



A ROCHA

Caring for God's World Together

Issue 20 - Spring 2006



Hope

for the planet

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A ROCHA – the small print

Are you concerned about God's world?

You are not alone! For over 20 years A Rocha has studied God's word and cared for God's world. We currently work on diverse conservation projects in over 15 countries around the world.

A Rocha can ...

- Share with you what the Bible says about tending and keeping God's world
- Help you change your lifestyle
- Point you to reliable environmental information
- Connect you with like-minded people

A Rocha was started in 1983 in Portugal and means 'the Rock' in Portuguese. A Rocha currently works in Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Ghana, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Netherlands, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, UK & USA – contact details are found at www.arocha.org or through the UK office.

In the UK, A Rocha has the flagship Living Waterways project in west London, and works to encourage greater care of creation across the UK.

Across the world our projects share five core commitments:

- **Christian:** Underlying all we do is our biblical faith in the living God, who made the world, loves it and entrusts it to the care of human society
- **Conservation:** We carry out research for the conservation and restoration of the natural world and run environmental education programmes for people of all ages
- **Community:** Through our commitment to God, each other and the wider creation, we aim to develop good relationships both within the A Rocha family and in our local communities
- **Cross-cultural:** We draw on the insights and skills of people from diverse cultures, both locally and around the world
- **Cooperation:** We work in partnership with a wide variety of organisations and individuals who share our concerns for a sustainable world

A Rocha UK Council of Reference

- Professor Graham Ashworth CBE, DL
- Rev Steve Chalke MBE
- Rev Dr Rob Frost
- Ram Gidoomal CBE
- Dr Andy Gosler
- Sir John Houghton FRS
- The Rt Rev Dr James Jones
- Professor Sir Ghilleain Prance FRS
- Dr Elaine Storkey

Monthly News by e-mail:

If you would like a monthly e-mail with up-to-date news from A Rocha around the world, please send an e-mail to international@arocha.org asking to be added to the list. This can be used for information and prayer.

To learn more about how you can support the work of A Rocha...

A Rocha UK, 13 Avenue Road, Southall UB1 3BL
Tel.: 020 8574 5935 e-mail : uk@arocha.org
website : www.arocha.org or www.arocha.org.uk

The first word

By **Dave Bookless**,
National Director, A Rocha UK



Welcome to the first issue of A Rocha UK's new magazine! It's a response to requests for more resources, more news, and more biblical teaching.

We're delighted with it. Please let us know what you think, and please send us your own ideas and contributions – we can't use them all, but we'll take them all seriously.

In this issue we report on the successful 'Hope for the Planet' conference, and look at the links between poverty and environment – illustrated from several A Rocha projects. We also announce some important new initiatives and resources: a new A Rocha book, a multi-media pack for this year's Environment Sunday and more! Don't miss 'Climate Stewards' inside the back cover – a practical way of making a difference – tell your friends. There are also some important job opportunities in A Rocha UK (p.18).

Most importantly, this magazine is part of a strategy to grow our support base in the UK significantly. Globally the environmental situation worsens daily, and opportunities for A Rocha multiply, but our resources aren't keeping up. We need to spread the word – why not show this magazine to 6 friends, and encourage each to photocopy the response form on the back page and return it to us?

Finally a huge thank-you to John Smiley, stepping down as Chair of A Rocha UK's Board after 6 years. John has been pivotal in countless ways – we quite simply wouldn't be here without his wisdom, encouragement and hard work. We're delighted John plans to stay involved, and equally delighted that existing trustee Richard Hall has agreed to Chair the Board over the coming years.



Come and enjoy a Lee Abbey break in partnership with A Rocha in 2006! There's no better place to marvel at God's creation, and enjoy the hospitality of an international Christian Community.

0800 389 1189
www.LeeAbbey.org.uk
Lynton, North Devon, EX35 6JJ

Upcoming Lee Abbey conferences with A Rocha

**6th – 10th March 2006 (Mon–Fri)
Whose Earth is it anyway?**

It is easy to see why God has told us to take care of his world – a command often neglected by Christians and the Church. With A Rocha's **Dave Bookless** and **John Wibberley**, we look at the implications of Jesus being the saviour of the whole cosmos. *From £172 full board*



**29th Sep – 1st Oct 2006 (Fri–Sun)
The Lord's is the Earth:
Harvest Weekend**

At Harvest, we thank God for his awesome creation which speaks of beauty and fruitfulness, yet groans in agony at our carelessness. **Dave Bookless** will explore ways of making a fresh start in caring for our world. *From £102 full board*

More holidays, mid-weeks and weekend breaks in our new 2006-07 programme – available now!

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Hope for the planet



By Dave Bookless,
National Director, A Rocha UK

“A high octane day ... but it has been unleaded!” That’s how Peter Harris summed up ‘Hope for the Planet’.



A Rocha UK’s first major conference for church leaders was powerful stuff, with four eminent academics giving superb presentations. By the end, heads were spinning, overdosed with information, but aware of the scale of the environmental crisis, and of the opportunities to get involved. This article gives a flavour of November 24th 2005 – a day to remember.

Alister McGrath, Professor of Historical Theology at Oxford University, kicked off by highlighting the failure of human-centred and atheistic ideas in protecting the environment... “The Christian doctrine of creation gives you a far more robust, resilient way of demonstrating that nature is special than any secular argument”. He outlined four biblical foundations for a Christian ecology:

1. **The natural order, including humanity, was created by God and belongs to God.** A plaque in St. Paul’s Cathedral about Sir Christopher Wren says: “If you are looking for his memorial, look around you”. Similarly, creation points to the greater beauty of God.

2. **Humanity is distinguished from the remainder of creation by being made in the “image of God”.**

This is God delegating responsibility, not conferring privilege. There is no excuse for environmental exploitation - we are accountable to the Creator and Owner.

3. **Humanity is charged with tending creation (as Adam was entrusted with the care of Eden – Genesis 2.15), knowing that creation is God’s cherished possession.** “It is God’s and he loves it ...we must think before we act.”

4. **There is no theological ground for humanity having the “right” to do what it pleases with the natural order.** Humanity is creation’s steward, not its exploiter.

Sir John Houghton then built the case for a Christian understanding of sustainability (“not cheating on our children, or our neighbour”), making it clear that “climate change is the most important environmental problem which we face”. He spoke of near unanimity amongst scientists on the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change, agreeing that a temperature rise of 2° - 6°C is inevitable unless massive changes are made now.

