

GAZELLE

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مجموعة دبي للتاريخ الطبيعي

DUBAI NATURAL HISTORY GROUP

PO Box 9234, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Members' News

New Committee Members and Recorder: welcome!

Construction is booming in the UAE, but things are happening elsewhere, too. This causes us to have to bid at least a temporary goodbye to **Peter and Jen Robinson**, as Peter's employer has called him off to Cyprus at short notice. Since they will be based near Paphos, this cannot be considered a hardship assignment, but Peter and Jen admit to becoming very fond of the UAE, after living in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai, and they hope to be back before too long. They continued to be out and about until the end, Jen phoning from a weekend in Hatta to arrange for transfer of DNHG Treasurer's records.

We are very pleased to welcome several new and enthusiastic volunteers to the DNHG Committee. **Ranju Kapoor** will take over responsibilities as Treasurer. Stepping up to assist as additional Field Trip Coordinators will be **Peter Jackson**, who lived in Dubai in the 1980s and returned from Zimbabwe a couple of years ago with his wife Jutte, and **Sandhya Prakash**, who arrived last summer from Saudi Arabia. Apart from their official responsibilities, it appears this trio will add some IT savvy to the Committee, which may advance the sincere

but so far unfulfilled goal of making greater use of the Internet and electronic communications for DNHG purposes.

We are also pleased to welcome **David Bradford** as our new Bird Recorder. David is a long time resident of Dubai and, by common consent, one of its more knowledgeable and accomplished birdwatchers. The role of the Bird Recorder (and all other Recorders) is to serve as a point of contact to receive information about local natural history observations and as a starting point for members interested in further information.

Barbara Couldrey wrote to tell members that over the last week, the UAE border post and the Oman police post in Wadi Bih have been strict about seeing driving licences and/or passports for all vehicle occupants. Best to be sure and take both where possible.

Marijcke Jongbloed writes from France that, although she misses friends in Dubai, she has had a wonderful year there. She was interested to hear news of the Sharjah Desert Park from **Sandi Ellis**, **Peter van Amsterdam** and your Ed. who managed to enjoy 3 hours with the flora and fauna *outside* the fences. On Fridays, it opens at 2.00pm.

DNHG Membership Renewals

The current DNHG membership year runs from September 2004 to September 2005. Membership remains a bargain at Dhs. 100 for couples and Dh. 50 for singles. You can join or renew at meetings 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.)

DNHG membership entitles you to participate in field trips and helps pay for our lecture hall, publication and distribution of our monthly newsletter, the Gazelle, additions to our library, incidental expenses of speakers and occasional special projects.

This month's Contributors

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

Jenny Irwin
Prof. Ted Papenfuss
Renee Williams
Geoff Cossen
Gary Feulner
Dick Hornby
Barbara Couldrey

And for last month (with apologies):
Dr Rolf Schuster
David Bradford



Making the most of winter!

Hajar Mountain hike

Friday, January 28

Gary Feulner will lead this rewarding slog, and can be contacted at home for details.

Dubai Birdwatching

Friday, February 4

David Bradford will lead a trip to the Wimpey Pits/Pivot Fields area, with a possible finish at Khor Dubai if permission can be obtained to enter the new Municipality hides. This is presently the best birding locality in Dubai with a wide variety of species.

David will bring a telescope for general use but participants should bring their own binoculars. Also field guides, if you have them. Participants should meet near Wimpey Pits at 8.00am and the outing would finish around 1.00pm. Meeting place: Take the Awir Road. Turn right at the road for the sewage treatment plant just after new Chinatown/Dragon Mall. Go straight (do not take the left fork) for ~1 km. Park on the right and wait for the group to assemble. For more information contact David Bradford at davebradford9@hotmail.com

Wadi Bih

Friday, February 4

Peter van Amsterdam will take you up over the mountains of RAK/Oman, visiting an abandoned village with remarkable stone work. Bring stout shoes, picnic, loads of water and anything else you need for a walk, and your togs for a swim on Dibba beach. Contact Peter on pvana@emirates.net.ae



Jebel Akhdar rim walk

Thur-Fri, Feb17-18 (leaving Wed 16)

Peter van Amsterdam will lead this trip to Jebel Shams and the 'hidden village'. It is a relatively easy but rough walk, and a spectacular cure for vertigo. Prepare to spend the first night at the Ibri Hotel, the second camping at altitude, and be dehydrated, sunburned and exhausted. Contact Peter by email for details.

