

Newsletter



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1 Project, 3 Fieldtrips, 2 Months!

By Dafydd Crabtree

Following on from last year's 3 weeks of field work in January, the bryologists and lichenologists arrived for some more summer survey action.

Dr Alan Fryday and Alan Orange arrived for the first two and a half weeks, quickly followed by Dr. Ray Tangney, Dr. Matt Von Konrat, Dr. Juan Larrain (Bryologists) and Dr. Chris Evans, Dr. Shaun Russell and Professor Ed Maltby (Ecosystem Services Scoping Report Team, ESSRT). The whole team comprised of scientists from Cardiff and Bangor, Wales; Liverpool, England; Michigan and Chicago, USA; and Valparaiso, Chile.

The first two and a half weeks went very well, with a lot of collecting done on Saunders Island, Hill Cove, Mt. Adam and the Dunbar area, as well as across most of East Falkland. The walk from Hells Kitchen to the corries of Mount Adam was an especially long day with a total of 28km covered, but the weather was fine and the daylight hours long.

The two week lichen trip



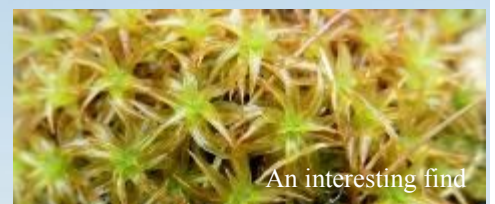
Conquering Mount Adam

seamlessly melted into the arrival of the remaining groups, which stayed for three weeks in total. After mistakenly trespassing a few metres out of Stanley Common on their first day, I was pleased that this incident did not set the precedent for the next three weeks! The bryologists spent time in Port San Carlos, Goose Green, Mount Adam, Fox Bay and the Dunbar area, while the ESSRT briefly visited the site of the Main Point Farm fire then stayed on East Falkland taking peat coring samples. An interactive talk on the 'Benefits of Ecosystem Services for Falkland

Islanders' was conducted at the Chamber of Commerce, which had a very impressive turnout.

Again the troops collected a wealth of information about the Falkland Islands in a short amount of time, which we will report on in the near future. I would like to extend a sincere thank you to all landowners for their cooperation and permission regarding access and their kind help when needed. I would also like to give special thanks to

Ross James for dealing with my constant pestering and sorting out the Biosecurity forms for the overseas postage of nearly 1500 specimens, and Glynis King at the Post Office for being so helpful when I turned up with eight heavy boxes one Friday afternoon - thank you!



An interesting find



The view of Hill Cove from Hells Kitchen, Carcass and Saunders Islands in the distance



Falklands Conservation is a charity that takes action for nature in the Falkland Islands. We work in conjunction with local and international partners to preserve and protect the unique wildlife, plants and natural features of the Islands. It is only through your support that our work is possible. Thank you.

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FC's Annual General Meeting By Farrah Peck

The Falklands Conservation AGM was held at the Chamber of Commerce in Stanley on the 3rd December 2015. Staff and Trustees were joined by a number of local members to approve the Directors of the Board and the completed audit of the annual accounts.

Chairman Roger Spink outlined the increased emphasis to centre the organisation's governance in the Falklands over the last year. The support from the UK trustees continued to be invaluable and the composition of the Board reflects the key role of the charity with all Trustees committed to conservation of the Islands' wildlife. The year saw a lot of change, and as part of that we saw our strong staff, complimented by

dedicated members, volunteers and Trustees both locally and overseas, pull together to achieve another successful year. The Chairman thanked each and every one of them.

CEO Esther Bertram and CO Andy Stanworth presented the refined organisational Strategy and Conservation Priorities for 2015-19, and invited members to provide feedback and comments over refreshments.

The main meeting was then followed by two short presentations;

Ben Berntsen gave an illustrated talk about when he received his first FC small grant in 2003 to start a tussac plantation at Elephant Beach Farm. Up to the present he can now see good results from the annual planting trips, and is working with FC to develop large-scale seed



Landowner Ben Berntsen

planting approach for the future. Ray Tangney gave an update on the Lower Plants and Lichens project, including the large number of new records for the Falklands, and outlined how the project will leave a legacy with specimens for the herbarium and a species guide, as well as workshops and local training.

A complimentary members evening was also held at the Union Jack Club in London by UK staff, Trustees and volunteers to update members resident in the UK on the work of the charity over the last year.



R-L: Ray with colleagues Matt and Juan - part of the Lower Plants field team

BRAHMS Training for FC Staff

Andy, Dafydd and Frin spent an enjoyable three days on the west learning how to use a BRAHMS (Botanical Research and Herbarium Management System) database - a plant database created by Oxford University to store and search for botanical records. Sessions were run by Helen Marsh who curates the Falklands National Herbarium and recently received a Shackleton Scholarship to undertake training at Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew. Sara Barrios (Islands Conservation Partnership Co-ordinator) from Kew provided guidance, and Black Shanty House at Fox Bay became a very comfy herbarium for the week!

