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Caring for God's World Together

Issue 24 – Summer 2007



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The small print

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A Rocha can ...

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

... and help you to make a change for good:

- to your own lifestyle,
- by supporting practical environmental projects here and abroad.
- in tackling the causes and effects of climate change.

A Rocha was started in 1983 in Portugal and means 'the Rock' in Portuguese. A Rocha currently works in Brazil, 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 works to encourage greater care of creation across the UK, has the flagship Living Waterways project in west London, and supports a growing number of practical local initiatives.

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
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 Dr Andy Gosler
 Sir John Houghton FRS
 The Rt Rev Dr James Jones
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Monthly News by e-mail:

Up-to-date news for prayer and information from A Rocha around the world. This is now being sent from the UK office, so please e-mail uk@arocha.org if you want to be added to the list, or if your e-mail address changes.

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

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The first word

By Dave Bookless,
 National Director,
 A Rocha UK



"All for one!" It's a great phrase, with images of the 3 musketeers, battling against ridiculous odds yet always scraping through, and hanging on to their sense

of humour. Perhaps not a bad image for conservation in the 21st century and for A Rocha internationally!

Certainly the recent A Rocha International Forum in Kenya showed us the huge challenges we face in tackling environmental change, extreme poverty and, sadly, human apathy. Yet there was also a real sense of 'all for one': pulling together, encouraging each other, and the excitement of being involved in something where God is clearly at work and there are significant signs of hope.

'All for one' is also a reminder of our interdependence. Whilst we see the world as 'them and us' or forget our reliance both on other people and on natural systems, we have no hope of tackling global environmental problems. That's why 'community' – the subject of Miranda Harris' article, is so vital. We need to model the truth that we cannot go it alone, that we need each other, need healthy ecosystems, and ultimately need to know our total dependence on God.

Now, speaking of 'all for one', I must get back to finding that elusive scarlet pimpernel ... Did you know the 3 musketeers were botanists?

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Community &



By Miranda Harris,
A Rocha International



At the Canadian centre, staff and volunteers share meals together

‘Community’ is like one of those huge lorries that thunder past on the motorway – it isn’t always obvious what’s in it. It’s an emotive word which may awaken longing, panic, or just mild curiosity.

Here in France it’s a word with sinister cultic connotations. Whatever preconceptions we may bring to it, community almost always turns out to be something different from what we expected. Like ‘church’, it isn’t something you join but something you ARE, together with the people God brings alongside you in the specific geographical locations he chooses. So, finding ways of building communities first involves looking around to see *where* we are; according to Acts 17:26 that’s not as random as it may feel!

What then do we understand by this multi-significant word in A Rocha, and why have we included it as one of our five core commitments? Nowadays in A Rocha there are many definitions and certainly many different levels at which community is being understood and worked out in practice. Some national organizations (NOs) have drawn from the

experience of Cruzinha in Portugal: establishing a centre where team leaders, scientific staff, volunteers, visitors and local people live and work more or less together, along with assorted animals, the occasional wounded bird – and for the really lucky ones the odd snake cooling off in the fridge before a photo! Most NOs are working towards this model of community, but in some countries it is impossible or inappropriate. In Lebanon, for example, households in two locations separated by 40 miles and mountain roads have lived out a different understanding of community by sharing resources, meeting frequently and working together over many years to manage and protect one site in the Bekaa Valley. One might say that A Rocha’s worldwide family (comprising National Organisations, International Team, Trustees, and Friends) forms a dispersed community of sorts. Increasingly (to my Luddite dismay) a kind of ‘virtual community’ is also

Doing Community Service

What image does ‘community living’ conjure up for you? Trappist monks (*trap/less* surely?) living harmoniously in a magnificent building with itchy cassocks and early morning community contemplation? Or scenes from the sixties maybe, with VW camper vans, ‘sunsilk’ hair (the men), caftans and a surprisingly high number of amateur mycologists?

