coverage exists, mobile phones can potentially play an important role if emergencies arise. *Report by Gary Feulner*

"Everybody Else's Birds"

Former DNHG Speaker Coordinator Mike Kerley, now retired and living in the UK, sent us a disturbing report about Cyprus which appeared in the UK's *Sunday Mail*. It was titled "Cyprus simply cannot carry on killing everybody else's birds." Similar articles have appeared in other UK newspapers incl. the *Daily Express*. It seems that Cyprus has become a killing ground for an estimated 20 million birds annually, mostly by illegal trapping, which is nevertheless officially tolerated, untaxed and lucrative. A survey of 85 scrub/woodland sites in September and October, the migration season, found that every one was covered in either mist nets or limesticks or both. These are indiscriminate methods and the conclusion was that many migratory birds, including rare species, do not leave the island to continue their journey. It was noted that even the most ardent efforts to preserve species and habitats throughout the European Union are doomed to failure if migrating birds are decimated enroute. Mike had earlier vacationed in Cyprus and questioned the sportsmanship of Cyprus marksmen who hung bee-eater pelts from their belts as trophies. By habit, Mike noted, the bee-eaters obligingly array themselves along telephone lines. Thanks to Mike for thinking about us and keeping in touch.



Dubai Natural History Group Recorders

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Archaeology - Volunteer required

Birds - David Snelling
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Seashells - Sandy Fowler
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Astronomy - Lamjed El-Kefi
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Marine Life - Lamjed El-Kefi

Geology - Gary Feulner
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Insects - Gary Feulner

Fossils - Valerie Chalmers
res 349 4016,
fax 398 3727

Plants - Valerie Chalmers

Mammals - Marijcke Jongbloed
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The recorders are not necessarily scientific experts in their designated fields. In fact, most are not. However, they are interested and knowledgeable amateurs - please contact them if you have any interesting reports or queries.

The intention is that information will be channelled through to the *Gazelle* editor, so new information can be shared with all our readers.

—SHELL—
—REPORT—



Please send your shell reports
to Sandy Fowler

The past few months have been average in shelling terms, except for a rumour of late paper nautilus, as yet unconfirmed. This is an interesting development if indeed the egg cases are recent, as the season should be well over for this year. I haven't been on the beaches overmuch myself, being too busy preparing a talk on sea-shells for the Emirates Natural History Group in Abu Dhabi on May 1st. That seemed to go down well, judging by the number of questions asked at the end.

The shell workshop followed on May 3rd. Despite quite a number of interested members, only two turned up on the day. They had my sole attention for over two hours, and copies each of the *Rough Sheller's Guide to the Northern Emirates*. The feedback from people who have seen the Guide has been good, especially one family who visited two of my favourite beaches and were delighted with the number and quality of shells collected.

More Field Clips....

A good day in the field up Jebel Qa'wah

I'm always amazed at how much one can observe without really trying too hard, and what fun it is to come across things! Geoff Cosson and I walked up Jebel Qa'wah on 6 April and I came back with lots of notes and specimens. My chief aim was to look for flowering *Dianthus*, a delicate little fringed carnation. I'd seen them on this mountain during springtime two years ago and thought the rains this winter might bring them out again. They were abundant, in mauve, white and a combination of pink and white, but only at high

elevation. There appeared to be two varieties, one with a dark centre.

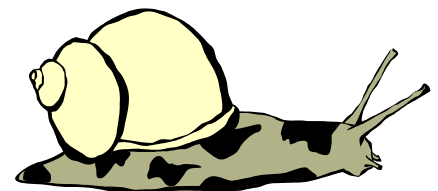
Gary Feulner had also requested a specimen of *Umbilicus*, if I found it in flower, because the identity of the local species is uncertain. This plant has a restricted habitat and in this instance was in full bloom, tucked away in the rocky ramparts at the summit. The leaf is round and flat with the stem in the centre, like a little umbrella.

