

December 2012



▶ Newsletter 3 +4/2012

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# STENAPA Update

## People and the Parks Wrap Up



*The presentations were well attended and we are happy that we could get so much information out there*

On Sunday October 7th, our long prepared-for event “People and the Parks” took place at the Carnival Village. Staff members gathered early to set up and prepare the village with the various display tables and activities .

The event took place from 1pm to 11pm and was well attended. Staff from each department gave informative presentations about their respective areas of work to the public , who were given the opportunity to ask questions at the end of each session. Unfortunately the local television stations could not be there to film the information so that those who could not attend could also be informed, however the National Parks Foundation is working on a project to produce a set of television programs so that our message can still be made available to the wider public.

The children’s competitions were a huge success (see photos on page 2). Winners were announced after the raffle draw and most have already claimed their prizes. These included a snorkel trip, a boat ride around Statia, and a Discover Dive with Scubaqua.

The evening concluded with a very funny play written by Misha Spanner entitled “Land, Sand and Sea”. This was a very accurate and amusing representation of how some local folks view STENAPA and the island’s nature regulations.

The scenes concerned people getting caught sand mining on Zeelandia beach, the consequences of sand mining, and then the same folks getting caught spear fishing in the reserves. It was a hilarious play that was enjoyed by the audience judging from the comments on the survey sheets afterwards. Misha Spanner is a talented playwright whose work can

be seen at various events on Statia. Stenapa is grateful to her for this collaboration and looks forward to more in the future.

The public also got an opportunity during the event to taste fried lionfish filets, cooked by Jessica Berkel. This fish has invaded the waters of the wider Caribbean, however it is delicious to eat. and most people that tasted it agreed.

From the positive feedback received, Stenapa will continue to host similar awareness-raising events in the future.



*Things got really busy around the stage when the raffle drawing started, with ticket holders waiting anxiously*

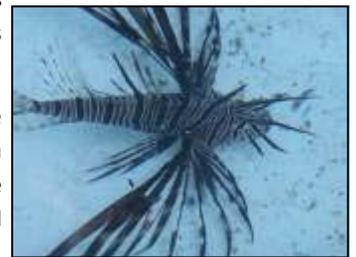
### Don't forget...

**Guided Hikes:** Are available

**Botanical Garden:** It is Humpback Whale watching season. Check out the view from the Lookout Garden Open from sunrise to sunset. Great for picnics.

### Find us on Facebook:

Keep up to date with all the latest happenings—Like our ‘Stenapa St. Eustatius’ page!



## REMINDER

**Lionfish are venomous and should only be removed by Marine Park Staff.**

**If you have any questions or a Lionfish sighting please call us on 318 2884**



Between presentations



Coloring for the little ones



Delicious food draws a crowd



Painting Competition



Early birds



Staff getting told off by the old folks

# Thanks

The National Park Foundation would like to thank the following for helping to make the “People and the Parks” event a success.

- 1 dive for two persons (**Golden Rock Dive Centre**)
- 2 fishing rods (**Golden Rock Dive Centre**)
- 1 LG smartphone (**Eutel**)
- 3 aqua gun (**Golden Era Dive Centre**)
- 4 gift for 50 \$ shopping (**Duggins**)
- 2 chicken fried rice (**Yummy Tummy Bar & restaurant**)
- 1 dinner for 2 persons (**Golden Era Hotel**)
- 2 meals + 2 drinks (**Stone Oven**)
- 1 dinner for 2 persons (**Smoke Alley Bar & Grill**)
- 1 dinner for 2 persons (**Super Burger**)
- 1 dinner for two persons (**Franky’s**)
- Cases of drinks and \$100 (**The Old Gin House**)
- \$40 (**Tropical Fruit Tree**)

## Staff Matters!!

The hard work and dedication to their jobs is paying off for two members of Stenapa's team. Marine Park Manager Jessica Berkel's request for a grant to host a lionfish awareness workshop in St. Kitts & Nevis is approved, and the workshop will be held shortly.

Early in the year a call was received from the Nevis Historical & Conservation Society acknowledging Statia's lion fish program and requesting staff to come to Nevis to do a training. Because both Foundations were low on funds, the matter was put to rest for some months. Then the UNEP-CEP SPAW Regional Activity Center and CaMPAM

(the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers network) announced their small grant fund in June and the idea was reborn.