“If God’s people will live faithfully in response to Jesus the Lord, there is hope for the planet”.
Rev. Peter Harris

The effects we already see will get worse:

- **Sea-level rise:** This won’t only affect Bangladesh, “If you live in East Anglia you’ll have a big problem.”
 - **More intense heat waves:** 2003’s European Heatwave has been linked directly to climate change. It killed 20-30,000 people.
 - **A more intense hydrological cycle:** Floods, droughts and hurricanes are more likely. The most severe droughts will be 10 times more likely in 2100. Drawing on articles in *Science and Nature*, Sir John said, “it’s very likely that [Hurricane] Katrina was that intense because the water in the Gulf of Mexico is warmer than it’s been for a very long time.”
- Sir Ghillean Prance drew on a lifetime’s experience in South America and elsewhere. The beautiful Golden Toad of Costa Rica, which he saw in the 1970s, is now extinct, killed by a drier habitat caused by Climate Change, while in Hawaii 37% of endemic birds and 10% of endemic plants are already

The now extinct Golden Toad of Costa Rica



extinct. Sir Ghillean went on to summarise the global *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment* (www.MAWeb.org) to illustrate how we are “living beyond our means”:

- In the last 50 years, humans have changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively than ever before, causing substantial and largely irreversible loss in the diversity of life on earth.
- These changes have benefited human well-being and economic development, but have damaged ecosystems and increased poverty.
- Ecosystem degradation could get worse in the first half of this century and is a barrier to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
- It may be possible to reverse some degradation of ecosystems and meet increasing demands for their services, but only with significant changes to policies and practices.

Dr. Elaine Storkey reminded us that when environmental disasters hit, “inevitably the poor are picking up the tab. The poor are there when the hurricane hits, when the tornado comes, when freak weather conditions are there. 98% of those killed and affected by natural disasters come from developing countries.” More of Elaine’s talk can be found in “Thinking it Through” (page 18).

The conclusion was overwhelming. It is not primarily population growth in the developing world, but over-consumption in the west that is to blame. The world’s billion richest people consume sixteen times as much as the billion poorest. The divide between “development” and “conservation” is overcome when we recognise that both are primarily about unsustainable western lifestyles.

Hope? What Hope?

Hope connected every speaker. It came through the worship, led by Paul Lavender and friends. The success of the conference (superbly organised by volunteers Sandra Coverdale and Seketa Crowley), gave us hope. The conference was significantly overbooked, generated interest from major organisations (including the RSPB, National Trust and Church Mission Society) and the media (Church Times and Premier Radio). But the river of hope ran much deeper, based on evidence from around the world, and on the nature and work of God.

John Houghton found hope in thousands of scientists creating a consensus report on Climate Change, and in technical solutions that already

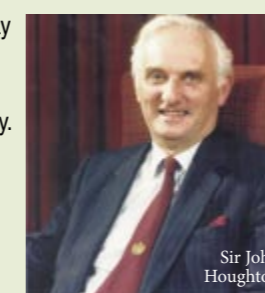
A green and happy ending

‘Green Endings’ brought along a bamboo coffin and a cardboard coffin. ‘Funerals of your choice’ (can I defer that decision for a while please?) and ‘Environmentally friendly’ it says on the card. So, when it’s time to move on, I can do so with a clean, green conscience. It wasn’t just coffins. There were church leaders too, over 200 of them

(there must be a collective noun for church leaders A heard?). They weren’t all lined up on the Green Endings stall though and there was no easy way to pick the one you’d like to do your funeral.



Despite the coffins, it wasn’t a funeral day. It was a day of hope. Outside, the weather had changed and it was brass-monkey cold. Inside, the hot topic was climate change, arguably the biggest issue facing mankind today. Sir John Houghton certainly provided food for thought. This man is both a global authority on climate change and a man of God too. Short of God speaking direct from his throne, is there anyone better qualified to change the way the church thinks about climate change? It wasn’t just



Sir John. There were two Sirs, one Professor and a Doctor (this isn’t the first line of a joke) all doing their bit to help the assembled masses climb aboard the modern day Noah’s Ark that is A Rocha.

Who knows how many will climb aboard? More than Noah’s Ark version one hopefully. The church does seem to be coming out of it’s environmental slumber. If it really wakes up it could be an environmental giant,



Hope for the Planet Speakers, Rev Peter Harris, Prof Sir Ghilleen Prance, Dr Elaine Storkey, Rev Dave Bookless, Sir John Houghton and Prof Alister McGrath

exist. We just need the will to change. Even the UK government's energy policy review states that a 60% reduction in CO2 emissions would only cost the equivalent of 6 months' GDP spread over 50 years. Ghilleen Prance shared the hopeful example of Cornwall's Eden project, now a major tourist attraction, and illustrated how western companies and indigenous Amazonian tribes can work together to provide incomes and environmental sustainability.

Changing human behaviour is the key environmental issue. A world leader has said that "90% of conservation work is with people", and in the words of one speaker: "We think we have an environmental crisis. We're wrong. The environment has a human crisis". Ghilleen Prance quoted Sir Roy Strong, who co-ordinated the 1992 Rio Earth Summit: "We cannot expect to make the fundamental changes needed in our economic life unless they are based on the highest and best of our moral, spiritual and ethical traditions, a reverence for life, a respect for each other, and a commitment to responsible stewardship of the earth."

Our hope must be grounded in God's commitment to the earth and his power to change people. If God created the universe, if he is committed to its upkeep, then we can have hope for the planet. If Jesus is the one "in whom all things hold together" (Colossians 1.17), then, in Elaine Storkey's words: "Our hope for the whole of the future of the human race, our hope for the planet, rests upon this Jesus", and (quoting John Houghton) "because of his incarnation and resurrection we have the promise of a future", both for us and the material creation. Ghilleen Prance cited Romans 8.22-25, where Paul compares the earth

to a woman groaning in labour - not the despairing groaning of many contemporary environmentalists, but a hopeful groaning focussed on new birth. Finally, Alister McGrath looked to the future of the planet in God's hands, reminding us that "Just as there is a connection between me and my resurrection body and you and your resurrection body and the Old Jerusalem and the new Jerusalem, the New Heavens and so on... we have to trust that in some way the whole business of salvation is about God making all things new."

A Rocha's work, though small in global terms, is a major source of hope. Ghilleen Prance talked of how "people have been really inspired and witnessed to through the example of A Rocha... I think A Rocha could be in 50 countries - the number of people that are asking us about the work of A Rocha and are enthusiastic to do something similar. I feel that is the Holy Spirit working - convicting people that we need to take this part of the gospel more seriously."

As he closed, Peter Harris, who has seen A Rocha grow from tiny roots 23 years ago, added: "This is something God is doing and it is a sign of hope and the secular environmental people recognise this more than the Christians! If God's people will live faithfully in response to Jesus the Lord, there is hope for the planet, just as there is hope for people's lives and hope for human societies."

The main talks and other resources from 'Hope for the Planet' are available on CD-Rom from the A Rocha UK office for £10. Contact Maria at uk@arocha.org or 020 8574 5935.

"Climate change is the most important environmental problem which we face".
Sir John Houghton.



Pete Hawkins, A Rocha's UK Development Director

Turning inside out

Pete Hawkins, A Rocha's UK Development Director, highlights recent developments and where energies will be concentrated in the future.

A Rocha UK needs to turn inside out! That's the major finding of a recent survey of existing and potential supporters. Up and down the country Christians and others are waking up to the degradation of creation and want resourcing in how to live differently.

A Rocha's mission is to encourage this. To do it involves improving the way we resource individuals and encourage local activities. We want to be in contact with as many people as possible, and as part of our development strategy have set a target of 5,000 people by the end of 2007. We have recognised, however, that the existing membership scheme does not encourage these relationships as well as it might.