I’m not sure how well I’d cope with either of these scenarios. The ‘sunsilk’ hair would be a major challenge (take a look at the photo) and waking up to an

itchy cassock wouldn’t help me get out of bed early. But A Rocha is into ‘community’. It believes in it – it’s one of the five ‘Cs’. And I believe in A Rocha (among other things), so how do I do community?

Now, if I lived at one of A Rocha’s centres, I’d automatically be living in community. Assuming someone else was there too. We’d all get along just fine, with a shared vision, shared washing-up and ever so sweet smiles when we greeted each other in the morning. The reality of community living of course is that it’s tougher than that, and the potential rewards are of greater substance too.

God meant us to be communal – ‘It is not good for the man to be alone’ it says. I know that’s true, even though I prefer my own company sometimes. I am already

K Creation



Staff and volunteers at Mwamba, the Field Study Centre in Kenya

'We live in a culture that honours self-sufficiency, and individual independence, so choosing to embark on a shared enterprise and embrace an interdependent lifestyle is somewhat counter cultural and requires trust and commitment.'

undeniably constituting itself. Certainly our emphasis on community includes the importance of integration with our geographical contexts, yet also building good relationships with other conservation initiatives (faith-based or otherwise), and with the national and international organisations with which we collaborate.

However, for this article I'd like to focus on the 'extended family' model of community because it's such an effective way of experiencing not only what a Christian conservation organisation does, but why and how it does it. Everyone who works in conservation is committed to the study, understanding, protection and transformation of the natural world. In A Rocha centres, as we throw in our lot with people who share our passions and yet are often very different from us, we find ourselves being transformed in the process - sometimes quite painfully - thereby offering hope not only for the planet, but also for its people, who

are often blamed for causing the problems in the first place. We live in a culture that honours self-sufficiency, and individual independence, so choosing to embark on a shared enterprise and embrace an interdependent lifestyle (with no convenient escape routes when the heat is on), is somewhat counter-cultural and involves significant commitment and trust. The writer M. Scott Peck described community as "A group of individuals who have learned how to communicate honestly with each other, whose relationships go deeper than their masks of composure, and who have developed some significant commitment to rejoice together, mourn together, to delight in each other and to make others' conditions their own." He goes on to point out that unless a community is inclusive, it isn't really a community but a clique. Genuine communities always need to extend themselves.

As Christians we have strong reasons to believe and practice this, knowing that all people everywhere share a common identity by virtue of being created by God, and bearing his image. We belong to the community of the created before joining the community of the redeemed. Committing to a group of people, making ourselves mutually accountable, trying to live as transparently as possible, inviting commentary on our choices and decisions, adopting others' ways of doing things because they're better than our own, recognising others' gifts and our own limitations - all these are counter-intuitive and make



part of several communities. My church. The parents that gather outside the school gates. The road I live on. But how do I do A Rocha community from a semi-detached house in suburbia?

If you are in a community you have something in common with the other people in that community. The early church was pretty good at community living - 'they shared everything they had'. Church these days isn't always quite that radical and I know most of you don't use my washing machine. So what do I have in common with the rest of you? How about our God-given mandate to care for his world? We are God's creation-caring community, or part of it anyway, even though we may never have met. I may not be the kind of person you'd choose as a friend, but community isn't about doing stuff with people you like. It's much more important than that.

David Chandler





us feel very vulnerable. Meals together (including preparation and clean-up), downtime, playing, laughing and learning to forgive create a wonderfully welcoming environment in which all kinds of people may feel truly at home.

Paradoxically, conflict is not a sign of a failing community but probably the reverse. The missionary doctor Sheila Cassidy said, “Conflict is endemic in communities” – and having lived in a boarding school, a Chilean jail, a convent and a small hospice, she should know! This inevitable conflict is hidden from the transient visitor who will often be saying things like “What a fantastic atmosphere!”, while you are fervently hoping that the heated discussion going on behind a closed door remains inaudible and that you can be sweet and loving to the colleague/spouse/dog who has been completely maddening all week. In fact once we allow people, over time, to venture behind the façade, they are invariably relieved and encouraged – we’re just like them! Our flaws and failures, honestly faced and freely forgiven are much easier to live with than our apparent perfection and success. What’s underneath the ‘masks of composure’ is much more interesting than the masks themselves. All of this is, of course, much easier to write about than to live!

