

September 2007

▶ **Newsletter 3/2007**

STENAPA Update

10th Anniversary of St. Eustatius Marine Park

This year marks the 10th Anniversary of the active management of the St. Eustatius Marine Park.



Legally established in late 1996, the Marine Park encompasses the entire coast extending from shore to a depth of 30 meters.

It is 10 years since the Marine Park first opened its office and started operations to install the first moorings for dive sites and yachts. The initial activities were funded by a start up grant from World Wildlife Fund Netherlands. Since then, the Marine Park has gone from strength to strength in its efforts to protect the 27.5km² of coral reef and sea grass beds around St. Eustatius.



These efforts include installation and maintenance of moorings to prevent yachts and dive boats dropping anchor on the reefs, creation and monitoring of several artificial reefs designed to increase fish population and enhance diving opportunities, the monitoring of two reserves where anchoring and fishing is prohibited, cleaning of the accessible beaches and most importantly working in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure that the Park remains in its present unspoiled condition.

To celebrate this important event, the Marine Park, supported by the St. Eustatius Tourism Development Foundation and all local dive centres, is planning a series of events, starting on Monday 3rd December 2007.

Activities will include an underwater photography course and contest, scavenger hunt for divers, evening talks, Statia Park Splash for children, snorkeling fun competition and a party to present prizes and celebrate the anniversary in style.

The St. Eustatius National Parks Foundation is inviting the general public to

join us in celebrating this anniversary to mark 10 years of protection of pristine coral reefs and diverse fish populations.



The tentative schedule of events in December follows:

Monday 3rd: The official opening of the Visitor Centre including judging of the school competition entries.

Tuesday 4th: The Charles Brown Scavenger hunt Dive Centre #1 followed by an evening seminar.

Wednesday 5th: The Charles Brown Scavenger hunt Dive Centre #2 followed by Statia Park Splash for kids (boat trips, games and fun fair) and ending with an evening seminar.

Thursday 6th: The Charles Brown scavenger hunt Dive centre #3 followed by Snorkel fun for kids and ending with an evening seminar.

Friday 7th: A celebration party with live music, prize giving and a buffet which will be held at the Gin House Patio.

Check www.statiapark.org for the latest information



Arrow Crab

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Don't forget....

- You can join us for our regular beach cleanups. Watch for the flyers that will be posted around town or call the office.
- It's turtle nesting season, please refrain from shining bright lights and walking or driving on the beaches at night.



STENAPA Summer Club 2007 Was Huge Success



Learning about nature on the trails with rangers, interns and volunteers.



The children looked forward to the snorkel trips that were sometimes at a Snorkel Site which meant a fun boat ride was in the bargain.



Playing an interactive game to test the children's knowledge of sea turtles.



Learning about local plants in the Botanical Garden.



And of course after the program is complete and certificates given out, there's always time for a little party.

Children's Programmes To Start This Month

Interested parents should keep in mind that all National Parks children's programmes will be starting up in this month of September. This is little more than a week away so parents are reminded to come in and sign up their child(ren).

The three programmes that are due to start are Snorkel Club, Junior Rangers and the all new Junior Rangers II.

Snorkel Club

Children interested in this programme must be at least eight years old and able to complete a swim test. This is basically a short swim of 50 metres and is usually from the little beach at the harbour to the small Ro-Ro jetty. The two hour sessions are one afternoon a week and last three months. Cost for this programme is FIs 50,- and includes a free t-shirt.

Junior Rangers

This programme is geared towards older children and those that have successfully completed Snorkel Club. Participants must be 10 years or older. The 2^{1/2} hour

last nine months. Cost for this program is FIs 150,- and includes a free t-shirt, baseball cap and snorkel kit. Children taking part in this programme will learn about what STENAPA does in all three areas of the Parks. This means they will be in the Quill National Park, the Marine Park and the Botanical Garden on a rotating basis. They will also learn about sea turtles and animal welfare.

Junior Ranger II

This is a new programme that will be introduced this year. This programme is geared towards those children that have completed the first Junior Ranger club.

During these sessions children will gain a deeper insight into the different aspects of nature and the environment.

The course material will cover subjects such as energy, plant growth, marine life, biodiversity, climates, pollution, the water cycle, sea turtles, pollution, recycling, erosion, endangered species, volcanoes, ecosystems, food chains and animal welfare.

Most of the information taught during classes will be backed up by audio visual materials and practical outdoor activities. Children completing this club will be versed in a wide range of conservation issues and hopefully go on to further their education in a field of conservation.