Bat and Flora trip

Friday, February 25 (to be confirmed)

Mary Ann Pardoe and Jenny Irwin plan to go to Wadi A'Dahir (near Al Ain). There is an underground mountain falaj, where the bats live and the walk down the wadi is very pleasant and good for flora. Anyone interested to contact Jenny Irwin at jenny_irwin200@yahoo.com for further details.

Musandam Dhow Trip

Friday, March 11

This is a full day trip from Dibba and includes a light breakfast and lunch. There are a maximum of 35 spaces and we need to pay a deposit. Those interested please email Lena Linton and she will collect deposit of Dh 150 a head (leaving a balance of Dh 120) either prior to or at the February meeting. Please be definite about your booking.

Inter-Emirates Weekend at Mafraq Hotel

Wed-Fri, March 16-18 (to be confirmed)

Details are coming. This weekend will offer a varied programme for all ages, and you can be confident that you will not only learn a lot but enjoy doing it. More information will be available by the February DNHG monthly meeting.

Roses on the Saiq Plateau Thur-Fri, April 7-8 (leaving Wed 6)

Peter van Amsterdam will lead yet another attempt to catch the roses in full bloom. Please let him know as soon as possible if you plan to go, as it is not the roses but the hotel rooms that are elusive. The Jebel Akhdar Hotel arranges entry permits for the military area along with bookings. The hotel is a pleasant place, and there's a lot more to do on the Saiq Plateau than smell roses. Contact Peter on pvana@emirates.net.ae for details and bookings. Early booking is essential.



Our Next Speaker

Archaeologist **Dr. Mark Beech**, formerly with the University of York, has a long history of studies in the UAE and Oman. His early studies focused on archaeozoology – the study and interpretation of animal remains found in archaeological contexts, and he has studied the pre-historical use of marine resources (fish, shellfish and crabs) on the UAE and Oman coasts. He is now employed by the Abu Dhabi Islands Archeological Survey (ADIAS). He is currently engaged in excavations at Merawah Island, one of the UAE's larger offshore islands, and in Umm Az-Zamool, at a former seasonal lake site on the edge of the Empty Quarter. The Merawah site has yielded some of the UAE's earliest archaeological remains.

Dr. Beech has been working in the Gulf since 1991 - in Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain as well as the UAE. He lives in Abu Dhabi with his wife and baby daughter.



Tsunami, Yala National Park

"Water in the road up ahead," our Sri Lankan driver translated the policeman's forceful statement as our vehicle was stopped on the bumpy and dusty road. "You must turn around and go back". The day before, I had taken a lovely hike into the green tea plantations of Ella which sits around 4,000 feet above sea level. Small Adam's Peak afforded a spectacular view almost all the way to the seaside. But this day (December 26th), after a leisurely breakfast at the guesthouse, occasionally glancing at the TV broadcasting a cricket match, we headed down the mountain to the remote southeastern coastal part of the island to visit Yala National Park, Sri Lanka's largest wildlife reserve. It is home to the world's densest leopard population and to elephants, sloth bears, deer, boar, crocodiles, buffaloes, and monkeys. Armed with my travel binoculars, I was hoping to see the plethora of birdlife (up to 130 species) promised in the Lonely Planet guide.

Not easily deterred by the policeman's warnings, we continued on, and arrived safely at the guest house located around 20 kms inland. Settling into the simple rooms, we had lunch while our driver went off to get some information about our scheduled 3 pm jeep game drive.

Two hours later he returned - in shock. Yala National Park, as it had been, was gone. Just that morning, a 10 metre wall of water had hit the beach and went three kilometres inland. The two hotels on the beach had been swept away leaving only the foundations. He had found the bodies of two friends, both safari tour guides and numerous tourists. Slowly the extent of the devastation became apparent, as did the realization of how fortunate we were to be alive having missed the deadly tsunami by mere hours.