At this point, it seems appropriate to flag up some common misconceptions and pitfalls. Often, people think that to be good at community you have to be an extrovert who enjoys being with people all of the time. Bonhoeffer in ‘Life Together’ warns “Let him who cannot be alone beware of community. He will only do harm to himself and to the community.” Solitude and personal space are indispensable to community life. Whether you are an extrovert or an introvert is of little importance, only that you are learning to be comfortable with who you are, and able to recognise and relish the difference in others. Being willing to deal with conflict and work together through difficulties is non-negotiable.

It’s important to avoid heroism. We live and work with what we are, not what we think we ought to be, and the same applies to those we live with. Words like ‘success’ or ‘failure’ must be quickly dismissed in relation to community-building, and we must be realistic about time scale. These are human bricks we’re building with! So we have to set ourselves reachable goals, not impossible ideals. Communication is so important, especially between people of different linguistic and cultural

backgrounds. Misunderstandings easily arise ... we’ve all had uncomfortable conversations which began with, “Ohhhh.....I assumed that...” If in doubt we must learn to over-communicate, remembering (as every married couple learns!) that timing is everything. Finally, community doesn’t come about by having deep conversations over coffee; rather those kinds of conversations are part of what is possible when people are already opening up their day-to-day lives to each other: putting up nets, peeling carrots, planting seedlings, singing to kids or fixing the bicycle chain (again...).

Expressing the meaning of what we do through our relationship with God, each other and the wider creation speaks louder than any words, however eloquent. Who we are always communicates more accurately than what we do. So by welcoming people into our A Rocha communities, cheerfully accepting that they are more like building sites than five-star hotels, we are drawing them in to discover for themselves God’s amazing love for all creation – including them! One A Rocha leader has summed up what I’ve been trying to say like this. In speaking of some of the achievements (which were many) in his National Organisation and of its programme growth, he said it was not that which gave meaning to the work but rather “the richness of relationship, born out of all these opportunities ... the Kingdom of God breaking in as relationships are restored between people, creation, and God himself.”

Miranda Harris





A Rocha International's CEO-Designate

As A Rocha expands internationally, it's vital to resource this with experienced staffing. Peter Harris is moving to be 'President & Founder' of A Rocha, whilst a new post – Chief Executive Officer – will oversee the running of the organisation. Marie Connett-Porceddu will take up this post later in 2007

Marie Connett-Porceddu – a name to conjure with! Where does it come from?

I was born in the USA of Canadian parents, and met my husband Mariano whilst we were both studying in Germany. He's from Sardinia which is where the 'Porceddu' comes from ... it means 'little pig'! We've spent many years in New Zealand, although my latest job has been based in Australia. We have four children – Daniel 17, Isaac 10 (whom we adopted and whose birth family remains very important to us), Eleanora 8, and Anya 6.

And now you're going to be moving with your husband and children ... to France?

Yes, the Trustees agreed I need to be near to Peter and Miranda Harris who have led A Rocha since the start, and I have Italian citizenship through my husband (as well as USA and New Zealand!), so living in the European Union is not a problem. With A Rocha now being so global it's useful that I speak English, French, German, Italian (and a little Spanish). Given airline leg-room, my small size also makes me uniquely qualified for the travel the role may require (but we're looking at the carbon footprint too — France is closer than Australia to most places where A Rocha works).

As well as being very international, your professional background has really prepared you for A Rocha – tell us about this.

