

July 2013



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Don't forget...Guided Hikes: Are availableBotanical Garden: Check out the view from the Lookout Garden Open from sunrise to sunset. Great for picnics.Find us on Facebook: Keep up to date with all the latest happenings—Like our 'Stenapa St. Eustatius' and Stenapa Youth pages!

STENAPA Update

Summer Club 2013 a big success

Over 30 children were able to participate in this year's summer club run by STENAPA. This year in a change to the norm, parents were able to sign up their children for each week's activities separately which meant that more kids got the opportunity to participate overall.



STENAPA Director Steve Piontek receiving donation check from Nustar Terminals NV

Children enjoyed varied activities like hiking in the Quill and northern hills, gardening at the Botanical Gardens, visiting Joshua's Congo Preserve and Hazel's vegetable project and helping to feed Greenblend's resident donkeys.



They also had snorkel sessions and lessons about marine life in the afternoons. Those who were more experienced snorkelers were able to use the STENAPA marine park patrol boat to visit two of the island's off shore snorkel sites, Twelve Guns and Jenkins Bay where they saw sting rays and other exciting sea creatures.

STENAPA expresses their appreciation for all those who took part and everyone who made it possible to run the club again this year, Nu-Star for their generous donation and Heleen Visser and Fraukje Vonk for their organization and management of the program.



Also thanks goes to the parent helpers as well as Joshua Spanner, Mr Melville Hazel and his staff at Hazel's vegetable project and Laurens and Lois Duiverman for opening their businesses and establishments and giving the children the opportunity to see their work.

**REMINDER**

**Lionfish are
venomous and
should only be
removed by Marine
Park Staff.**

**If you have any
questions or a
Lionfish sighting
please call us on
318 2884**

Staff Matters

Broadreach assist at the Garden... again!

Each year during the summer Stacia is invaded every few weeks by boat loads of teenagers. This would normally be enough to make you run for the hills but these kids are different. They are from Broadreach and they come to Stacia and tour neighbouring islands doing good deeds wherever they go.



So far this year they have helped us build one of the replica slave huts at the museum, diligently gathering roofing materials and clambering around on the wooden frame securing them in place as well as helping out at the Botanical Garden with the dreaded Corallita control! They removed a massive pile of the invasive plant from the perimeter fence allowing essential maintenance and repair work to be carried out and saving many man hours for staff and volunteers.

We always look forward to their visits and as ever we are deeply grateful and appreciative of their efforts. **It's so encouraging to see** kids of this age being eager and enthusiastic about community work and helping the environment. When it would be so easy for them to spend their summer breaks hanging around the mall or playing computer games, these kids take some time out to help worthwhile causes who desperately need it and that is pretty special.

Redbilled Tropicbird Monitoring update

For the past five months STENAPA has been conducting a breeding success and predation study on Red-billed Tropicbirds (*Phaethon aethereus*). National Park Ranger Hannah Madden and NP intern Andrew Ellis have visited over 100 nests across the island every week in order to collect data that will help assess the overall status of this seabird. The results of this project will be announced in July, however the preliminary results show that predation levels are relatively low compared with Saba, which suffered losses of 100% of eggs/chicks in one nesting site during a similar survey in 2011/2012. This is important for the survival of Red-billed Tropicbirds since it is estimated that at least 20% of the worldwide population of these birds nest on Saba and St Eustatius.

It would not have been possible for STENAPA to conduct this survey without the cooperation of NuStar, who allowed the team access to two of the main nesting sites on Pilot Hill and Pilot Ridge. In addition to this, NuStar also funded the purchase of

ten Reconyx cameras and a laptop for data storage. The cameras are installed outside various nests in order to capture photos of potential predators. Some images of cats and rats have been captured, however their numbers are relatively low. NuStar has also sponsored Madden's travel to attend a regional bird workshop in Grenada at the end of July, where she may present the results of this project.

STENAPA is extremely grateful to NuStar for their generous support of this project and wishes to extend its sincere thanks to the company. Without their cooperation it would not have been possible to conduct such a thorough survey of the sites. A public presentation will be held early July to inform interested parties of the results of this project.



Photo: NuStar employees handing over a check for \$1,000 to NP Ranger Hannah Madden to attend a workshop in Grenada. Madden is holding the laptop purchased by STENAPA thanks to a financial donation by NuStar. Intern Andrew Ellis is holding two of the ten Reconyx field cameras also purchased from the donation.

Staff Matters

Inter - Island Cooperation

Staff from St. Kitts Department of Marine Resources (DMR) and St. Eustatius National Parks (STENAPA) teamed up last week to conduct a preliminary seabird assessment of the nesting seabirds of St. Kitts. Stenapa's National Park Ranger Hannah Madden was invited by Randel Thompson of St. Kitts DMR to assist with hosting the survey. Madden and Thompson met in June 2012 when they attended a seabird capacity building workshop in San Salvador, the Bahamas, hosted by the Society of Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB).