Upon completion of the Junior Ranger II program, the students that perform best and show the most interest in environmental matters will win a free PADI dive certification training sponsored by Dive Statia and Scubaqua. It is hoped that this will further stimulate students' interest in nature and offer them the possibility of discovering many of the beautiful sights inhabiting Statia's tropical waters.

All children's clubs will begin the week commencing September 17th. National Park Ranger Hannah Leslie has visited all schools to inform them beforehand and has left behind signup forms for interested children to take home.

Activities on the National Park Trail Network

The Quill National Park offers hikers a network of trails ranging from 'easy' (Bird Trail/Botanical Garden trail) to 'difficult' (Mazinga, crater). The purpose of these trails is to provide hikers with a path they can follow without getting lost, however they also serve to prevent erosion or the destruction of vegetation.

It is the job of National Park Ranger Hannah Leslie to keep these trails maintained. She does this three mornings a week with the help of a National Park intern (currently Emily Gregus from Canada) and Stenapa volunteers. Ranger Nadio Spanner also assists. Recent improvements have been carried out to the crater trail and the Around the Mountain trail. Large dead tree trunks that had fallen and blocked the trail in the crater have been moved for easier access, and stones have been placed along the sides of the trail to guide hikers in the right direction. The crater trail is difficult to maintain given the steepness of the slope and the risk of rock falls due to erosion.

The Around the Mountain trail, a four-hour hike around the circumference of the Quill, has recently been completely overhauled. Sections of this trail, especially in the White Wall area, were severely eroded and narrow in parts. These sections have been widened where possible to reduce possible danger, however we still advise hikers to take care. The trail takes hikers through different vegetation zones and offers visions of orchids, bromeliads, gum trees, blackberry trees, as well as spectacular views.

The Courtar Mountain trail (pictured in yellow below) has been completely renovated — In fact it has been relocated! The new trail is located very close to the previous trail, which was discovered to be on private land. With the help of Stenapa and Broadreach volunteers, the new trail was completed in July 2007. The trail is relatively short and leads hikers to the Around the Mountain (N) trail. It cuts through thorny vegetation and silk cotton trees, and a number of iguanas have been spotted there.

After many months of closure due to a beehive at the entrance of the Panorama Point trail, Stenapa is pleased to announce the trail is open again! The beehive was removed in March 2007 by Rangers Hannah Leslie and Nadio Spanner. Unfortunately bees are a problem on many of the trails and there are a number of nests which need to be eradicated for the safety of hikers. A large nest was recently removed from near the bottom of the Quill trail. The hive was located just a few meters from the trail.

The main Quill trail is up for improvement next, with plans to remove rotten logs along the side of the trail and replace them with stones found on the slopes. Further erosion and drainage control will also be incorporated. Stenapa wishes to thank all the interns and volunteers who have worked on trails, without whom none of this would be possible.

Happy hiking!!

New Marine Park Management Plan

The New Marine Park Management plan is now available for review at the National Parks Visitor Center at Gallows Bay or online

http://www.cozm.co.uk/eux_management_planning_documents.htm

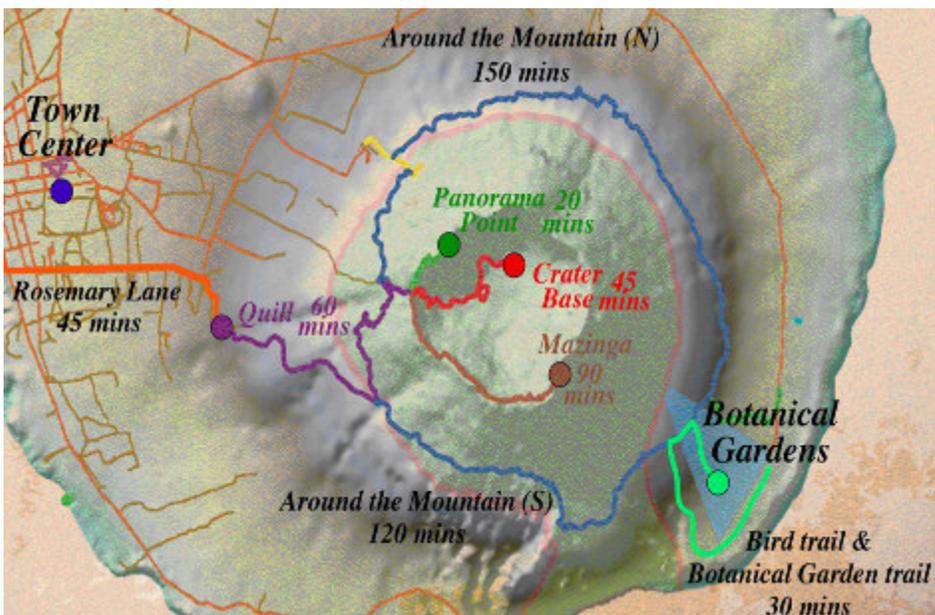
This plan encompasses the next five years and includes an outline of the goals that the board and management would like to see achieved in the Marine Park in that time span.