I studied Biology in California and Heidelberg (Germany), before specialising in plant genetics for my PhD, which was at Cornell. After that I moved into forestry in New Zealand, initially in an academic setting, but gradually moving into commercial work and consultancy (and did an MBA). Finally, I've been DCEO with CAMBIA, a Canberra-based non-profit using biosciences to enable creative self-help in disadvantaged communities in the areas of agriculture and public health.

When did you first hear about A Rocha?

Only in 2006, when I saw the CEO post advertised in 'The Economist'. I thought, they're looking for me, and I'm looking for them and I didn't even know it! I sent off for the application, and was disappointed to hear I was too late, but visited the A Rocha website and asked how I could help in the initiatives for A Rocha in Australia and New Zealand. When the CEO post was re-advertised I applied, writing

I'm staggered at the privilege of working in an organisation that's full of praying people, and where God's clearly working.

'This must reflect disappointment for you, but to me it looks as though it could be an answer to prayer!' After somewhat exhausting interviews the appointment process then had to involve willingness to be flexible about timing, yet God was so clearly involved. Since then I've been in a period of active learning and transition, before I officially take on this new role in September 2007.

So, now you've met some of the key people, what are your impressions of A Rocha?

I'm so indebted to Peter and Miranda Harris (*Founders and International Directors*), and David (*Managing Director*) and



Betty Payne, and how they've been introducing and helping me. Now, having met so many people at the International Forum in Kenya, I'm filled to overflowing with a sense of God's planning these grace-filled interactions. A Rocha will continue to be a vision-led organisation, but the vision's a lot bigger than one person or a few people, and it needs to be supported by an organisation. Vision-led organisations can become dreadfully skewed if the vision is too closely associated with individuals. This should continue to be centred in Christ.

And your vision for A Rocha International's future ...?

My ideas will continue to develop in the coming months, but centrally I believe that A Rocha should continue with practical conservation, that is clearly in God's service and not just as an end in itself nor to perpetuate itself as an organisation. I've been taken on by the International Trustees to add organisational processes that support the rapid growth A Rocha has seen, and I want A Rocha International to be an even better channel to serve those working out A Rocha's vision. I'm staggered at the privilege of working in an organisation that's full of praying people, and where God's clearly working.

NEWS & VIEWS from A Rocha



A Rocha International Forum in Kenya 'Poverty, Conservation & Hope'

April 16th-23rd 2007 saw the biggest international A Rocha gathering ever.

A Rocha leaders from over 20 countries across six continents gathered in Watamu, Kenya, for an intensive week of bible-study, discussion, sharing and visits to A Rocha Kenya's project work. The central theme, of hope in a world where human poverty and conservation challenges are increasing, was always to the fore. Bishop Zac Niringiye, of Kampala, gave bible-readings which kept the focus on Christ, and constantly challenged us to fight against the 'giants' of greed and idolatry, which cause both poverty and environmental disaster.

The overwhelming impression was of A Rocha as a diverse and fast-growing worldwide family, facing the challenges of resourcing growth humanly and financially, yet trying sincerely to listen to each other, to care

for those who are struggling, to learn from good practice, and to discern God's call together. Bishop Zac reminded us that it is only together (from different cultures, societies, genders)

that we can discern God's truth, and that our ultimate vision should not be A Rocha but God's Kingdom. A Rocha's role within that is to rebuild relationships between God, people and nature that help create signs of God's Kingdom.

All who attended – and A Rocha UK was represented by Steve Hughes (CEO), Dave Bookless (National Director) and Richard Hall (Chair) – were challenged and changed by their time in Kenya. It was inspiring to hear the enthusiasm of the 'new' and 'potential' A Rochas (Uganda, New Zealand, Australia,



Some of those gathered for the A Rocha International Forum at the Kenyan centre, Mwamba

Romania, Switzerland), as well as to see the hugely positive impact of A Rocha Kenya on the local community and local environment. Elsewhere in this magazine, there are updates from Peru and Netherlands, and an introduction to Marie – A Rocha International's new CEO-designate. Future issues will feature other stories from the international family.

