

March 2009

▶ **Newsletter 1/2009**

STENAPA Update

New STENAPA Marine Park Manager



Outgoing Marine Park Manager Lee Munson (l) and Tadzio Bervoets who started his orientation as Marine Park Manager on March 29th.

The National Parks Foundation is pleased to welcome Mr. Tadzio Bervoets as the New Marine Park Manager for St. Eustatius. He will assume the duties of Lee Munson who is returning to the UK after a year of working on St. Eustatius. Tadzio is a native St. Maartener who specialized in NGO's at the

University of Florida. After volunteering for the Nature Foundation as a ranger, he became one of the original founders of Ocean Care on St. Maarten, an organization concerned with reef health and marine conservation. He was a site coordinator for

Reef Check and is a certified Reef Check instructor.

After becoming so involved in conservation he obtained his education in Marine conservation in Amsterdam where he graduated in 2008. After completing his thesis on coral reef valuation on Bermuda, Tadzio stayed on to give Reef Check training and to follow a lion fish seminar.

Then it was back to Holland from where he left to go to Tanzania to take part in a project to train child soldiers to become Marine Park rangers. While there he was contracted to do a study on the Crown of Thorns Starfish and Sea urchin's impact on the reef. Going back to Belgium where he was busy with a specialty re-breather dive course he saw the ad for a MP manager in the on-line daily Herald and the rest is history.

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Don't forget....

- Tune in to 91.5 for the "Nature on Statia" radio program on the 1st Thursday of every month.
- Volunteers are always welcome to help out at the Botanical Gardens.



Early Start for Turtle Season

The first leatherback female of the season nested on Zeelandia beach in the early hours of 17th of March. Nightly beach patrols, which were due to begin as soon as the first turtle nested, have now started. The National Parks Foundation is happy to have the help of Mr. Micah Herriot, who will be working as the turtle program intern for this year. Mr. Herriot who hails from Canada will be doing most of the field work and will be assist-

ing Ms. Jessica Berkel who has taken over the role of Turtle Program coordinator.

The program coordinator would like to remind the general public that it is a violation of the law to, in any way, disturb nesting females and their nesting beaches. Loud noises, bright lights, bonfires and driving on the beach are strongly discouraged and the public is kindly asked for their coopera-

tion. Sand mining remains one of the largest threats to the successful hatching of the nests.

STENAPA's monthly radio program "Nature on Statia" which will air on Thursday, April 2nd at 10:30am (and again at 2:30pm) will focus on the turtle program and provide listeners with more information. Call the office for more information on how you can assist.

Visiting SHAPE Photographers



Photographers being photographed.

STENAPA was very happy to welcome a group of five professional nature photographers at the beginning of March. These photographers are among the best in their fields and are working with DCNA to take land based photos of all the Dutch Caribbean islands. The group's spokesman, Mr. Henkjan Kievit explained that they were here to take pictures in the Miriam Schmidt Botanical Garden, The Quill/Boven National Park, White-wall and other scenic areas. Of the thou-

sands of pictures taken, DCNA will be able to choose 150 from each photographer for its use in promotion of the nature of the 6 islands. Each photographer had their own specialty which included landscapes, insects, flora, birds and animals.

Milos Zumrik, who specialized in photos of animals and birds was tragically lost in a swimming accident on Thursday, March 5th. Although it affected the group deeply, they all agreed that Mr. Zumrik would have wanted them to carry on the work

On the last day of their stay, the group treated STENAPA staff members and interns to a slide show presentation of some of the photos that they had taken.

A compilation of the photos will be available on their website in the next few months. Interested persons can visit the SHAPE website www.shapeofnature.net to view the tribute that has been posted in honor of their lost friend and to get an idea of the amazing array of photos that they have taken over time.

Sea bird Survey



A team from Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC) visited Statia in the last week of February to conduct a sea bird survey. With the help of STENAPA staff they were able to visit the many sea bird nesting sites around the island by land and by sea.

One result from preliminary counts is that it is clear that Statia has far more Tropic birds than previously estimated.

The group sailed from Europe doing surveys on most of the islands along the way. The completed sea bird atlas will be made available on line. It is estimated the entire study will take two years to complete.