That's why we've conducted a root and branch review of our membership scheme by consulting over 300 people. You may well have played a part by answering or forwarding a questionnaire. We are very grateful to all who helped. The findings are very encouraging and we highlight below some of the main ones (to view the full report, please visit www.arocha.org.uk)

Firstly we surveyed existing A Rocha supporters...

- Most first hear about A Rocha from their friends, and are interested because of the combined Christian and environmental aims.
- 72% are interested in A Rocha's work in both the UK and internationally.
- Of the existing 'supporter services' the newsletters are very highly endorsed; members days and holidays are rated as only moderately important.
- 40% of existing supporters are keen to get more involved, mainly through local groups, practical volunteering and lifestyle choices.
- 74% are interested in signing up to a voluntary creation-care lifestyle commitment.
- The largest age-group of A Rocha supporters is aged 51-60.

We also surveyed Christians who were not A Rocha supporters...

- A massive 94% regard caring for the environment as important, the top 3 issues being pollution, global warming and deforestation.
- People want to learn about the theological foundations of creation care, and about the environmental crisis and its causes.
- People particularly want A Rocha to help with providing information about how to live more sustainably where they are.
- If supporting A Rocha financially, people would prefer regular financial news and appeals to a fixed membership scheme.

We will be launching the reshaped supporter scheme shortly and look forward to welcoming many, many new friends and spreading the word.



The North West Surrey A Rocha group

PHOTO: KEN MORT

Local Heroes

A Rocha UK's Genesis Programme, is about reaching current and future church leaders, and also about resourcing grassroots Christian activists. The latter is very dependent upon the hard work of local volunteers. Much great work is already being done, and Cambridge, North Surrey and Dronfield illustrate the diverse initiatives happening up and down the UK. As ever, we welcome hearing what you are doing, wherever you are, and how we can better serve you.

In Cambridge, an A Rocha group started in 1997, and was given new blood when Rob & Petra Crofton moved there in 2003. After monthly activities and



Workshop delegates in Cambridge

meetings, a full-scale regional conference 'Stewards of Creation' was organised on 5th November 2005, with Dave Bookless as keynote speaker. Over 100 people came from all over East Anglia, hearing plenary talks and choosing 2 out of 8 workshops, led by local people. Twelve new members signed up on the day, with 20 new contacts for the local group, and £700 of books sold. One person said: "I thought it would be wacky and way-out - I am delighted that it's so Christ-centred and Biblical"



Bookstall in Cambridge

In North West Surrey, a group began 3 years ago, and has steadily grown to include about 20 people from 7 or 8 churches. Founders Ken and Mary Mort state "We meet about 5 times a year, keeping up with A Rocha developments, looking at local conservation issues and wider facets of creation care. Sometimes we meet at weekends - a dawn chorus walk now seems an annual fixture! It's really encouraging to see growing awareness in many churches of A Rocha concerns of conservation, creation care, community and prayer."

In Dronfield, south of Sheffield, Norman Crowson is leading a local A Rocha project restoring the Lea Brook valley that winds through the town. Launched as part of a week long mission run collaboratively by the churches, this drew in local conservation organisations and local people. This project and it's continued development will be profiled in depth in the next issue.

the voice on Radio 4 responding to the latest environmental crisis. Why shouldn't that be the church? God asked us to look after the planet after all. So wake up, throw off the duvet of complacency and do as you were told in Genesis. If the climate changes in the church who knows what might happen... there may well be a green and happy ending.

David Chandler
Environmental Educator and Author





Sian living and working in Afghanistan



Debbie Wright talks to Sian Hawkins about her new role, heading up the A Rocha Living Waterways project.

Introducing Sian Hawkins

new Director of A Rocha Living Waterways

First of all tell us something about your background.

I have done a variety of things before arriving here. I have a degree in environmental biology and then became a probation officer for 5 years. I felt a call to work overseas, so after training at All Nations Christian College in biblical and cross-cultural studies, I joined CMS and went out to Afghanistan for 6 years. I worked on a mental health project and then headed up a disaster management programme. Life was very challenging there and when I came back to the UK for a holiday, I realised it was time for a change.

How did you hear about A Rocha?

I first of all knew about A Rocha when I was at All Nations Christian College. Then, when I had returned to the UK and was looking for reassignment, Martin Thomas at CMS suggested I applied for a post here as my background and interests seemed perfect.

Living and working in Southall, what were your first impressions?

When I came here for my initial interview, I fell in love with the place, and that love has continued. The colour, smells, people and vibrancy of the whole place

makes me feel very at home. In Afghanistan you rarely saw women out - here I love seeing and meeting lots of Asian women from the traditionally dressed to the more western. The multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith community is wonderful and reminds me in many ways of Afghanistan.

You are splitting your time between A Rocha and St John's church in Southall. How does that work out?

I spend 2 days a week at St Johns working with the local community, and 3 days with A Rocha, now heading up the Living Waterways team. I love the way we are so involved with local people, and the Minet Country Park provides endless opportunities for practical activities. Caring for creation is a wonderful tool to reach out to people.

How about some of the challenges for the year ahead?

The team is very busy. The Living Waterways work is divided between Minet Country Park, education work, and work in local faith communities. The team are all very good at what they do, but I would like to foster a greater spirit of interdependence. Southall is a great place to live and work and I am really looking forward to the rest of 2006 and all that it brings.

“Everything has to do with something else, and if you follow it far enough, it has to do with you and God.”



Sewerage overflow in their water catchment area.

“Caring for creation is a wonderful tool to reach out to people.”

“We will never be able to turn things around as long as we understand our failures as essentially tactical and make proposals that are essentially technical.”



Peter and Miranda Harris

Poverty and Conservation

– Making the connection

Peter Harris,
Director,
A Rocha International

Ecology is the study of connections, even if the problem for contemporary ecologists is that we live in a time of strenuous disconnection. Privilege, whether personal or societal, requires isolation. Products conceal their origins, academic disciplines operate in expert solitude, social relationships fragment. In a year when the European Commission's own auditors cannot account for 65% of its own expenditure¹, we have to admit there is a lot we don't see too clearly.

In part this is because technological connection has never been easier, and so the very inconvenient light of knowledge can shine all too easily upon the often murky and unequal relations that lie behind the prosperity of the relatively few in an increasingly poor and broken world.



South African women collecting polluted drinking water.

But there is nothing new here – the Old Testament prophets were remarkably ahead of their time in spelling out inconvenient connections, and their ancient voices sound uncomfortably topical. We can listen to two across the centuries: anticipating our data by three millennia: Hosea takes us in one unflinching leap from social evils to ornithological catastrophe and from human dysfunction to marine distress. “Hear the word of the Lord... There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgement of God in the land. There is only cursing, lying and murder, stealing and adultery... Because of this the land mourns... the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying.”²

Isaiah said the same, “The land lies polluted under its inhabitants”³ - only one of the ancient and profound ecologists for whom pollution was always moral, whether physical or otherwise. However the creation

has its own logic, and all is not lost. The connections between human choices and environmental distress have never been more apparent. The good science which lies behind such magisterial achievements as the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment has inevitably brought to light the connected processes that lead inexorably from the decisions made in wealthy societies, to the consequences of ecosystem impoverishment, and inevitably then to human suffering.