*Anna Maitz, Marine Park Ranger, will be sharing her expertise on Lion fish with counterparts in Nevis*

After much collaboration, the grant application was successful and Jessica Berkel and Anna Maitz of the Statia National Marine Park will soon travel to Nevis to conduct the workshop.

There is now also interest from St. Kitts, Montserrat and Guadeloupe to attend.

The workshop will consist of classroom work as well as hands on training in the field and the aim is to work with a variety of stakeholders.

National Park Ranger/Education Officer Hannah Madden is the proud co-author of two scientific papers. The first is "Eurscorpion", a paper on the scorpions of St. Eustatius, describing three species that can be found across the island. The species are *Centruroides barbudensis*, *Oiclus purvesii* and *Isometrus maculatus*. These include the first record of the occurrence in St. Eustatius of the family Scorpionidae and the genus *Oiclus*, as well as the first published findings of *I. maculatus* since 1942. The paper was written in collaboration with Dr. Rolando Teruel of Cuba's Museum of Natural History, and was published last month through Marshall University.

The second is a paper changing the description of the flowers of Statia's endemic plant, Statia Morning Glory (*Ipomoea sphenophylla*). This was written in collaboration with Dr. Stephen Bush, who spent six months studying pollinators and pollination systems of the native plants of Statia earlier this year. The paper has been accepted by Harvard Papers for Botany and will be published in December.



*National Park Ranger Hannah Madden counting orchid leaves in the Quill*

Further papers by Madden and other co-authors on a variety of topics will be published in 2013.

Berkel and Madden were also recognized for their expertise in their

respective fields by being asked to present at the recent Conference for Sustainable Development, hosted by the St. Eustatius Tourism Development Foundation (STDF).

Finally, an invitation was accepted by Marine Park Manager Jessica Berkel to travel to St. Kitts at the end of October for a three-day workshop on Marine Protected Areas awareness. Berkel was invited to share her expertise and the success stories and challenges Stenapa has faced with implementing and managing a Marine Park. The Statia National Marine Park is very happy that our neighbours on St. Kitts are making this step towards establishing a Marine Protected area of their own, and we are more than willing to assist in any way that we can.



*Marine Park Manager Jessica Berkel holding a red-billed tropicbird during a bird ecology training*

## Orchid Workshop

National Park Ranger/Education Officer Hannah Madden recently attended an orchid workshop at Soroa's breathtaking Orquideario in Cuba, organised by the University of Pinar del Rio and Kew Gardens' Orchid Seed Storage for Sustainable Use (OSSSU) project. Around 20 delegates attended from Latin America and the Caribbean, including Colombia, Mexico, Panama, Cuba, Cayman Islands, Dominican Republic, and also from the USA.

The workshop covered a variety of topics such as the importance of preserving orchid habitats; the importance of education to the local and national community; *in-vitro* reproduction of orchid seeds; deterioration of orchid seeds in storage; orchid seed conservation; orchid research and the creation of hybrids in

Cuba, and much more. The workshop concluded with a visit to the university to celebrate the 40th anniversary of its annual international scientific symposium, followed by two days in the field. Funding for



Madden to attend this workshop was provided by the LVV department of St. Eustatius, for which Stenapa is extremely grateful.

Orchids worldwide are in decline due to habitat loss, over collection and climate change. While Statia's orchid populations generally remain stable thanks to the existence

of our National Parks, populations in other areas are at risk – primarily due to human disturbance. In Florida, the cigar orchid (*Cyrtopodium punctatum*) was collected almost the point of extinction, where in 2009 just 19 plants were known to exist in the wild. A project was put into place to pollinate plants and germinate seeds, resulting in the outplanting of 200 juveniles at the Fakahatchee State Reserve.