Strangely enough, our driver said that he saw no wild animals in the park, dead or alive. This since has been confirmed by articles quoting regional wildlife experts. They, too,

have found no dead wild animals in Yala. All the way from the wild elephants to hares, these animals seem to have relied on a little understood 'sixth sense' moving to higher ground that saved their lives. Unfortunately, like human beings, many domesticated animals such as cats, dogs and cattle were victims of the tsunami.

That evening the sky was filled with thousands of birds flying at dusk. Also, the mosquitoes were biting with a vengeance, even through DEET soaked skin and thick socks. A regular occurrence or were they stirred up by the day's natural disaster?

Hopefully, we will look now at ways to develop effective and timely tsunami warning systems in the Indian Ocean. Possibly, the wild animals have had the answer all along. Tired but relieved, I came back to Dubai with a renewed sense of how important it is for us to respect, study, and learn about the power of the natural world on this small and fragile planet. *Thanks to Renee Williams*

Ancient Jabeeb

This was a one day trip organised by Val Chalmers, who had invited Brian Holmes from Al Ain to guide us. We first stopped by the camel farms, where Brian took the opportunity to show us some examples of the beads and coins that we might find. He also showed us a small stone black ball that had been found amongst camel droppings - and looked extraordinarily like them! There was much speculation on what it could be as it had a slightly flattened side.

We decided to go straight to the first archeological site without visiting the camel farms. This site was in a quarry, where the quarry wall showed the site of an ancient well very distinctly, and also the path of a falaj. Above the quarry there was plenty of opportunity to gather shards of pottery lying on the sand. Brian showed us how to date the different pieces by looking at the quality of the pottery, the glaze and

any patterns, ranging from Iron Age, Pre-Islamic to Islamic. He explained that early pottery was made by flattening clay and then shaping it, progressing to making coils of clay and working them into the required shape and then the more advanced method of using a wheel. There were several hearths, evident to the experienced eye, which, because they were not in pits and also were fairly large, were thought to be work fires to make bronze for arrowheads etc. using a combination of copper ingots with either arsenic, tin or urine! On our way back to the cars we were surprised (and delighted) when an owl that flew out of a ghaf tree just as we approached it. We also found mouse and ghecko tracks in the sand.



At a quick stop by another well, we looked for Islamic Iranian blue/green pottery, and beads or comfort stones. Brian told us also to look out for coins often found by old wells as people used to throw them in, much like we do into fountains. Brian told us that we might also find flint arrow heads here. He explained that if you shook pieces of flint together in your hand it should sound like metal. Surprisingly, the Neolithic flint heads are very small - about the size of a little fingernail, so we needed careful observation to find them! The arrows would only normally have been used to hunt animals. Although the peoples of the time raided each others' belongings, they did not tend to engage in warfare. We found some gazelle tracks, easily distinguished by the fact that gazelle drag their feet.

We then progressed to the main site where Brian promised us that we would be able to find objects of interest on the surface. This was in an area of dunes, with 'scours' in between. The first we visited had been named 'the women's majlis'



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

as many pieces of jewelry had been found there, mostly glass and clay beads, and some silver. Brian found a beautiful ring, which encouraged us all to scour the ground enthusiastically. There were again many shards of pottery and we all felt that we had learned to identify, to some extent, which were the more ancient pieces. One member found a coin and another a piece of metal that looked like an ancient pair of tweezers and we all came away with handfuls of interesting looking pieces of glass, beads, pottery and some mother of pearl, which is probably only used for burials as no worked pieces have been found. We found some interesting tracks that disappeared under the sand and then reappeared a few metres on. Many thanks to Val and Brian for a really excellent and informative trip!