It is becoming ever more apparent that knowledge of environmental degradation does not lead to the necessary changes within society, and so within the environmental organisations themselves a profound reflection has begun. A key conclusion of the highly influential study *The Death of Environmentalism*⁴ was that “We will never be able to turn things around as long as we understand our failures as essentially tactical and make proposals that are essentially technical.”

So it is a time of opportunity. We can begin with a renewed commitment to truth telling, to good research and honest enquiry of the wider creation, in order to re-connect our human choices to their global consequences. We can now understand much better the scope of all those choices to either impoverish or to enrich all of those human societies with whom we share God's good earth. We need to listen harder to those who are currently at the heart of the matter in the poorer world, whose words we find in these pages. We need to talk more clearly with those making the bigger decisions in the wealthy world, who we pray will hear the prophets. Why does it matter? Because as Eugene Peterson has rightly said, “Everything has to do with something else, and if you follow it far enough, it has to do with you and God.”⁵

(Footnotes)

¹ BBC online news 15.11.05 ² Hosea 4:1-3 NIV ³ Isaiah 24:5 AV ⁴ *The Death of Environmentalism: Global Warming Politics in a Post-Environmental World* by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus. Online publication Copyright 2004 www.thebreakthrough.org, www.evansmcdonough.com ⁵ Eugene Peterson: Regent Lectures: Follow the Leader.

Allen Goddard, on how A Rocha South Africa's 'Living Msunduzi Waterways Project' is working to create employment and a healthy ecosystem along the Msunduzi River

Allen, Nkosinathi and municipal workers in the conservancy



PHOTO: MARK BROWN

Making the Connection in South Africa

Conserving biodiversity and simultaneously uprooting poverty is challenging, because most environmental degradation and most poverty are interlinked and not accidental. The words of the Old Testament prophets about injustice are apt for today's world. Then as now, poverty and destruction of the environment are the result of social and political exploitation and selfishness. The interests of the few have been served by creating structures to keep the many in abject poverty. Simultaneously, creation's resources have been mismanaged. Apartheid is one recent example. Ongoing multinational abuse of Amazonian biospheres is another. Small wonder that both wildlife conservation and uplifting poor communities present one pivotal challenge – transforming wealthy people's political and economic attitudes and behaviours.

A Rocha South Africa is making a start in the 'Living Msunduzi Waterways Project' in Pietermaritzburg. Between its sources, and the confluence with the Umngeni River (about 70 km) the Msunduzi flows through

valleys which are home to 600,000 people, with either inadequate or no waterborne sewerage infrastructure. Little has changed here since apartheid. Rates of HIV infection, life expectancy, unemployment and poverty-related crimes are shocking, especially juxtaposed with the standard of living of South Africa's small wealthy class. The Msunduzi also meanders through Pietermaritzburg's urban and industrial centre so water quality is poor. Escherichia coli pollution and toxic industrial effluents threaten both human health and the survival of the surprising range of wild plants and animals – including flagship species like the River Monitor, Giant Kingfisher and Cape Clawless Otter.

'Riverside', A Rocha's temporary headquarters in South Africa, stands twelve metres above the Msunduzi. In the last year, A Rocha has created employment for Nkosinathi Chonco and other day workers, to transform a 2 km stretch of the riverbanks below Riverside into a conservancy. Invasive Syringa and Sesbania trees have made way for Quinine trees, wild bananas and currant bushes. Small businesses,



Malachite Kingfishers hunt along the Msunduzi River.



PHOTO: BARBARA MEARNS

Stella Simiyu – on how environmental degradation most hurts poor people:

"If you look at Africa, for example, the rural poor depend directly on the natural resource base. This is where their pharmacy is, this is where the local supermarket is, this is where the Do-It-Yourself store is, this is in fact their fuel station, their power company, their water company. What would happen to you if these things were removed from your local neighbourhood? Therefore we cannot afford not to invest in environmental conservation, because this is how we enhance the ability of the rural poor to have options and provide for them ways of getting out of the poverty trap."

Stella lives in Nairobi where she is Senior Research Scientist (Plant Conservation) at the East African Herbarium, National Museums of Kenya. She serves on the national committee of A Rocha Kenya and is an A Rocha International Trustee.

local schools and neighbouring residents are our project partners, donating funding necessary for this livelihood creation project. One partner, the Duzi-Umngeni Conservation Team, a group of canoeist conservationists and engineers, is following A Rocha's lead by fundraising for community employment projects to create a riparian conservancy all the way from Pietermaritzburg to Durban!

South Africa is like the world in one country. Our past has been sorely shaped by social and environmental injustice. Our future viability as a nation depends on meeting the basic needs of millions of poor people, while simultaneously safeguarding our country's scarce water resources



The start of the 'Duzi Marathon.

PHOTO: STEVE JERRY

and astoundingly rich heritage of biodiversity. Working for A Rocha in this challenging context offers hope. As Christians we understand the whole environment to be open to its Creator. A Rocha also affirms the cultural resourcefulness of all peoples, irrespective of belief. We strive to conserve the integrity of biospheres in a way that creates livelihoods and promotes co-operation between rich and poor for viable communities. A Rocha's ethos reaches to the heart of the poverty-

ecology challenge. We are seeking to pioneer conservation practice where healthy ecosystems, equitable livelihoods and healthy communities will be mutually sustaining.

A Rocha wins "Hope for Europe" Award

The "Hope for Europe" award for 2005 was presented to A Rocha in Tavira, Portugal, in October. The annual award recognizes a project or a ministry, in Europe, which "embodies the proclamation and demonstration of the message of hope, while maintaining core values

of partnership, networking, transformation, and integrity (in finances, relationships, and ministry)." The award was accepted by Marcial Felgueiras, Director of A Rocha Portugal and Alfredo Abreu, one of the International Trustees.



The Portugal team with Beatriz Felgueiras holding up the "Hope for Europe" award

Star Tortoise

The Indian Star Tortoise *Geochelone elegans*



Vijay D. Anand with an adult tortoise

The Indian Star Tortoise is a characteristic species of the Indian sub-continent.

It is distinctive and attractive, growing to around 30cm across the carapace, but it faces a number of threats: it is traded for food, used in traditional medicine (primarily in Asia) and kept as a pet in Asia and North America. In India it is illegal either to possess or trade the Indian Star Tortoise and the species is also legally protected in Sri Lanka and Pakistan. It is listed in Appendix 2 of the 'Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora' (CITES) as a species that, while not currently endangered, is at a risk of becoming extinct. Despite this, the Indian Star Tortoise is widely traded.

A study by A Rocha India's Vijay D. Anand and Surendra Varma in collaboration with the Wildlife Trust of India investigated the complex and secretive way in which this species is taken from the wild and illegally traded. The results reveal a global network whose

end result is cruelty to animals and the pushing of a species towards extinction.