As a result of this workshop the two participants applied for, and received, a small grant to conduct seabird projects on their islands. Madden travelled to St. Kitts between 13 and 16 June, where she met with a team of dedicated volunteers and presented information about the seabirds they were likely to encounter. The workshop also consisted of a quiz on seabirds of the Caribbean and a dummy census count using Skittles scattered within a grid. Participants had to count the number of Skittles in order to estimate the total number of 'birds'. This gave them an idea of how difficult and variable such counts can be.

On the second day the team met early and travelled to Nag's Head by boat, where they counted a number of Magnificent Frigatebirds and other seabirds nesting on the steep cliff face. They then continued to Booby Island with the aim of accessing the island to conduct a reconnaissance survey, however strong winds and a high surf prevented this. From sea they were able to identify nine

different species of seabird and attempted to make a rough estimate of numbers. However, it will be necessary to return to the area under more favorable weather conditions in order to make a better assessment. Team leaders Thompson/Madden were happy with the overall success of the workshop and look forward to collaborating again in the future.

Funding for this project was provided through SCSCB from the US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation under a special program funded by BP from the sale of recovered oil from the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill in 2010, which affected numerous species of seabirds. Global seabird populations are declining at a faster rate than any other group of birds. In the Caribbean region, seabird populations are a mere remnant of their historic numbers and are subject to continued losses from development, introduced invasive predators, harvest, pollution, and other threats. It is encouraging that STENAPA and the St Kitts DMR are working cooperatively to safeguard the populations that we have.

(Photo below: participants of the workshop after a rough ride to Booby Island, St. Kitts)

Leatherback Sea Turtle Hatchlings

During the month of July STENAPA staff have observed two Leatherback Sea Turtle nests hatching.



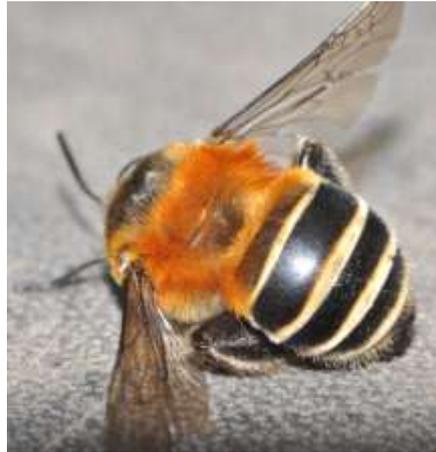
Native Bees of Statia

In many Neotropical regions the estimate of bee richness is very likely low due to a lack of sampling. Although the Caribbean is considered to be a 'hotspot' for biodiversity, only a few bee species have been recorded for many of the Lesser Antillean islands. Only two native bee species were previously listed for St. Eustatius (not including honey bees, which were introduced to the region by Europeans in 1616 via Bermuda), namely the carpenter bee (*Xylocopa mordax*) and the 'Statia bee' (*Anthophora eustatiensis*). Therefore, to increase knowledge of Caribbean bees, Dr. Stephen Bush of Coastal Carolina University and Stenapa's National Park Ranger Hannah Madden, compiled a preliminary checklist of bees during a six-month study of the native pollinators of the island's flora in 2012. This checklist was recently published in *Insecta Mundi*, a journal dedicated to insects.

Thanks to this project, a total of eight native bee species are now known to exist on St. Eustatius. The team was particularly interested in capturing a specimen of the Statia bee, *Anthophora eustatiensis*, which as the name suggests has a link to the island. In fact, it is endemic to Statia and St. Kitts and is found nowhere else in the world. This bee is described as having ocrea-coloured hairs, and despite catching many other bee species this one proved elusive. Bush and Madden spent the entire six months searching for the endemic bee, and on the very last day of fieldwork before Bush left the island they finally caught a specimen on the bay road, which they sent to an expert for confirmation.

Thanks to Dr. Bush's pollination project we now know a lot more about the native pollinators of the island's plants. Bush's project is ongoing and he will return to Statia towards the end of this year to continue collecting data. His main paper on the pollination systems of the island will be published in the future. This is the first Caribbean island on which such a study has taken place, although comparative studies have been conducted on Pacific islands.

Anyone wishing to download the checklist of Statia's native bees can go to: <http://centerforsystematicentomology.org/insectamundi/0298BushandMadden.pdf>



Statia bee, *Anthophora eustatiensis*



Centris decolorata



Centris lanipes



Centris smithii



Megachile sp.



Mesoplia aff. *Rufipes*



Lasioglossum sp.