The Al Ain website (www.enhg.org) has an interesting page labeled 'Surface finds at Jabeeb' for anyone who would like more information and to see examples of what has been found there so far. *Report by Jenny Irwin and photographs by Mohammed Arfan Asif*

An Apology:

Last month I credited Val with a photograph of the DNHG group at Ras al Junaiz. Val was in it; it was actually taken by Jutte Jackson. Thank you for your photograph, Jutte. Ed.

Adversity and Diversity

In December I spent a few days surveying the flora and fauna of an area immediately adjacent to the Al Taweelah power and desalination complex. At first sight this is a very unpromising spot, with dredged out-fall channels, mounds of bulldozed material, roads, fences and evidence of uncontrolled off-road driving. Interestingly, however, it proved to be nice example of just how resilient some of nature can be in the face of adversity.

There were about twenty species of plants, including the two parasites *Cistanche tubulosa* and *Cynomorium coccineum*, and quite a lot of *Sphaerocoma aucheri* and *Crotalaria persica*. Both of the two latter are right on the western edge of their limited ranges in the UAE. In fact the coastal habitats change at about this point, from the high energy sand beaches and dunes stretching from Taweelah to Dubai, to sabkha and very flat intertidal zones and shallow bays protected by barrier islands, from Taweelah to Abu Dhabi. Lack of suitable habitat may, therefore, be the explanation for the absence of these rather coastal species to the south-west of this point. Another plant I was pleased to see was *Echiochilon jugatum* (apparently known to some as "Stoneseed"). This is a very thinly spread species, and I could only find a single specimen at Taweelah, but it was a magnificent one.

It was the mammals, however, which proved to be of greatest interest. There were plenty of tracks or other evidence of House Mouse, Cheeseman's Gerbil, Ethiopian Hedgehog, Arabian Hare, Red Fox, and—believe it or not—Caracal Lynx. We had found tracks of a fairly large cat, which I would not normally get too excited about, but we also found a dead cat with all-brown fur. The tracks had clearly been made after the demise of the latter, so if they were the same species, we were looking at two individuals. The animal had been dead for long enough for the skull to be

almost clean, and this was collected and taken to the Arabian Wildlife Centre at Sharjah for expert examination. They were positive that it was a young cat, because it still had milk teeth, so the final size of the adult would have been somewhat bigger. This and the all-brown unstreaked fur confirmed the identification as Caracal.

So what were two young Caracals doing at Taweelah, in very unsuitable habitat, fairly close to human habitation and in a generally rather disturbed area? Were they adventurous wanderers from the resident population in the mountains and foothills? Had they taken to the area because they learned to exploit the convenient food resource of some rather lazy feral Egyptian Geese? We will probably never know, but the most convincing theory may be the sad one that they were trapped as young wild animals in their native range, kept in captivity then released near Taweelah when they proved to be rather unsatisfactory as pets.

If anyone can throw any more light on this, or has any other theories, I would be delighted to hear from them. *Report by Dr. Richard Hornby (dnahornby@yahoo.co.uk)*
[Editor's Note: Dick Hornby, one of our members resident in Abu Dhabi, will be leading a couple field trips at Inter-Emirates Weekend (March 3-4) focusing on the coastal environment.]

New Sites for Unidentified Snail

Dr. Rolf Schuster of Dubai's Central Veterinary Research Laboratory and Simon Aspinall of Abu Dhabi have recently added three new sites to the existing two known for a distinctive but as yet unidentified 8-12mm turban-shaped land snail found in the UAE.

The snail was first collected in 1998 on the grounds of the Dubai World Trade Centre apartments and was determined by Dr. Eike Neubert of the Senckenberg Institute to be a



Dubai Natural History Group Recorders

Reptiles - Dr Reza Khan
res 344 8283
off 344 0462
fax (off) 349 9437

Archaeology - Prof. John Fox
jfox@aus.ac.ae

Birds - David Bradford
davebradford9@hotmail.com

Seashells - Sandy Fowler
res & fax 344 2243
shellerdoc@yahoo.com

Astronomy - Lamjed El-Kefi
res 06-5583 003
off 06-5247 958
pearldiv@emirates.net.ae

Marine Life - Lamjed El-Kefi

Geology - Gary Feulner
res 306 5570
fax 330 3550

Insects – Gary Feulner

Fossils - Valerie Chalmers
res 349 4816,
fax 340 0990
vmc@latifaschool.co.ae

Plants – Valerie Chalmers

Mammals - Recorder needed

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.