A great deal of work went into the creation of this management plan and it will serve as an important reference tool to gauge the progress of our work in the Marine Park in the coming years.

The National Parks Foundation expresses a heartfelt thank you to all the stakeholders who came to meetings, filled out survey forms and otherwise voiced their opinions so that their views and visions for the Marine Park could be included in the management plan.

Anyone who wishes to have a look at the plan can check on line or come into the Visitor center or call and request an electronic copy which will be e-mailed to you.

Work will begin shortly on the new Quill National Park management plan and the National Parks Foundation is looking forward to working with all stakeholders to create this very important document.



Plant Sale



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

Prices from Fls 5,- to Fls 50,-
Open during the lunchtime !!

St Eustatius: National and Marine Parks and Botanical Gardens



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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: Jana Mason
Secretary: Vacant

Next edition of STENAPA Update available soon with articles on:

- New guide to Statia Marine Park
- More on the celebrations of our 10 year old Marine Park
- A day in the life of a Marine Park ranger
- Developments in the Botanical Garden

CONGRATULATIONS TO PARK RANGER,, NADIO SPANNER ON HIS MARRIAGE TO JOANNA WHITE—A FORMER MARINE PARK INTERN

WE ARE ALSO HAPPY TO WELCOME A NEW ADDITION TO THE STENAPA FAMILY : CHLOE POZAS ESTEBAN

Launch of New Friends Programme

Later this year check out our website (www.statiapark.org) for complete details about our NEW programme offering membership in "Friends of STENAPA". This will be your opportunity to join others who are dedicated to nature conservation of the pristine eco-systems of St Eustatius by investing in the future of the National Parks.

You may not be aware that the National Parks Foundation relies heavily on grants and donations for the majority of our funding. This type of funding can be irregular and inconsistent, thus creating uncertainty for program, project and staff planning. Your support will help maintain reliable fiscal responsibilities that are essential to the sustainability of STENAPA.

Highlights of "Friends of STENAPA":

- Five Membership levels from which to choose. The membership packages include some very nice incentives which increase with the levels.
- Various items with exclusive "Friends of STENAPA" logo such as t-shirts, cotton canvas tote bags, polo shirts, magnets, decals, desk calendars and much more.
- Quarterly e-newsletter "STENAPA Update"

- Discounts on STENAPA brand items. STENAPA has some very interesting publications that are increasing in number all the time.

- Discounts at all participating Statia businesses. A complete list of the businesses that will recognize and honor your membership card will be publicized at a later time. Membership cards will entitle you to a discount for a variety of services and products.

- Invitation to special events and behind the scenes opportunities such as accompanying the rangers while on patrols.

Persons wishing to make one time donations only or persons wishing to become members but would like to forego the package that comes with it will be able to do so.

There will be an amazing amount of ways in which you can contribute to the continued daily operations of the National Parks Foundation.

So look for the complete details soon at www.statiapark.org where you can join and proudly say "I am a Friend of STENAPA, you can be too."

With your help we can continue to maintain the beauty of Statia on land and sea.

A Special Thank You To A Sponsor

As a non-profit organization the National Parks Foundation often relies on funding from aid organizations to have sufficient monies to successfully carry out our work.

It is therefore very encouraging when a private company is willing to donate funds.

In late June Mr. John Wiginton and his wife Danielle, both managers of the company VECENERGY, having heard our radio ads for the Summer Club Program, came into the office and offered to sponsor all participants' fees.

To add to such amazing generosity a few weeks later STENAPA received a shipment of two boxes of learning material for our soon to be introduced Junior Ranger II program, courtesy of VECENERGY.

The National Parks Foundation is extremely grateful to VECENERGY for all their support financial and otherwise and look forward to continuing the relationship in the future.