On the climb up, we met some friends of mine who had over-nighted on Qa'wa and had just come down from the top, having seen a false horned viper at close quarters. We didn't make a similar encounter, but instead were given a fantastic aerial display by eight migrating European bee-eaters noisily playing the thermals. I also saw my first WERB (White-Edged Rock Brown) butterfly of the season - almost black, with pristine white frills.

My biggest surprise of the day was unintentionally flushing out a parent Chukar with seven very tiny chicks, just below the summit! Unfortunately, Mum clucked off in one direction and the little ones scampered as best they could the other way. I felt so guilty, but had no way of knowing that this precious family was almost under my feet. I just hope that they were successfully reunited.

Geoff was the 'official photographer' for the day, so we are hoping to have some good records of the spring plant life. An excellent day!

Report by Barbara Couldrey





special report ...

BEWARE ! ALIEN INVADERS!

Non-native or alien species can and do cause considerable damage to the host environment they find themselves in, usually at the expense of native wildlife. It was pointed out recently at the United Nations Biodiversity Convention in Montreal, Canada, that alien species are the second biggest threat to indigenous wild species after habitat loss. Alien species often out-compete native species for resources, introduce diseases or inter-breed resulting in a loss of species diversity and a general loss of biodiversity.

The UAE has its fair share of alien species and related problems. These range from donkeys, which are outdated transport, to unwanted pets such as Mollies (ornamental fish) released into the wild by "caring" owners. Feral donkeys compete directly with the declining Gazelle and Tahr for grazing, which is often marginal, in mountainous areas. Feral cats and dogs also account for a substantial loss of native birds, reptiles and small mammals but are arguably not as difficult to control as other problem species.

According to the UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) alien fish species threaten 20% of the world's freshwater fish with extinction. Locally, the predatory fish Tilapia (*Oreochromis* spp.) have been released as a source of food in local Wadi systems to the detriment of indigenous species such as the Arabian Killifish (*Aphanius dispar*), a predator of mosquito larvae.

Birds such as the Mynah, of which 3-4 species are breeding residents to the Emirates, Masked, Streaked & Golden-backed Weavers, Scaly-breasted Munia, Red Avadavit and Pin-tailed Whydah, to mention but a few, often out-compete native species for food, nesting material and nesting space. Recently the

beautiful and vocal Indian ring-necked parakeet has been cited as a source of influenza A viruses liable to infect chickens, mice and ultimately humans. Bird flu has caused recent human fatalities in Hong Kong (1999) and China (2000). It is sobering to recall that the deadly Spanish flu epidemic in 1918 resulted in the death of 40 million people world-wide. Other flu epidemics in 1957 and 1968 killed over a million people. Unwanted pet birds should not be released into the wild so as to avoid such disasters.

Fifteen species of introduced ants (20% of all ant species recorded in the UAE) have been recorded from the Emirates with three species posing potential problems of public health and nuisance while two species threaten the local entomo-fauna and biodiversity. In the southern USA an alien ant species was so successful that it almost entirely out-competed the local ant fauna and altered the local insect diversity. Controlling ants and other alien arthropods is also very difficult, time consuming and expensive, but worthwhile.

Exotic trees such as Eucalyptus (Blue-gum spp.) generally use more water than indigenous species while exotic *Prosopis* spp. have the potential of invading marginal areas and ousting local flora, which is evident (in its initial phase) in the RAK and Fujairah coastal areas.

Often, many countries do not realize the threats posed by alien species or that they can be eradicated. Feral cats and rats (both of which prey heavily on birds) are two species that have been successfully eradicated from islands off South Africa and New Zealand.

Authorities should implement better monitoring, quarantine and overall environmental control to prevent exotic species from becoming a problem. "Do-gooders" should also realise that releasing those unwanted pets may cause

lasting damage in an unfamiliar environment. Pet shop owners and other importers of exotic wildlife, as well as illegal trafficking in live and other animal products, should be shut down and strictly controlled by the relevant authorities so as to avoid the type of publicity such as was recently published in *New Scientist* (10 March 2001). "Indian ivory joins African ivory before it goes to Japan or China. The biggest smuggling route out of India is through the UAE, and African ivory always comes that way".