Research involved several aspects. Visits were made to enforcement agencies to collect information about past tortoise seizures, details of offenders and prosecutions, and also the status of the seized animals. Rehabilitation centres were also contacted to gather information on Star Tortoises in captivity. Field investigations looked at habitats and the source of the trade.

Undercover enquiries were made at markets, pet shops and business establishments to assess their involvement. Web page and literature surveys were carried out, to determine the global extent of trade in Indian Star Tortoises. The results allowed mapping of the most common routes through which these tortoises are taken and exported. In the Andhra Pradesh region they are mostly collected by nomadic local forest hunters and then sold through nearby villagers to dealers in major cities such as Bangalore. They are smuggled abroad, often through cruel methods in which most suffer and many die.

Although most tortoises are destined for the Asian market, their high value in the United States (where they can fetch up to \$1,000) means that attempts are made to smuggle them there. Although the more effective enforcement of laws in the United States appears to be restricting illegal imports, some smuggling clearly continues. The treatment of tortoises rescued from would-be smugglers seems often to be poorly managed and death rates of up to 60% have been reported at one rehabilitation centre.

This study lays the foundations for reducing trade in the Indian Star Tortoise. The identification of collection sites, transit points, smuggling methods and final destinations is an aid to enforcement agencies.



Juvenile tortoises seized from smugglers

In Kenya children learn about the connection between their future and the conservation of the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest.

A Rocha Kenya is committed to working with other conservation organisations and local communities to protect the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, one of the most important forests for wildlife in all Africa. But how can children living around the forest escape from poverty? Through the ASSETS programme (an eco-bursary scheme initiated by A Rocha Kenya) many are able to attend secondary school and look forward to employment opportunities their parents never

had. Through its environmental education programme, A Rocha Kenya teaches young people about other ways in which they can benefit from the survival of the forest.

Melissa Ong, currently working with A Rocha International, interviews two teenagers who are members of local wildlife clubs run by Tsofa Mweni, A Rocha Kenya's Environmental Education Officer.

"we learnt that conserving the environment is a way of helping ourselves. It also helps us by getting jobs."

CLEOPHASS SULUBU (Aged 15)

"When I was young I used to poach small birds by trapping and shooting them. We used to take our animals for grazing. At the grazing site, we just gave the animals to the younger kids and then we converged inside the forest to poach some animals." Cleophas tells us that it was like a competition to see who could kill more. He and his friends used catapults to kill the birds and ate them later. He's even eaten the rare Golden-rumped Elephant-shrew.

After learning from A Rocha Kenya about the importance of the forest, he's stopped killing birds, because "we learnt that conserving the environment is a way of helping ourselves. It also helps us by getting jobs."

Environmental education has also impacted his family and village. "In those olden days, my parents used to burn charcoal for fuel. They used to cut down the big hardwood trees. After we have learnt from Mr Tsofa, then we passed that message to them by explaining the importance of forest conservation." What does his family use now? Wood and branches from fallen trees, which was what we found when we made a surprise visit to his home after the interview.

Cleophas watches as his sister cooks ugali for lunch, using firewood instead of charcoal.



PHOTO: MELISSA ONG

RUWA JEREMIAH (Aged 13)

The teacher picked Ruwa for us to speak with because he had written an excellent article, "Why Arabuko-Sokoke Forest Should Be Conserved" for the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest News Bulletin.

Shy Ruwa aspires to attend secondary school and wants to be a doctor when he grows up. We asked, "Do your parents have money to send you to secondary school?" He shook his head slowly. But he knows there is hope. He mentions a student who graduated from his school, and now attends the top secondary school in Kenya. It was made possible through the support of ASSETS, which he writes about in his article.

Ruwa speaking with Mel at his school

PHOTO: DANIEL TAY



A Rocha Kenya environmental educator, Tsofa Mweni, Wildlife Club teacher, George Yaa, with students Ruwa Jeremiah and Cleophass Sulubu.

For him, the importance of conserving the forest and growing trees is more than a textbook fact. He knows it's linked with his future and his life: "It is important because it is catchment area for rain. After learning in school, I told my parents to plant more trees. They went to the Forest Station to buy seedlings and I helped them to plant the seedlings."



PHOTO: MELISSA ONG

Environmental Education in Canada: Making the connection between poverty and the environment

Poverty isn't just a problem in the developing world. In all countries, urban poverty and environmental degradation go together. The Vancouver area of British Columbia, Canada, is well known for its spectacular scenery of mountains and rocky coastlines. In fact, every license plate on every car declares "Beautiful British Columbia." But even here, many people in urban areas cannot easily get into the countryside or enjoy the local wildlife. In East Vancouver the A Rocha Canada team offers day camps to local children. The price of attending the camps is intentionally kept very low, to make them accessible for kids of all backgrounds, from single parent and foster care families to newly arrived immigrants. During the urban-based day camp, the kids spend the first part of the week in their own neighbourhood, learning about the plants and wildlife that can be found in their everyday life. They play games, sing songs, hear stories, make crafts and enjoy all the fun of a typical day camp. Then on the final day, everyone loads into the big church vans and heads

out to the A Rocha Field Study Centre. Here they gasp in wonder as they pull strange bugs from the water during pond-dipping activities and have the chance to pet the hairy Highland Cows while learning about sustainable living. In both settings children are given the gift of new eyes to discover the amazing creation which surrounds them every day. *Jessica Nye*



Day Camp in Vancouver

Poverty isn't just a problem in the developing world. In all countries, urban poverty and environmental degradation go together.

Welcome to the first ever AR-Kids (ARK, get it?)

AR-KIDS

This page is especially for our younger readers and this issue has a feathery focus. We hope you like it.

give a bird a home

Different birds nest in different places. Pheasants nest on the ground, Blackbirds use bushes or small trees and Rooks build high up in tall trees. Great Tits and Blue Tits nest in holes in trees, or at least they do if they can find the right hole! There aren't always enough natural nest holes but you can help by building a nestbox. You'll find a plan here: www.rspb.org.uk/youth/makeanddo/activities/nestbox.

When you've built it get an adult to help you put it up. Put it on a tree, wall, fencepost or something similar about 180cm or more off the ground. Make sure that it's not in bright sunlight and that the wind

and rain won't blow straight in the hole. Do your best to put it where cats can't get at it and where you can see it from the house.

Nest-box experts recommend putting up nestboxes before spring gets going, so don't hang around! Once it's up, sit back and watch...



the hole story

Imagine a pair of Blue Tits move into your nestbox. The female builds the nest

relying on the male for food while she's stuck in the box. After about two weeks, the eggs hatch, and both parents feed the chicks. Caterpillars are a favourite food – the young eat hundreds before leaving the nest 16-22 days after hatching. In the UK, Blue Tits normally have just one brood of eggs a year.

from moss, grass, twigs with maybe some hair, wool and feathers. She'll probably lay 7-13 eggs. She does all of the incubation,



top facts

A Bald Eagle in Florida had a nest that was 2.9m wide, 6m deep and weighed over 3,000kg!