The Forum was made possible through a generous grant from the Bible Society, and all the international travel was offset through Climate Stewards (www.climatestewards.net).

A ROCHA ART WORKSHOP AT LEE ABBEY – APPRECIATING SMALL THINGS

The A Rocha Lee Abbey week in March was a great opportunity for A Rocha Art's vision of encouraging artists (of whatever standard) who want to use their gift for God's creation. Ten people signed up, but others joined in too. We learned about how hard it can be to 'unlock' our talents, but it was amazingly rewarding and we discovered a lot of positive things about our abilities. The culmination was the communion service on the final day which gave a visual, symbolic and emotional expression to the predicament of our fragile but beautiful world.

A ROCHA ART SCOTTISH WEEK IN SEPTEMBER

The A Rocha Art group is organising a week on Royal Deeside to encourage active artists who want to use their gift for God. Renowned wildlife artist John Busty will be spending the week with us, offering his considerable expertise and experience. It will be hosted by a church in Aberdeen, and the Christian owners of a traditional Scottish Estate on the town's outskirts. B&B is being offered by members of a local church. This is intended as a low cost opportunity, and it is a great privilege to have John joining us.

Dates: Saturday September 22nd till Saturday 29th September 2007. Places are strictly limited. For more information contact david.coleman@arocha.org.

Appeal News

In March we wrote to our Friends to ask for your help, particularly in appointing a Scientific Director and resourcing our fast developing regional network (see update elsewhere). We are very grateful to everyone who responded so generously. Whilst we fell a little short of our goal of a 15% increase in regular income, as we go to print we will have raised over £20,000 over 3 years, much of this through regular standing orders. We will keep you updated on the progress we are able to make as a result in future issues of the magazine, and in the meantime, if you still want to contribute we'd love to hear from you.



Values in Nature & the Environment

(www.vineproject.org.uk)



This is a new network for those involved in nature conservation who want to ask 'Why?' ... Why do and why should we care about the world?

Membership is free and open to anybody. It is not faith-based, but open to all people of faith, and we encourage A Rocha Friends to get involved.



When Plastic is a Good Thing!

Some A Rocha Friends may have been alarmed that their magazine now comes in a plastic bag, but, fear not, this is a step-forward environmentally. How so? The 'poly-wrap' being used is bio-degradable, and moreover, A Rocha's Pete Hawkins worked with CPO, the major Christian publisher who prints our magazine, so that all CPO's products now use biodegradable poly-wrap!



NEW! Chiltern Gateway Project Launched!



Rev Simon Brignall (and daughter Annie) with Assistant Manager Jane Pendleton (far right) and A Rocha friends at the launch

Friday May 11th saw the official launch of A Rocha UK's second major project at Lewknor in Oxfordshire. The Bishop of Dorchester-on-Thames Colin Fletcher was the keynote speaker, as Lewknor church was packed with local people from many backgrounds. There was superb local

food, and a tangible atmosphere of excitement and anticipation. The project is a partnership between groups including A Rocha UK, Lewknor PCC & Oxford Diocese and Natural England – and is led by Rev. Simon Brignall with assistance from Jane Pendleton.

NEW! Partnership with BMS World Mission

An exciting new partnership was formally launched at the Baptist Union / BMS Conference in Brighton on May 7th. BMS (the former Baptist Missionary Society founded by William Carey) has recognised that creation care is an essential part of mission, and has asked A Rocha to help it with

this. More details in due course, but the hope is that this will lead to more creation care teaching in Baptist Churches, and more support for some of A Rocha's projects around the world.