Sediment Traps in Marine Park

In the middle of March, Chantale Bégin, based out of the Simon Fraser University in Canada, visited the Statia National Marine Park to conduct some work as part of her PHD, which is the correlation between sediment and coral diversity and abundance.

Chantale is primarily looking at the situation in the Windward islands from BVI right down through the islands and has been working with the various Marine Parks to obtain permission to place her sediment traps.

With the help of the Marine Park manager Lee Munson, Marine Park ranger Walter Blair (Gadget) and Marine Park intern Caroline Kull, Chantale installed sediment traps at 4 dive sites in the Marine Park. The locations are, after much discussion, in areas where the best and varied readings could be obtained. The traps have been positioned near the Statia Oil Terminal, just outside the harbour and in the Southern reserve. One of the traps in the Southern Reserve has

been placed at the Mushroom Garden dive site, which is reasonably close to shore and where it will be able to measure the amount of runoff from the Quill.

The installation of the sediment traps was done by drilling a small hole into dead coral or rock and hammering the stands in. The drill was powered by a dive tank and though initially there were some hiccups, all traps were installed in 2 days. Chantale's work, fortunately, blends nicely with Caroline's project which is a health assessment of Statia's reefs. The information gleaned from the sediment traps can be integrated into Caroline's reporting on the reef health.

How often the traps will be checked and the contents measured still has to be worked out with Chantale, but elsewhere in the Caribbean her traps are being checked every 3-6 months. Since we at Stenapa have regular access to the traps during research dives and line cleaning, on Statia we will probably be able to check them every 2 weeks or so.



Lee Munson drilling to place a trap



Sediment traps at Mushroom Garden dive site

Cargo Tanker Fined for Illegally Anchoring in Marine Park



Stenapa representatives on board the cargo tanker Heinrich Oldendorff along with the shipping agent's representative awaiting a meeting with the Captain.

The St. Eustatius National Parks Office (STENAPA) this month issued a summons to the cargo vessel Heinrich Oldendorff for anchoring outside of the permitted anchorage zone within the Marine Park. Using the new AIS Vessel Monitoring System, which tracks the movement of vessels in the waters around St. Eustatius, STENAPA was able to determine that the vessel anchored south of the allowed anchorage area, causing possible damage to areas of coral reef.

After consulting with the Public Prosecutor, the Harbor Office, Statia Terminals, and the Seven Seas shipping agency, it was decided that representatives from STENAPA would board the vessel and hand deliver a summons to the captain.

A monitoring dive was also carried out in order to gauge the extent of the damage to the reef caused by the vessel's anchor. After researching the area it was determined that, although significant damage from anchor drag had occurred, it was difficult to gauge the extent of the damage to the area due to lack of reef value data. In the coming months STENAPA plans to conduct a Reef Valuation Study in order to determine the monetary value of the island's coral reefs and the level of appropriate damages that would have to be paid if anchor damage to coral within the Marine Park does occur.

Although the area is mostly rubble caused by earlier anchor damage, there is some sea life present. Juvenile fish, moray eels, sea anemones, sting rays and over a hundred conch were spotted on the assessment dive.

The Public Prosecutor did decide that the Heinrich Oldendorff would have to pay a fine for the illegal anchoring and would be detained until it was able to do so. The vessel subsequently paid the fine and was allowed to leave.

This is the second such incident in recent months. In November last year, the Tanker Centennial Jewel anchored outside of the permitted anchorage zone within the Marine Park, causing significant damage to an area of pristine coral reef. A summons and a fine were also issued to that vessel. The recent incidents have shown that there is a need to ensure that proper communication is given to tankers before anchoring, thus avoiding instances where vessels anchor within the Marine Park and coral reefs are damaged. The preservation of St. Eustatius' coral reefs is important to the local community, providing a source of income from dive tourism and fishery to the community. The damaging of the island's coral reefs could have long term negative effects on the economy of St. Eustatius.

President Does His Part in Clean Up



STENAPA President Mr. Irving Brown and daughter pictured with collected bottles.