## Beach Clean up

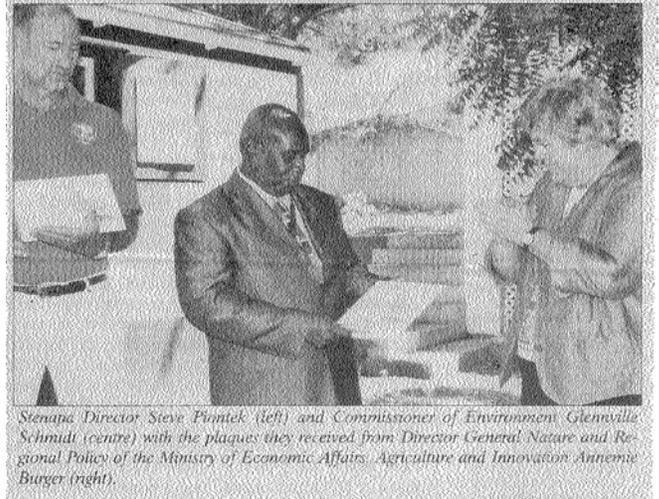


Friday, December 21 found 24 volunteers and STENAPA staff on Zeelandia Beach cleaning up trash. The volunteers came from all over the island. One volunteer remarked that she was going into the office after the clean up, because these events are important. Several of the volunteers brought guests with them, friends who were visiting the island. They were impressed by the turnout and the trash collected—40 bags containing an estimated 255 kg of trash. STENAPA would like to thank all of the volunteers who helped make the island a more attractive place to live and visit.



# STENAPA Focus

Annemie Burger, Director General of Nature and Regional Policy of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation visited the National Parks Office September 26, 2012. At this time she presented the Island Government, in the person of Commissioner Glennville Schmidt, and STENAPA with the official decrees declaring the St Eustatius National Marine Park and the Quill / Boven National Park to be National Parks of the Caribbean Netherlands. This is an important designation since the Parks' status as National Parks of the Netherlands Antilles ended with the dissolving of the Netherlands Antilles on 10/10/10. The decrees read "This unique natural environment forms a significant contribution to international biodiversity. The geology and landscapes and associated biodiversity of our islands, as well as the marine and coastal biodiversity, are to be preserved for future generations." Following the presentation, Ms Burger and her group enjoyed a tour of the Miriam C. Schmidt Botanical Garden and then a presentation of the Turtle Conservation Program by Marine Park Manager Jessica Berkel at Zeelandia Beach, where Ms Burger was lucky enough to see a hatchling make its way to the sea. Ms Burger stated that her first visit to Statia was a memorable one.



Stenapa Director Sieve Pintek (left) and Commissioner of Environment Glennville Schmidt (centre) with the plaques they received from Director General Nature and Regional Policy of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation Annemie Burger (right).



## STENAPA Christmas Party



The first Christmas Party to be hosted by STENAPA in several years occurred on the evening of December 14, 2012. STENAPA staff, interns, volunteers and board members gathered at the National Parks Office to share holiday greetings and enjoy the Christmas dinner prepared by Ocean View Terrace. It was an opportunity to thank everyone for their time and commitment towards helping STENAPA fulfill its mission. We hope to again make the Christmas party an annual event.

## St Eustatius National Parks



Gallows Bay z/n  
Lower Town  
St Eustatius,  
Dutch Caribbean

Phone: +599 318 2884  
E-mail: [info@statiapark.org](mailto:info@statiapark.org)

STENAPA is an environmental not-for-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 Schmidt Botanical Gardens. STENAPA is legally delegated by the Island Council to manage these protected areas.

Acting President:  
Vice President: Ira Walker  
Treasurer: Ruth Pandt  
Secretary: Linda Berkel

[www.statiapark.org](http://www.statiapark.org)

### Emergency Oxygen Kit Donated by DAN.

The Divers Alert Network (DAN) has donated an emergency oxygen kit to the Marine Park. This is a portable kit and is meant to be taken on the dive boat in case any diving emergency should arise. Because of the many dives that Marine Park Rangers make in the course of their work week, it is very important to have the oxygen available on the boat. With a value of \$800, this kit is a valuable donation to the Marine Park staff, who wish to express their gratitude to the people of DAN who made this donation possible. The Marine Park rangers are now well equipped to assist if there is a dive emergency.

### Friends of STENAPA

The Friends of STENAPA are back in operation after a couple of years of inactivity, thanks largely to the efforts of STENAPA volunteer Olga Schats van Driessen. Olga has been visiting with Statians and signing up local businesses.

The goal of the Friends of STENAPA is to help provide reliable funding while at the same time explaining STENAPA's mission to everyone who will listen.

In order to ensure the preservation of what is uniquely Statia we need your help. Your support will help achieve the reliable fiscal funding that is essential to the sustainability of the National Parks.

### Iguana Survey Initial Results

A year long survey of the Lesser Antillean Iguana, *Iguana delicatissima*, is wrapping up without encouraging results. Despite increased public awareness of its endangered status and the creation of the Quill and Boven National Park, it appears that there is no increase in the population since the last survey, completed in 2004. In fact, some areas of the island which had substantial populations back in 2004, such as the area around Kingswell, now have only rare sightings. The final report will be written in early 2013 and it will contain recommendations for preserving this symbol of Statia's biodiversity.