NEW! Steyning Downland Project

After a year of discussions, a partnership is being launched between A Rocha UK and the Wiston Estate in West Sussex. A 160 acre site has been identified, with an open valley and chalk stream on the edge of Steyning, rising to woodland and down-land. On Tuesday 6th March 2007, a packed meeting heard Harry Goring and William Trinick from the Wiston Estate, and Dave Bookless and Steve Hughes of A Rocha outline the vision. A cross-section of the local community was represented and enthusiastic, from bat and butterfly groups, to mountain bikers and local A Rocha Friends. The project aims to balance opening the site for local people to enjoy,



The Steyning Downland Project

conserving wildlife and enhancing the landscape. A Management Committee has been formed led by the Estate, with A Rocha represented by former Managing Director Richard Smillie. A Rocha friend Bryony Webb is to co-ordinate the project part-time, raising funds, and encouraging local involvement. Please contact A Rocha UK if you want to be involved.

14th-15th June BIKE for HOPE

Steve Hughes, Dave Bookless & Jenny Tebboth are cycling the 110 miles of the Grand Union Canal from Southall to Birmingham. If you'd like to sponsor them for A Rocha, visit www.justgiving.com/bikeforhope or send a marked cheque to 'A Rocha UK'.



Lee Abbey Partnership moving forward

Martyn Lings who has volunteered with A Rocha in the UK, Canada and Kenya ... has now joined the Lee Abbey Devon community, and it is hoped this will further strengthen the partnership between Lee Abbey and A Rocha. Martyn's role will include conservation work as part of the Estate Team, and explaining Lee Abbey's environmental work both to guests and new community members.