As just another example of how every little bit helps, STENAPA president Irving Brown and family have started collecting bottles from the environment around town. The family has two drums outside their gate and while driving if they see bottles on the side of the road they would put them in the back of the pick-up, take them home and deposit them in the drums. When the drums are full, Mr. Lennard Brown collects the bottles for recycling. On Saturdays Irving Brown and his family spend about two hours picking up bottles at different sites in town. So far they have filled 5 drums. This is about 1700 bottles.



In Mr. Brown's opinion, "If more people would pick-up bottles on the side of the road it will make a big difference in the environment. Also government need to find a way to enforce the littering laws."

The National Parks Foundation is encouraging everyone who has the capacity to collect bottles to join in this effort. Contact Lennard Brown on 318 1107 to arrange collection..

Pass by the Visitor Center at Gallows Bay any weekday from 7:00am - 5:00pm

Open during the lunchtime !!

St Eustatius: National and Marine Parks and Botanical Gardens



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St. Eustatius, Netherlands Antilles

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info@statiapark.org



“Friends of STENAPA”

The Friends of STENAPA program, launched last December, allows nature lovers in the general public to contribute to nature conservation on the island.

A number of local businesses now offer discounts to persons presenting their Friends of STENAPA membership card.

Blue Bead	5%	All food and drinks
Brown's Garage	10%	All labor
Dive Statia	2nd hour free	kayak rental
Five Pearls shop	10%	All purchases
I.F. Rivers	5-10%	General merchandise
Largo Heights	10%	Food only
Pandt Steel	10%	Gates/welding repair
Scubaqua	10%	Dive fees (rack rates)
Sonny's	10%	Food (no take-out)
SuperBurger	10%	Hot lunch
Intermezzo	10% off	Espresso Cocktails

Persons wishing to become a member or purchase a gift membership can obtain more detailed information from the National Parks Visitor Center or online on our website (www.statiapark.org).

STENAPA is an environmental non-profit foundation on St Eustatius and was established in 1988. The objectives of STENAPA are to upkeep the natural environment, to preserve and protect endangered or endemic species (flora and fauna) and to educate the community about the importance of the protection of the natural environment.

Areas of responsibility include management of the marine park, the national parks and the Miriam C. Schmidt Botanical Gardens. STENAPA is legally delegated by the Island Council to manage these protected areas.

President: Irving Brown
Vice President: Ronnie Courtar
Treasurer: Ruth Pandt
Secretary: Ingrid Walther

Next edition of STENAPA Update available soon with articles on:

- 2009 Summer Club Activities
- Fisheries Improvement Workshop
- Turtle Program Update
- Various other activities

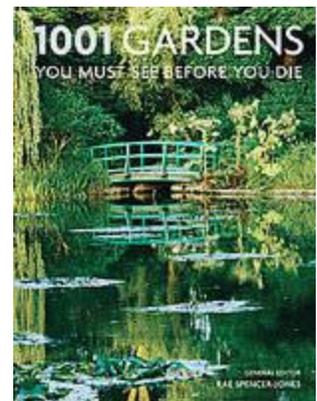
Botanical Garden Listed as Place to See Before You Die

All the work done to carve the Miriam Schmidt Botanical Garden out of the wilderness that it once was has paid off once again with a mention in the publication “1001 Gardens You Must See Before You Die” by Rae Spencer-Jones.

The publication “1001 Gardens..” is a stunning collection of magnificent gardens from around the world contained in 960 pages. A team of 70 photographers, writers and horticulturalists spread out across the globe to document the most amazing gardens in the world. Every garden in the book is given a short description, a comprehensive history, design and climate information. A short description and history is given of Statia in our case as well.

The National Parks Foundation is very proud to receive this recognition of all the hard work of staff, volunteers and interns over the years. The general public is always welcome to visit the Botanical Garden to enjoy the quiet and the beauty of the surroundings.

This year also marks the 10th Anniversary of the Miriam Schmidt Botanical Garden. There will more publicity on that and a week of celebration later on in the year. In the meantime, persons wanting to purchase the book to enjoy the many gardens it contains can do so by using the ISBN number below.



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