Female (above) and rarely seen male (below) carpenter bee, *Xylocopa mordax*



Filming Statia's Natural History

Mauricio Handler has been photographing and filming natural history around the world for the last 30 years. For many years he was part of the premier underwater photography team at National Geographic Magazine. He is no stranger to the Caribbean, having lived in Tortola for 20 years, and has visited Statia a few times. Recently, Mauricio pitched an idea to the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision (Nederlands Instituut voor Beeld en Geluid) to document the natural history, both on land and underwater, of all six Dutch Caribbean islands, who agreed, and over the coming months he will complete filming. He will complete filming by the end of July. Mauricio shoots using a RED DSMC (Digital Still and Motion Capture) cinema camera which films in 4K or four times high definition quality. The camera and tripod weigh around 50 pounds and he has hiked with it on his shoulder up the volcanoes and across the cliffs of Saba, Statia and St. Maarten. The underwater housing adds to the camera's weight on land but thankfully has negative buoyancy underwater.

Stenapa and the St. Eustatius Tourism Development Foundation hosted Mauricio during his visit to Statia between 8 and 16 June, where he spent four days filming the island's terrestrial species and landscape, and three days underwater. He captured stunning images, from a tiny Johnstone's whistling frog in the Quill crater to pike blennies in the Marine Park. Our volunteers were able to accompany and assist him in the field, either carrying bags or holding lights, and they got to see how a professional operates at close range. In an agreement with Beeld en Geluid, Mauricio's final selected footage will be made available pro bono to the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance for promotion and awareness-raising use on all the Dutch Caribbean parks. We look forward to seeing the final product in 2014 and hope to welcome Mauricio back to the islands in the future.



A school of Caribbean reef squid



Mauricio on Gilboa Hill filming a time-lapse sequence of clouds passing over the Quill



Mauricio and Stenapa Director Steve Piontek about to shoot some underwater scenes



Volunteers Fiona and Mike accompanied Mauricio to film red-billed tropicbirds along the rocky coast of Pilot Hill.



In the Quill, Mauricio had to maneuver his camera into a mappoo tree in order to film this Brassavola orchid



The Charles Brown wreck, a great place to see barracudas and reef sharks



Above) Mauricio and his camera on Gilboa Hill

(Below) Filming giant Silk Cotton and Ficus trees in the crater



St Eustatius National Parks



Gallows Bay z/n
Lower Town
St Eustatius,
Dutch Caribbean

Phone: +599 318 2884
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STENAPA is an environmental not-for-profit foundation on St Eustatius and was established in 1988. The purpose of the Foundation is the acquisition, preservation, protection and administration of parcels of land/water on Sint Eustatius, worthy of preservation, due to: a. its scenic beauty and/or presence of flora and fauna important in scientific and cultural respect or valuable from a geological or historical point of view; b. its purpose to serve for the well being, the education, and the recreation of the Sint Eustatius population as well as that of visitors, all this with due observance of the primary requirement of preservation.

STENAPA is legally mandated by the Island Council to manage the St Eustatius National Marine Park, The Quill / Boven National Park and the Miriam Schmidt Botanical Gardens .

President: Irving Brown
Vice President:
Treasurer: Ruth Pandt
Secretary: Linda Berkel

www.statiapark.org

Friends of STENAPA

STENAPA would like to thank the following businesses for supporting us. Their donations make it possible for us to continue our mandate of managing the protected areas of Saint Eustatius. Each of the following has made a contribution to the Friends of STENAPA. We would like to encourage all of you who receive this newsletter to support these businesses.

Individuals who join Friends of STENAPA will receive the following discounts from our supporting businesses.

Franky's Bar and Restaurant: 1 regular drink by lunch or dinner

Golden Era Hotel, Bar, Restaurant and Conference Centre:
10 % off dinner bill higher than \$60,-

Yummy Tummy Bar and Restaurant: 10 % off dinner bill

Fay Bar & Restaurant: 1 beer or soda with dinner more than \$ 10,-

I.F. Rivers Enterprises N.V.: 10 % discount on merchandise

Blue Bead Restaurant
Golden Era Hotel, Bar, Restaurant & Conference facility

The Old Gin House

Yummy Tummy Bar & Restaurant

Chamber of Commerce & Industry St. Eustatius & Saba.

Super Burger ice cream and shakes

Fay Bar & Restaurant (a.k.a. Sonny's place)

I.F. Rivers Enterprises N.V.

Original Fruit Tree bar & restaurant

Scubaqua Dive Centre

Coolcorner:

Peso's Supermarket

Golden Rock Mini Market

Brown's car rental & garage

Dutch Plumbing Services

Golden Rock Dive Center

Hai Zhu N.V. Julie Supermarket

Modentes Tandtechnisch laboratorium

All Run supermarket.

Franky's Bar en Restaurant

Duggins Shoppingcentre

Lyn's dream Bakery:

4piek Travel Agency.

Opa's snack

Statiahousingandservices
(harbervieuwapp)

University of St. Eustatius School of Medicine