Wandering Albatross eggs take up to 85 days to hatch.

In Central and South America, Violaceous Trogons nest in wasp nests. They have to eat the wasps first of course.

Ostriches lay the biggest egg of any bird. One egg is as big as 24 hen's eggs, and would take 40 minutes to boil!

A Grey Partridge in Sussex laid 25 eggs in a single clutch! Phew.

The Bee Hummingbird of Cuba is the world's smallest bird. Its nest is the size of a thimble.



REMEMBER >>>>> Birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law. Take great care not to disturb nesting birds.

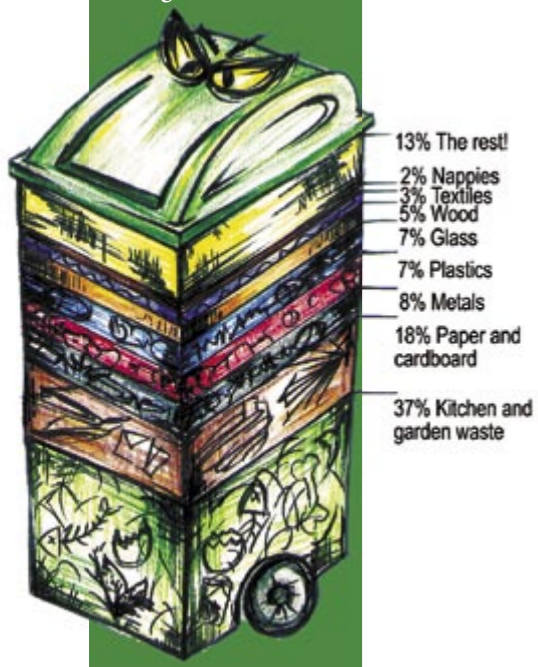


How Green is YOUR valley?

At first I was delighted to be asked to contribute to this magazine - the necessity of an ethical sustainable lifestyle is close to my heart. But then I went into mild panic. We're a very ordinary family living in our local community, trying to balance (or not!) work and church, social life, the house and looking after our two young boys. I'm enthusiastic but no expert. How could I possibly help others with "what to do"?

However, all around us is a need to "do" something. I see clear evidence of it in the bulging rubbish bins ready for collection.

The diagram shows the average bin's contents



Recycling is often the first way we think of being 'greener'. But why don't a lot of people bother? How can I encourage my friends and neighbours to live a greener lifestyle without being pious or piling on the guilt?

Some people are overwhelmed by the enormity of the subject. However, as the joke goes "How do you eat an elephant? ...one mouthful at a time!"

So start small and make it achievable. Sort your rubbish into real waste and recyclables. If you don't know, phone your local council for what can and can't be recycled and where the recycling banks are (also www.wastewatch.org.uk). Two websites www.recycle-more.co.uk and www.recoup.org have information about plastics and yoghurt pots. You may even add a composting element, with the benefit of also helping your garden, but that can always come later!

If you enjoy a glass of wine, remember corks can be recycled too. Send an envelope full to Guides Corks, Freepost, LON 17392, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 8BR. Contact www.drinks-cartons.com for information on recycling juice cartons, which are made of high grade board.

You don't need specialized containers for recycling - use something you already have. We use an old kitchen bin alongside the 'waste' bin for paper, tin and plastic, an ice-cream container under the sink for aluminium foil; even an old plastic milk carton with the top cut off for used batteries. These should not be 'binned' because heavy metals may leak into the ground. Cadmium, for example, can be



Jenny Hawkins, is a busy mum, juggling family, work and a desire to live a sustainable lifestyle, without killing herself trying to do it!

toxic to aquatic invertebrates and fish. Even better, use re-chargeables (www.rebat.com for rechargeable battery recycling). Our council collects much of our recycling; the rest we take to the local recycling centre when making another journey.

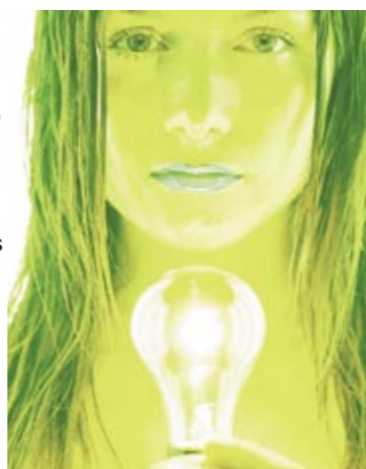
By recycling one plastic bottle you conserve enough energy to light a 60W bulb for six hours.

Recycling two glass bottles saves enough energy to boil water for five cups of tea! Just think how many bottles we use throughout a week? But only 3% of household plastic bottles are currently recycled.

Over the next few issues we'll look at house and laundry cleaning products, shopping, packaging and consumerism and also energy consumption. We would love to hear any practical tips that you've had success with on these or other topics. Let's share the journey, where ever we may be on it.

If you have a go, you WILL be making a difference. Once something becomes a habit you can move on up to your next achievable challenge! Remember whatever you do will make a difference to you and your Valley!

Jenny Hawkins

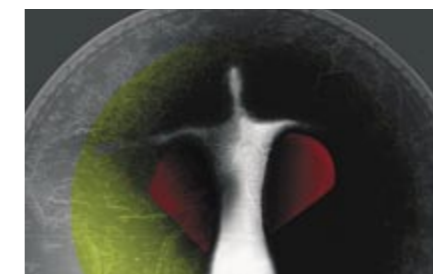


Poverty & Planet – Which comes first?

Thinking It Through



By Rev Dave Bookless,



In 2005 many Christians supported "Make Poverty History". Some are now calling for a "Make Climate Change History" campaign. But is this a Christian concern to the same extent? Does God care more about people than polar bears? Should we? This brief study combines material from Dr. Elaine Storkey's talk at "Hope for the Planet" with ideas for discussion.

"What is poverty? Poverty is a whole amalgam of things. It's about hunger, it's about malnutrition, high infant and maternal mortality rates, poor access to fresh water, vulnerability to climate change, illiteracy, low income, indebtedness, global exclusions, powerlessness, exposure to disease and epidemics, not a few of which are actually communicated in the context of climate change." Dr. Elaine Storkey

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Psalm 24.1; Job 38.4-18; Genesis 1.26-31; Psalm 104.10-18

- Whose world is it? How does this affect our use of 'resources'?
- How do God's role, and our roles as humans differ, in terms of caring for the earth and providing for human needs?

COLOSSIANS 1.15-20

- What does this passage tell us about the purpose of the universe?
- If "all things hold together" in Christ, how does that help us understand:
- the scope of God's interests?
- the roots of the environmental crisis?
- hope for both people and planet?

Elaine Storkey says "Three central relationships define us - with God, with each other, and with the rest of creation." From these come attitudes that flow from God through us towards others and towards creation :

- Guardianship of the earth – Genesis 1.26-28
- Neighbour love – Luke 10.25-37
- Compassion – Matthew 10.29-31
- Justice – Amos 5.21-24
- The equal significance of every human being before God – Psalm 139

- How do we see each of these values impacting our lifestyles, our politics, and our attitudes to both poverty and environment?