Hygromiid, but sufficiently different anatomically from other studied snails as to represent not only a new species but probably a new genus. However, questions about the propriety of naming a snail that is obviously an introduced species, without any information about its place of origin, delayed formal publication. Some years later, the same snail came to light at an ostrich farm in the desert near Marqab.

More recently, Simon Aspinall has found the snail on the grounds of the Abu Dhabi Golf and Country Club, at Sheikh Khalifa's boatyard near Ras Al Akhdar, and at a park maintained by the Abu Dhabi Municipality near the old Bateen Airport. Rolf Schuster collected the unknown Hygromiid and other snail species from the lawn of his new home in the Terraces complex in Dubai.

It seems reasonably clear that the snail is introduced with plants, soil or fertilizer (compost or manure) that have been used at these sites, and efforts are underway to try to trace the source of these components, in the hope of identifying the origin of the snail. *Report by Gary Feulner*

DNA Results for Local Reptile

We were pleased to receive the following report from Prof. Ted Papenfuss of the University of California at Berkeley, who is studying the taxonomy and biogeography of Middle East herptiles (reptiles and amphibians). Prof. Papenfuss is also a former DNHG speaker.

"*Diplometopon zarudnyi*, commonly known as Zarudnyi's Worm Lizard was first described by the Russian herpetologist Aleksandr Nikolski in 1907. This small burrowing reptile is not a real lizard but a member of the suborder *Amphisbaenia*. This is the smallest suborder of scaled reptiles with only about 160 species. The two other much larger suborders of the order *Squamata* are the lizards and the snakes.

"The type specimen of *Diplometopon zarudnyi* was collected by the Russian naturalist Nikolai Zarudny in western Iran. The species occurs in western Iran, southern Iraq, northern Saudi Arabia, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. It is often found burrowing in subsurface soils of date plantations and in low sand dunes in open terrain. These animals are active at night and their tracks are often seen in sandy areas in the UAE.

"Last year I asked the DNHG to put a request in the *Gazelle* for a specimen for me to use in a DNA study. Johanna Raynor kindly collected one for me in the desert between Dubai and Al-Ain. We have now completed a DNA analysis of this specimen and compared it to one from Iran and one from the Wahiba Sands of Oman. The DNA of the UAE specimen is very similar to the DNA of the Iran specimen. A big surprise is the large DNA difference of about 8% in the Oman individual. This suggests that the Oman population represents a new undescribed species." *Report by Prof. Ted Papenfuss*

Traveler's Advisory: A Third Way to Muscat?

For those who are bored with the usual two routes south to Muscat (the Nizwa road & the coast road), there has always been an exciting alternative. It is possible to cross the mountains by going down the inland road as far as Ibri, then turning east. After about 35 km, at Miskin, there is a good dirt road going south-east linking through to Rustaq. From there it is an easy drive, on tarmac, across to the coast road, or better still, by way of Nakhl (with its amazing fort and river).

The only problem with this is time. Although the dirt road is mainly level, it twists and turns round villages & across several wadis, is dusty & very 'rippled'. It takes nearly two hours to get through by 4WD. It's spectacular country, but maybe not so good if you are in a



hurry. However, the Sultanate's extraordinary road-building programme is now upgrading this route. For more than 75kms, a massive new road is being currently (Jan. 2005) carved through these mountains. About 40 bridges and culverts are nearing completion, and work is under way across the whole length of the road. Earthmovers are slicing through hillsides and levelling valleys, in what must be one of the longest new road projects undertaken in our region. There's a massive labour camp right in the middle.