DOING SOMETHING WHERE YOU ARE

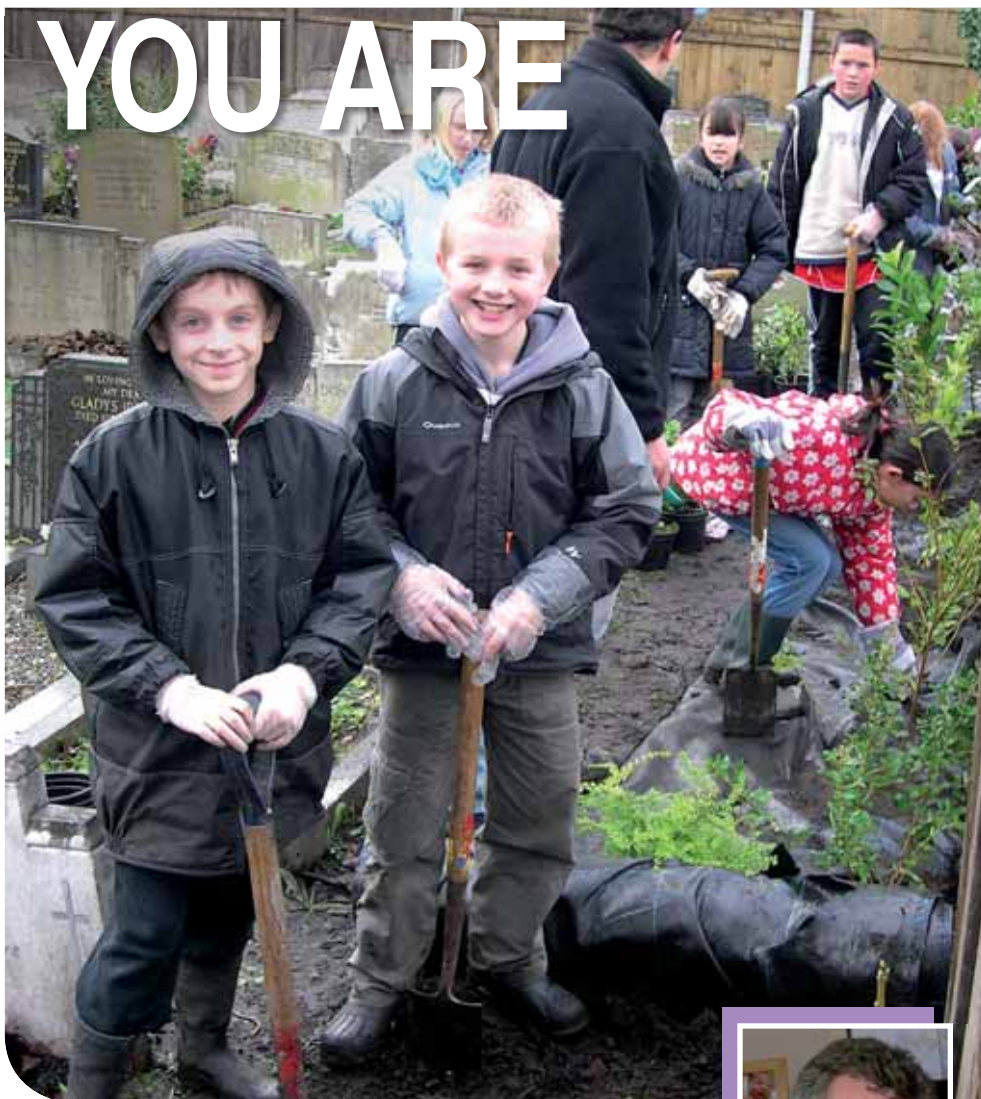
Bringing life to the graveyard

The place where A Rocha was conceived is not too far from this graveyard.

Peter and Miranda Harris weren't so far away before heading off to the Algarve all those years ago. When Cruzinha was still a twinkle in Peter and Miranda's eyes, George Turner started the Southport A Rocha group. It's been meeting monthly ever since, praying faithfully for well over twenty years. Last year a new group got going in Sandbach. Things are moving in the graveyard too ...

St. Luke's Crosby is an Anglican church of some 240 people in a fairly urban setting. Managing 'God's Acre' for wildlife is not a new concept, but what Steve Matthews was asked to get involved with was God's four acres complete with 4000 graves. 'Can you help organise a grounds maintenance workshop?' was the straightforward request. Steve said 'yes' and somehow it's turned into more than tending the herbaceous borders and sweeping the paths. In fact, it's become a project that has something of A Rocha about it. It encompasses four of A Rocha's five 'Cs' - Christian, Conservation, Community and Co-operation. It just needs a bit of Cross-cultural working to complete the set.

So what's happened? It began with a grounds maintenance workshop, and morphed into a funding bid to 'Breathing Places' for almost £10,000. A bit of money from Operation Eden and the Church Council kicked things off and work began. Ten and eleven year olds from the local school turned their hands (and someone else's spades) to wildlife-friendly planting. MENCAP and a local special needs school did too. Support for the work was confirmed by promoting it



Steve Matthews

in an ecumenical café in the church grounds. Forty people helped run a 'wildlife activity morning' in March, when bird boxes were made and a butterfly garden created. There were badges to make and a nature trail to navigate. The local newspaper gave the event nearly a page of good, positive coverage.

In the past, Steve saw this kind of thing as worth doing, but essentially inward looking. He's changed his

mind. To quote Steve, 'It's building partnerships and alliances'. We've mentioned some of them already. Then there's Landlife (who lent the spades), BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers), the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, and the local authority's biodiversity manager. Not forgetting the local residents. Crosby in Bloom welcome the work too - it may not be planted



STOP PRESS: St Luke's Crosby has just received £9,990 for their Breathing Places Project

up roundabouts or magnificent floral displays, but the emphasis on community involvement and wildlife is seen as a very good thing.

What the project is working towards will contribute to the North Merseyside biodiversity action plan – St. Luke's now has a place on the biodiversity map. The work will benefit local people too, creating a place for traders to eat lunch and catch up with themselves, somewhere for residents of the sheltered housing complex to walk and relax and somewhere for local people to enjoy.

Steve says that things fell into place, that one

contact led to another... he suspects some divine project management. He didn't know it was there, but found lots of positive support within the church. All that was needed was the opportunity. It's happened quite fast, but Steve has seen the importance of the process – 'Involving people is more important than how long it takes'.

As I write, Steve still doesn't know if the funding bid has been successful. The project is already succeeding, but the extra money will take it to new heights – a community garden, tree planting, a wild flower meadow and wider paths to improve access. Like Steve, you might not think your church would be that interested in this kind of thing. You might be surprised ...