One of A Rocha's core values is "community" – understanding that all creation is relational – beginning with God as Father-Son-Spirit, and including the three key relationships which Elaine describes.

- How does understanding of inter-relatedness of God, humanity and the natural world help in tackling the twin needs of poverty alleviation and environmental protection?
- It may help to refer to some of the stories from A Rocha's work elsewhere in this magazine.

Now read and discuss these statements :

- "The poor are not usually the major cause of environmental degradation." UK Government Report
- "Inevitably the poor are picking up the tab. The poor are there when the hurricane hits, when the tornado comes, when freak weather conditions are there. 98% of those killed and affected by natural disasters come from developing countries." Elaine Storkey
- "Our trading system in the world at the moment moves money from the poor to the rich. That's the most condemning statistic I know as a Christian." Sir. John Houghton
- "Is it fair that we in the west live the way we want to live, with high consumptions levels, with high pollution levels, when we know what it's costing people in other parts of the globe?" Elaine Storkey
- Is it fair to talk about the idolatry of materialism and individualism having infected western churches?

PRACTICAL RESPONSE

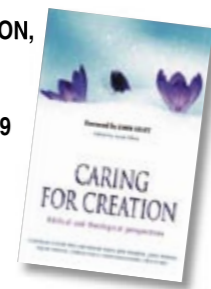
- We may agree on Christian attitudes in this area, but what helps us move to practical responses?
- How do each of A Rocha's "5 Cs" (Christian, Conservation, Community, Cross-cultural, Co-operation) have practical outcomes in our lifestyles?
- There are many practical steps we can take. What is the next step God is challenging you to? (For some it may be changing light bulbs, for others changing cars or careers - be open!)

STATISTICS ON POVERTY & ENVIRONMENT

- Global population – today : 6.2 billion people, rising to 8.9 billion by 2030
- Consumption : the world's richest 20% consume 16x as much as the poorest 20%
- 20% more natural resources are already used every year than can be regenerated
- Richest 1/6 population produce 55% of CO2 emissions.
- Income: the world's richest 20% have an income 74x the poorest 20%
- Poorest 1/6 population produce 3% of CO2 emissions.
- 20% of the world's population consume 80% of world's resources

Which of these statistics hits you hardest? Why? Which of the key Christian attitudes described above has relevance here – and how?

CARING FOR CREATION,
Ed. Sarah Tillett,
pub. Bible Reading
Fellowship, 2005, £8.99
ISBN 1 84101 4397



In his foreword to a new A Rocha book *Caring for Creation*, John Stott writes, "Creation is a much-neglected biblical topic, and caring for creation an equally neglected biblical responsibility. So I am delighted with this symposium." *Caring for Creation* meets a real need by combining twelve biblical reflections from various authors with stories from A Rocha's work around the world. Whilst published in the UK and edited by British A Rocha supporter Sarah Tillett, the book has a truly international feel – with chapters from Vinoth Ramachandra, Eugene Peterson, and James Houston and stories from nine different A Rocha projects. Other contributors include eminent scientists Sir Ghilleen Prance, Professor R. J. Berry, Sir John Houghton and A Rocha's own Peter and Miranda Harris and Dave Bookless. It's a great book to pass on to anybody who wants to explore the biblical basis for A Rocha's work.

Available from the A Rocha office.

ENVIRONMENT SUNDAY 2006

– Hope for the Planet

This year we've really pushed the boat out! The pack contains a CD-Rom with service orders, OHP masters, specially written songs and drama sketches, PowerPoint presentations, a 5 week bible-study course and specially recorded music and visuals. A bonus DVD included with the pack contains no less than four films – the "A New



Creation" Living Waterways story, a brand new international A Rocha film, a film with John Stott and other Christian leaders talking about the importance of creation care, and a film of Dave Bookless preaching at Gerrards-Cross.

All this for only £10 including postage from the A Rocha office.

HOPE FOR THE PLANET

– CD- Rom - Missed the conference in November?

Never mind! You can listen to all the keynote addresses (from Professors Alister McGrath, John Houghton, Ghilleen Prance and Dr. Elaine Storkey) along with talks from Peter and Miranda Harris. The CD-Rom also contains PowerPoint presentations of most of the talks, and other resources from the conference.

This makes an ideal resource to accompany the latest Environment Sunday pack which is also on "Hope for the Planet".

Available for £10 including postage from the A Rocha office.

The international A ROCHA CONSERVATION SCIENCE REVIEW 2003-2005

has just been published and can now be downloaded at <http://en.arocha.org/work/index7.html>. It can also be bought from the Natural History Book Service for £5.95 (+44 (0)1803 865913 www.nhbs.com).



Debbie Wright talks to David Hughes on A Rocha and 'Climate Stewards'.

"A Rocha has opened my eyes, and is doing something practical about it!"

Introducing A Rocha UK Members

How did you first hear about A Rocha?

In 2004, my wife and I spent a year touring Europe in a camper van. I'd vaguely heard of a Christian environmental project in Portugal. To cut a long story short, we spent the best Easter we've ever had at Cruzinha (A Rocha Portugal). Here was a bunch of Christians living out their Christian faith in community. Later in our trip we visited Finland and met Lennart Saari of A Rocha Finland, and finally Peter Harris "just happened" to be preaching in the Anglican Church in Brussels. After that I was hooked!

So hooked in fact that a year later, you are now working for A Rocha as a volunteer on a part-time basis...

We came across A Rocha at the same time as I was thinking of what to do after leaving Royal Mail. Peter outlined the need to make A Rocha more financially self-sustaining. We felt I could use my experience to help A Rocha explore this whole area.

Why are you so excited about A Rocha?

I am a Christian and an environmentalist, but was unaware if anyone else was too! It seemed obvious to me that there was a message of creation care in the Bible, but the church has been running behind in responding to the environmental crisis. A Rocha

has opened my eyes, and is doing something practical about it!!

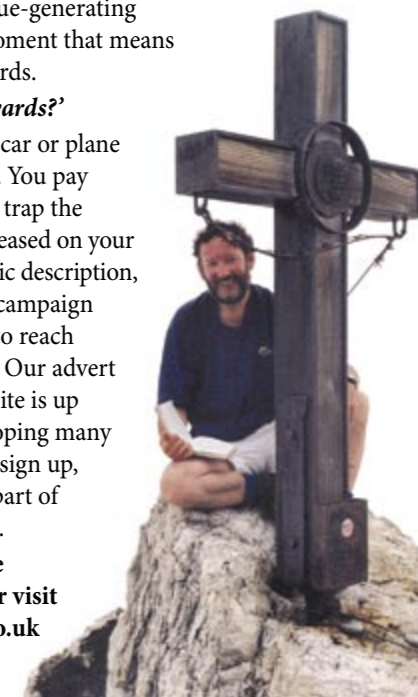
So what exactly are you doing for A Rocha?

My job is to create revenue-generating businesses, and at the moment that means setting up Climate Stewards.

So what is 'Climate Stewards'?