I don't know when it will be completed, but it definitely will provide us with a viable and spectacular, third route to Muscat. *Report by Geoff Cosson*

Book Review:

TRAVELS WITH A TANGERINE - A Journey in the footnotes of Ibn Battutah by Tim Mackintosh-Smith (Picador) ISBN 0-330-49114-8

I vividly remember school lessons about the heroic 'voyages of discovery', but only later realised that such 'discovery' was a very European-centric view. The native Americans & Australians clearly already knew - they were there! Similarly, when we enthuse about epic journeys, we often forget that it was local guides who led these great adventurers. Vasco da Gama 'found' the route to India because he hired an Arab pilot in Africa. Without detracting from the exploits of people like Philby, Thomas and Thesiger in the Arab world, we should remember that they were following routes well-trodden by local traders and travelers.

The greatest traveler in the Arab world was undoubtedly Ibn Battutah, whose incredible achievement is now being recognized, especially in his native Morocco. He was born in Tangier (hence the title of this book, which was first published in 2001), and set out on what was to be a lifetime journey of maybe 75,000 miles, lasting nearly 30 years. He trained as an Islamic

lawyer, and set off in 1325, initially to Mecca. With his marketable skills, he was able to work and travel throughout the Muslim world, and as far as India and China, and just about everywhere in between (no employment visa troubles for him). On his eventual return to Tangier, he dictated his memoirs, which were widely read in the Arab world.

In this book, Tim Mackintosh-Smith does not *recount* these adventures, but uses them as a traveling companion, retracing the first journey as far as Constantinople, via Egypt and what we now know as Oman. He intersperses Ibn Battutah's descriptions of what he saw, with a current perspective on the same places, lively, humorous and perceptive, based on his own experience as an Arabic scholar and linguist. The comments on what has happened to Arabia and the people who live here, are especially interesting to us. This is a truly exceptional, entertaining book.

(An excellent website is www.isidore-of-seville.com/ibnbattuta) *Report by Geoff Cosson*

Library acquisitions

The DNHG library has received two copies of *The Vascular Plants of Abu Dhabi Emirate*, an ERWDA internal report by Gary M. Brown and Sabitha Sakkir. This report introduces a simple but useful classification of the basic habitat types found in Abu Dhabi, and a checklist of Abu Dhabi plants and the habitats in which they are typically found.



Part VI (and truly the conclusion) of Drew on Geckos

Aside from their sometimes secretive nature, geckos have few defenses against their enemies. No gecko, nor indeed any lizard in

Oman, is poisonous. The small teeth of even the largest gecko species are hardly able to break human skin. One Australian species has special glands at the base of the tail which can squirt a sticky glue at predators. Geckos have many enemies—snakes, birds, foxes and other predators. Their one trump card is their ability to shed their tails. Anyone who tries to catch geckos soon experiences this. Even the slightest pull on the tail of some species leaves the detached tail wriggling vigorously in the hand or on the ground, while the tail owner makes good his escape. The gecko will re-grow the tail, although the regenerate never quite matches the original. The importance of this trick is shown by the high proportion of geckos with regenerated tails in many populations.

Another trick is shown by the Wonder gecko *Teratoscincus scincus*. These are the largest of the geckos in Arabia and the most colourful. They are probably also the most endangered as they are restricted to the area inland from Dubai and Jebel Ali, which is of course disappearing fast under housing schemes and factories. Wonder geckos are sand geckos, but very different from *Stenodactylus*. Indeed they are usually classified into a different subfamily from all the other geckos I have mentioned. Their scales are different, being large and overlapping (the only other species with similar scales is *Tropicolotes scorteccei* from Dhofar, but it is tiny). They also have large scales above the tail which can produce a hissing sound as a threat. They are unafraid and will make a lunge towards humans. However their defense of last resort is skin autotomy—they have a fragile skin which if grasped detaches from the underlying tissues and comes away. For a small mouthed predator such as a hedgehog or bird, this results in the loss of a small area of skin which quickly regenerates. However if held firmly in a human hand, large areas of skin may be lost and the gecko may die from dehydration. They should therefore not be handled.