The trip was also a brilliant opportunity to collect native grass seeds for Frin's Darwin-funded Habitat Restoration Project. Seed collections were made at both the Patricia Luxton and Lyn Blake National Nature Reserves, which are beautiful at this time of year. Leon and Helen Marsh kindly took us to The North Head on Rincon Ridge Farm where children Abigail, Ruby and Madison pointed out cool plants and mosses for us and teacher Tracy, and we all grabbed bunches of cinnamon grass seeds between rain showers!

A big thank you to Leon and Helen and the girls for their hospitality and guidance.

Find out more about the Patricia Luxton Nature Reserve:

<https://www.facebook.com/patricialuxtonnationalnaturereservechartres/>



Frin collects seeds with the girls



Daf and Andy's excitement at finding a rare plant



Helen shares her learning



A Chance to Visit Steeple Jason

By Amy Elstow-Guest



After a chance expression of my growing interest in conservation work, I was very fortunate to be offered a place on the Steeple Jason trip as a volunteer to assist with the work of FC during my Christmas break.

This included counting rockhopper and gentoo chicks to determine this year's breeding success, as well as noting the marked albatross nests which have failed to produce chicks this year. Also, we helped PhD student Julie collect albatross scats for her dietary research, collected seeds from native and introduced species of grass for another of FC's projects, and marked skua nest sites across the Island using a GPS.

Besides the important things, I enjoyed the fresh air, the walking, the exceptional weather and the escape from technology for the week! It was also a good opportunity to add to my knowledge of local flora and fauna and see first-hand the brilliant work that FC does for the Islands. Overall, this trip was an unforgettable experience and it has definitely given me an idea of what to do after my Biology degree.

Welcome Angie!

I was born in the Islands and spent my early years growing up on Pebble Island (1980-1988) with my four siblings and parents. We then lived at Fox Bay East before moving into town in 1991. I have always had a keen interest in wildlife and conservation; growing up surrounded by wildlife and watching David Attenborough programs it was hard not to be!

Previous to joining Falklands Conservation I worked for the Falkland Islands Museum and National Trust, first at Britannia House and then at the new Historic Dockyard Museum. After two years at the Museum I have now taken up the position of Administrative Assistant at Falklands Conservation.

Although my position is administrative I look forward to taking part in the opportunities to get involved with practical conservation.



And some other visitors from the last few months...

Thank you to Megan, Moyra and Pauline for bringing 'Simon' the gentoo penguin to us on Thursday 21st January, all the way from Cow Bay on East Falklands. Simon had a patch of thick dried oil down his front, so after a quick assessment we decided he was tough enough to be cleaned right away. Here's a photo of Simon cleaned off and having his first feed. We expect Simon will be with us for a few weeks until he is fully waterproof again.



Jonathan Hall, Head of UK Overseas Territories at RSPB, talked to the Falkland Islands Infant and Junior School about endemic species of other Overseas Territories.



The children were all very interested and had some excellent questions for. Thanks for having us IJS!

Shaun Russell (left) and Ed Maltby (right) of the Lower Plants ESSRT talk to Liz Roberts from Falkland Islands Radio Station about the benefits of ecosystem services for Falkland Islanders. Ed is also a Trustee of Falklands Conservation based in the UK, so it was great to have him visit and to catch up with the current team whilst working in the Falklands.



Watch Group News Board

The new 2015/16 season for the Watch Group started in September. So far we have been involved with 'Clean Up Day', got creative with charity ball decorations and watercolour sessions, a beach clean at newly de-mined Eliza Cove, and enjoyed a small group camp to Sea Lion Island and a whole group camp to Long Island. A highlight for eight lucky Watch Group members was to meet Princess Anne in January (top right)!

We also have another large group camp to Elephant Beach Farm in February, marshalling at the Standard Chartered Bank Marathon and lots more planned!



Princess Anne visit



Eliza Cove tidy up



Liam cleans up Stanley



Long Island Camp

SEAs for the FI?



Watercolour sessions with Richard Cockwell



A photo from the workshop on how Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) would be used in the Falkland Islands. Riki Therivel, our visiting expert, also conducted a public talk on Wednesday 27th January titled 'What is Strategic Environmental Assessment, why is it important, and how can it be used in the Falkland Islands?' More to follow in our next issue...



Princess Anne display

Magellanic
Student £15

Rockhopper
Individual £30

Gentoo
Household £50

King
Gold £100

Albatross
Life £1000



Become a FC Member

Chief Executive Officer: Dr Esther Bertram
 Conservation Manager: Dr Andrew Stanworth
 UK Director: David Spivak
 Office Manager: Farrah Peck
 Conservation Officer: Sarah Crofts
 Community Engagement Manager: Liz Milston
 Lower Plants Officer: Dafydd Crabtree
 Habitat Restoration Officer: Katherine Ross
 Administrative Assistant: Angie Clarke



Trustees:
 Roger Spink (FI Chair)
 Keith Biles (FI Treasurer)
 Henry Robinson (UK Chair)
 Tym Marsh (UK Treasurer)
 (A full list of trustees is available on request)

Not all opinions expressed in this newsletter are necessarily those of Falklands Conservation

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