Report by Peter Cunningham
(plc@emirates.net.ae)

Happy Anniversary, Tribulus!

Tribulus, the twice-yearly journal of the ENHG in Abu Dhabi, celebrates its 10th anniversary with issue no. 10.2 (Autumn/Winter 2000). *Tribulus*, which became a refereed publication in 1998, is published with the support of the ENHG's corporate members and under the patronage of H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al-Nahyan, the UAE Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research. *Tribulus* remains the only journal of its type that deals specifically with the UAE and represents a happy combination of a forum suitable for the publication of original scientific research yet accessible to the interested, but not necessarily specialist, public. *Tribulus* has an especially important national role to play, because thus far no government agencies or academic institutions have launched their own journal or other such forum where original papers can be published.

Tribulus 10.2, available at DNHG meetings, features longer articles on the abundant and diverse grasshopper fauna of the UAE and on the implications of recently discovered non-mangrove populations of the so-called mangrove mud creeper, *Terebralia palustris*, one of the most common shells



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found at UAE archeological sites. Also reported are summertime behavior of the spiny-tailed lizard (*dhub*), arboreal hunting by the Sand Snake, a review of current archeological projects in the UAE, and rare sightings including a Golden Eagle nest in Liwa and live killer whales off Mubarraz Island. *Tribulus* 10.2 also contains an index to volumes 6-10.

It is a pleasure to congratulate *Tribulus* and its Editorial Board, and to acknowledge and thank the current corporate members of the ENHG: ABN Amro Bank, Abu Dhabi Company for Onshore Oil Operations (ADCO), Al Fahim Group, Al Nasser Holdings, Al Sayegh Richards Butler, Banque Nationale de Paris, Bin Hamoodah, The British council, British Petroleum, HSBC, Mobil Abu Dhabi, Mohammed Bin Masood & Sons, National Bank of Abu Dhabi,

Ready Mix Abu Dhabi Ltd., and Union National Bank.

We are pleased to tell members that the latest *Tribulus* (11.1) has arrived and is now available from our librarians. It is devoted to archeology.

Also Available....

Issue no. 17 of *Phoenix* (December 2000) is now available, published by the Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Arabia (ABBA) project and edited by Michael C. Jennings. *Phoenix* contains numerous short articles about Arabian avifauna – observations, range expansions, behavior – as well as reviews of other new publications on Arabian wildlife generally. Among the many items in no. 17 are reports on the first breeding

breeding by the Great Crested Grebe (in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia), the world's first known breeding site for Jouanin's petrel (on seaside cliffs in Socotra), and a history of purple sunbird courtship and nesting in an Al-Ain backyard.

A regular highlight of *Phoenix* are Mike Jennings' accounts of his periodic ABBA surveys, usually in out of the way corners of Arabia. The latest survey (no. 26) was in the recently defined border area of Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman. These reports are always entertaining and full of useful geographic information, most of it not otherwise easy to come by. Mike also seems always to manage to make an adventure of it, even in the modern era.



GAZELLE

Dubai Natural History Group Programme

Lecture at Jumeirah English Speaking School, Gymnasium 7.30pm for 8.00pm

June 3	Members' Night	Minority Tribes of North East Burma	- Helen Emery
		Introduction to the Mayas of Gautemala	- John Fox
		Using wild plants in your garden	
		how to make the best use of water	
		in gardening	- Elizabeth Craig-Maley
		Birding in the UAE	- David Snelling

Coming events

June 14 Insect workshop 7.30pm at Marijcke Jongbloed's residence

June 21 End of Season Get-Together, Oasis Room, Dubai Country Club, 7.30pm for 8.00pm
See flyer for details and book soon

September 16 From Equator to Antarctica – Hanne and Jens Eriksen
(subject to confirmation)

Field Trips (DNHG members only, please).

May 18 Arabia's Wildlife Centre

May 24/25 Saiq Plateau with Peter van Amsterdam

Title Surname

PO Box

City

UAE
