

EDITORIAL

This editorial has taken longer to complete than anticipated. In the time taken to write it we have seen the annual mass migration/vacation of people from the Arabian Peninsula. Schools have closed for the holidays and many people have taken advantage of this to head overseas to their home-country or simply on their annual vacation. The school break offers people the opportunity and time to flee the extremes of temperature that make the Arabian Peninsula an arid, challenging environment. Some are not returning for various reasons and we at WME News wish Sean McKeown all the best for the future in his new role as Director of Fota Wildlife Park.

Over the past 18 issues of WME News we have attempted to describe a few of the many projects and initiatives being undertaken in the Middle East and this issue is no different. We hear from Sarah Gough who describes a City and Guilds course she is completing as a Veterinary Nurse to help her improve her standards and the level of care she can provide for the animals she is responsible for.

Locally, there are many Universities within the region offering top class courses of study and the opportunity to carry out research projects. One of these is the UAE University in Al Ain and they report a preliminary study investigating activity patterns of captive Arabian oryx. Studies like this contribute towards the scientific objectives of regional initiatives such as the Arabian Oryx secretariat who have renewed their activities and are in the process of completing the regional studbook for this species.

Also in this issue we are informed that the Kuwait Turtle Conservation Project has teamed up with other partners to satellite tag green and hawksbill turtles on islands off Kuwait. The use of satellite tags to monitor these animals is one of the most important and significant tools now available to acquire information on animal migrations. We are also fortunate to learn about two projects being carried out by our Iranian colleagues. One presents a brief description of the mugger crocodile and its biology, while the other describes how the Iranian Cheetah Society has used the experiences built up over a decade of work on the Iranian cheetah to highlight the plight of the regions second leopard subspecies and the perils it now faces across its range.

Our colleagues at AWWP describe how detailed animal records can be used to determine population trends and possible veterinary issues within animal collections, while the researchers of Sharkwatch Arabia explain how recreational divers and sea farers can become involved in a monitoring programme for certain marine species. With a little bit of further education and training recreational divers can provide a much wider data collection area than could be accomplished by a small team of researchers.

In our book review section, Prof Rolf Schuster reviews the 3rd volume of the Arthropod Fauna of the UAE. Together with the species covered in the previous two volumes, more than 170 families have been described from the UAE.

We would also like to draw your attention to a useful online resource called the Avian Rearing Resource Website which should be a must visit site for anyone involved in rearing birds from eggs.

Finally, we again call for articles from researchers/ organisations in the Middle East. If you would like to contribute, please contact us at the addresses provided.

WILDLIFE MIDDLE EAST NEWS OBJECTIVES

- Raising awareness of environmental and conservation issues affecting wildlife in the Middle East.
- Distributing information to enable better management healthcare and welfare of wildlife.
- Providing a central contact point for practical advice and information on wildlife management in the region.



Sean McKeown

NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL TEAM

Tom Bailey, BSc, BVSc, MRCVS, Cert Zoo Med, MSc (Wild Animal Health), PhD, Dip ECAMS, Falcon and Wildlife Veterinarian, Dubai Falcon Hospital, PO Box 23919, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Declan O'Donovan, Dip.H.Ed., B.Sc., M.Sc. (Conservation Biology) CBiol, MIBiol, Director of Wildlife Services, Wadi Al Safa Wildlife Centre, PO Box 27875, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Chris Lloyd, BVSc, MRCVS, Cert Zoo Med, MSc (Wild Animal Health), Medical Director, Nad Al Shiba Vet Hospital, PO Box 116345, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Theri Bailey, BSc, MSc, Cert Ed FE, FRGS, Adjunct Instructor in Environmental Science, Zayed University Dubai, United Arab Emirates.