Every time you travel by car or plane you emit carbon dioxide. You pay us to plant trees that will trap the carbon dioxide you've released on your journey. This is a simplistic description, but we want to keep the campaign as accessible as possible to reach large numbers of people. Our advert explains more. Our website is up and running and I am hoping many A Rocha supporters will sign up, tell their friends and be part of this very exciting project.

For more about Climate Stewards see opposite or visit www.climatestewards.co.uk



David Hughes

Opportunities with A Rocha

Working for A Rocha

A Rocha UK has a number of key vacancies this year. Please consider these or pass on the details to others. Most people who work for A Rocha raise their own support, partially or completely, and salary / support levels are by negotiation.

• **Centre Managers / Wardens in Southall** (if a couple, then could be combined with other A Rocha work).

• **Managing Director** – a senior post to oversee A Rocha UK's growth over the next 5 years or more.

• **Scientific Director** – combining overseeing A Rocha's UK science and ecological consultancy.

• **Accountancy** – qualified book-keeper up to trial-balance standard or above, working part-time or full time combined with other duties.

ALSO... salaried opportunities with the West London Floating

Classroom in which A Rocha is a key partner. Please contact us immediately about these as the closing date is imminent.

• **Manager** - This will be someone who runs the Charity and manages the booking for education and community use. They will be based at Willow Tree Marina, Hayes.

• **Teacher** - Full time salaried. This post will be based with A Rocha when not on the boat.

Volunteering with A Rocha

• **Summer 2006** – contact us now to help with playschemes and events this summer.

• **Gap Year?** – Opportunities for 2006-2007 in the UK and elsewhere. Please contact uk@arocha.org.

• **Lebanon** – help with spring migration and bird survey work – contact lebanon@arocha.org.

Climate Stewards

Concerned about climate change? Want to do something about it? Look no further.

www.climatestewards.co.uk



Climate Stewards is a new enterprise from A Rocha. It reduces the impact of CO2 given off by our energy-hungry lifestyles. CO2 adds to global warming. A Rocha will use the carbon credits you buy from Climate Stewards to fund tree-planting or other actions to reabsorb the CO2 & protect the world from its effects. All projects supported by Climate Stewards will be directly managed by A Rocha.

Climate Stewards is an internet based service which enables you to neutralize your CO2 emissions by paying A Rocha to plant trees which will reabsorb the CO2 you emit. Initially we will be funding tree planting through the ASSETS project run by A Rocha Kenya and a project run in schools and universities by A Rocha Ghana. By using A Rocha projects, Climate Stewards will achieve so much more than just absorbing CO2. We will also be encouraging bio-



diversity by using a mix of native species and promoting community development by working with local action groups to do the planting and after care. We will also fund other ways of reducing the impact of CO2 emissions as the scheme develops. We would like you to tell friends, families and colleagues about this new initiative and to give us feedback on every aspect of the idea. Later in the year we plan to launch it nationally through a series of partnerships and media coverage."

"For the life of the world" John 6:51

It's all about you!

– A Rocha events



There are more details listed on the website. Please inform us if you are planning a local A Rocha event.

11th February NATIONAL SUPPORTERS DAY – Chew Valley Lake – Meet in Nailsea to hear news of A Rocha's work; then a guided walk at Chew Valley Lake, where 260 bird species have been recorded. We should see many wintering ducks, gulls and perhaps a rarity or two! Please phone the office to book.

6th – 10th March LEE ABBEY Conference – “WHOSE EARTH IS IT ANYWAY?” – Dave Bookless & John Wibberley will be speaking. Enjoy fantastic scenery and walks, good company and great food! Book through Lee Abbey at www.leeabbey.org.uk or 0800 389 1189

25th March “HOPE FOR THE PLANET” day conference, Seaford Sussex; £10 – Speakers: Dave Bookless and Ruth Valerio – book through Patrick McCausland PATJAN@1barclose.totalserve.co.uk or 01323 893416

13th May NATIONAL SUPPORTERS DAY – Royal Agricultural Showground, Warwickshire – Peter & Miranda Harris

will be speaking, as we gain a sense of what God is doing through A Rocha around the world. **Book using the enclosed form, or by calling the office.**

4th June ENVIRONMENT SUNDAY – HOPE FOR THE PLANET - See feature on page 18. Why not get your Church to celebrate this with our pack – on this or the nearest suitable date.

10th June “HOPE FOR THE PLANET” day conference with Somerset Churches Together, at Kings of Wessex School, Cheddar. 10 am. Keynote speaker: Dave Bookless. Cost £6. Book through Robin Dixon sctog@blueyonder.co.uk or 01225 872903

17th June NATIONAL SUPPORTERS DAY – Minsmere, Suffolk – Join us for a day of information and wonderful wildlife at one of England's top reserves. June should see baby Avocets, hunting Marsh Harriers, breeding Bitterns, rare dragonflies, butterflies and shingle flora including Yellow-horned Poppy. Book using the enclosed form.

22nd – 5th August NEW WINE CONFERENCES (Shepton Mallet and Newark) We will have stands at New Wine A & B, and Dave & Anne Bookless will be speaking at all the conferences. Join us if you can!

17th – 20th August BRITISH BIRD-WATCHING FAIR – A Rocha will be running a stand, and a service on the Sunday morning at 9.45am – why not come along?

25th – 28th August GREENBELT FESTIVAL at Cheltenham Racecourse. A Rocha will be running a stand – contact us if you can help!

23rd September NATIONAL ALL-AGE SUPPORTERS DAY at Minet Country Park, Hayes - more details in the next magazine.

29th Sept – 1st October LEE ABBEY Harvest weekend - Dave Bookless speaking. Book through Lee Abbey at www.leeabbey.org.uk or 0800 389 1189

A Rocha Living Waterways Minet Events

These are open to all A Rocha supporters. A small charge may apply for some events. For details please check www.arocha.org.uk and to book call 020 8574 5935 or e-mail uk@arocha.org

- **ART IN THE PARK** – Fortnightly on Saturdays at Minet Country Park
- **GREEN TEAM** – Practical conservation parties - 1st Sat each month – contact sarah.leedham@arocha.org to book
- **MINET EVENTS** – Big Art 18th-19th March, Rhythms of the Earth 29th April, Dawn Chorus & Breakfast – 7th May and Minet Community Festival - 17th June. More details are on the website.

RESPONSE FORM

GOD CARES FOR CREATION. DO YOU?

Yes, I want to help care for God's creation.

Please return this form Freepost, to us at:

A Rocha UK, Freepost (SCE 13093), Southall UB1 3BR

(your details will be stored on A Rocha's database in compliance with the Data Protection Act and will not be supplied to others without your permission)

Your name:

Your address:

.....

.....Postcode:.....

Phone:

.....

Email:

I would like to:

receive regular information about A Rocha's work, including details of events etc

help my church by:

arranging for an A Rocha speaker to visit

celebrating Environment Sunday

(please enclose £10 for a 2006 pack)

give to A Rocha's work in the UK through:

a one-off gift of £.....

(please enclose cheque payable to A Rocha UK)

a monthly standing order for £.....

(we will send you a standing order form)

learn more about volunteering with A Rocha