	name	tel home	tel office	fax
Chairman	Gary Feulner messages: 306 5300	306 5570	330 3600	330 3550
Vice Chairman	Valerie Chalmers e.mail: vmc@latifaschool.co.ae	349 4816 no calls pls	340 0990	
Treasurer	Ranju Kapoor e.mail: ranjukapoor@hotmail.com	295 4816	050-553 7016	2959515
Membership Secretary	Lena Linton e.mail: linton@emirates.net.ae	344 2591		344 2591
Membership Assistant	Anindita Radhakrishna e.mail: anin@emirates.net.ae	282 3952	050-714 4893	
Speaker Co-ordinator	David Palmer email: dpalmer@sharjah.ac.ae	050-366 2551	06-505 0221	06-505 0429
Fieldtrip Co-ordinator	Pradeep Radhakrishna e.mail: wgarnet@emirates.net.ae	282 3952	050-450 8496	
Fieldtrip Co-ordinator	Peter Jackson email: pj.architect@gmail.com	2882713	335 4545 050-5521005	3354338
Fieldtrip Co-ordinator	Sandhya Prakash e.mail:sandhya@clavib.com	050-55102481		348 2868
Special Projects	Beryl Comar e.mail: comar@emirates.net.ae	344 2243		344 2243
Newsletter Editor	Anne Millen e.mail: pvana@emirates.net.ae	269 2519	no calls please	269 1654
Publisher	Peter van Amsterdam e.mail: pvana@emirates.net.ae	269 2519	335 5495	269 1654
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Chief Engineer	James Pardoe e.mail: James@extremereviews.net	394 3821		

These harmless and interesting animals seem to inspire an equally diverse range of emotions in human observers, from fear and loathing to enthusiasm bordering on fanaticism. Gecko fans are catered for by Global Gecko Association, which organizes meetings, publishes a journal devoted to geckos in the wild and in captivity, and maintains a website. Increasing interest in geckos is reflected in the use of the 'gecko' name and gecko images as trade marks and in advertising, particularly (and hardly surprisingly) for rock climbing gear, but also for software design consultancies and clothing manufacturers and even wine labels. There are also numerous gecko enthusiasts web pages complete with photos and advice on how to keep geckos as pets. Indeed the reptile pet trade has increased

enormously over the last 15 years, particularly in the USA. Indiscriminate collecting of geckos from the wild for trade is of major concern to conservationists in some countries such as Madagascar, the home to many species of beautifully coloured day geckos. We do have some rare and unusual gecko species here which are not widely available in the reptile trade, and vigilance is required by the relevant authorities to ensure that such collecting for financial gain is not allowed to occur here. Geckos should be left in the wild and not collected as pets. *Thanks to Drew Gardner for this wonderful series.*

Maybe Butterflies

An international conference on landfill site remediation will take

place at AUS from 17-19 January 2005. The outcome of the meeting will be of particular interest to members who have visited the landfill site near AUS in Sharjah (known to readers of the *Gazelle* as "Larry Woods' Dump") given that this site is now the subject of a major remediation effort to be discussed at the conference. Not bad, eh? From DNHG fieldtrip venue to international conference subject? Is this a first - or just another case of "once a dumpsite, not always a dumpsite"?

Interested members can point their browsers to <http://www.ausharjah.edu/media/landfill/> for further details and information.



Dubai Natural History Group Programme

Lectures at Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, 7.30 for 8.00pm

- Feb 6 Archaeological Discoveries on Merawah Island: Dr. Mark Beech
Mar 6 Natural History of the Canary Islands – the Arabian Connection: Dr. Gary Brown

Field Trips (Members only, please. Details inside.)

- Jan 28 Hajar Mountain Hike – Gary Feulner
Feb 4 Dubai Birdwatching – David Bradford
Feb 4 Wadi Bih – Peter van Amsterdam
Feb 16-18 Jebel Akhdar Rim Walk – Peter van Amsterdam
Feb 25 Wadi Dhahr Bat Falaj & Flora – Jenny Irwin & Mary Ann Pardoe
Mar 11 East Coast Dhow Trip – Lena Linton
Mar 16-18 Inter-Emirates Weekend at Mafraq Hotel (Dates and details to be confirmed)
Apr 6-8 Roses on the Saiq Plateau – Peter van Amsterdam