By David Chandler

A UK-wide vision

If you've ever wished that A Rocha was doing more where you are, you'll be encouraged to know that 36 people met in March to discuss how to achieve this.

Since its beginnings, A Rocha UK's vision has been nationwide and the realisation of this became a step closer through a 24hr consultation at Cliff College in rural Derbyshire. The vision, which was strongly endorsed, is to establish a national network of up to 12 reps. These 'Regional Reps' will provide much closer contact for A Rocha UK on the ground.



Through 2006 Norman Crowson (norman.crowson@arocha.org) pioneered this role in the Sheffield region, and in early 2007 Victoria Beale (victoria.beale@arocha.org) started as our Scottish Rep. We plan to appoint further reps over the next couple of years. We also have in place national coordinators to help reps coordinate community groups (david.chandler@arocha.org), partner churches (simon.brown@arocha.org) and speakers (john.townsend@arocha.org).
Pete Hawkins UK Operations Director

Community Group day

A Rocha UK already has a number of community groups across the UK, running varied programmes that support and develop our work. If you'd like to know more about what groups get up to, perhaps with a view to running one yourself, why not come along to our Community Groups day on Saturday November 10th in Southall?

If you're interested, contact David Chandler on david.chandler@arocha.org.



A Rocha Cambridge Community Group

There has been an A Rocha group in Cambridge for many years, with varying levels of activity and support from A Rocha members. The current group was

relaunched in early 2005 under the capable leadership of Rob Crofton. We initially envisaged a very low key beginning. However God had other plans, and in Nov 2005 we ran a very successful day conference on Christian faith and the Environment with over 70 delegates. Since then we have held a mix of activities – outdoor events (guided walks, visits to local nature reserves) and, especially in the winter months, evening meetings in someone's home. This is when we pray for A Rocha projects worldwide, hopefully with input from someone involved in a national project. We've welcomed the Simonsons (A Rocha Portugal,) and the Naylor's (A Rocha Lebanon) to these gatherings. After only two years, some events are becoming regular fixtures: in particular the annual Winter Walk, and the August barbeque. If you live in or around Cambridge and would like to know more, get in touch: arocha.cambridge@gmail.com

Restoring Creation

Dr. Andrew Gosler
*Edward Grey Institute and
Institute of Human Sciences,
University of Oxford*



Conservation is a uniquely human enterprise. By this I imply no pride in believing that, of the millions of species in the world, only humans exercise concern for other species; no, quite the reverse. If it were not for the devastation of human agency, conservation would not be necessary.

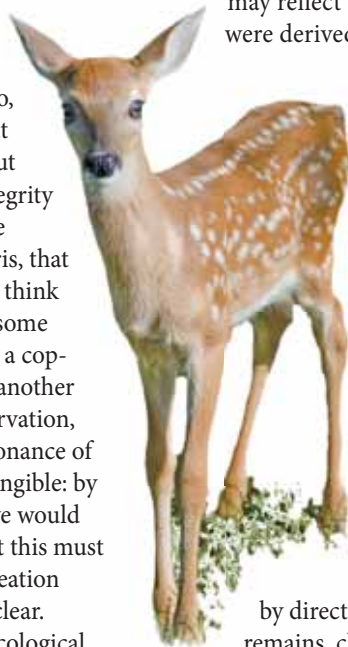
We see conservation therefore as a uniquely human responsibility, driven essentially by a moral imperative. Had humanity not appeared, life on this beautiful planet would presumably have continued in the pristine, glorious splendour from which, through pollution, extinction, habitat loss, and now even climate change, it has been degraded. So, conservation is ultimately not just about preventing further extinctions, but about attempting to restore the functional integrity of Creation. Some regard the idea of the human stewardship of Creation as hubris, that it is yet another mere human conceit to think we can manage a planet. While feeling some sympathy for this viewpoint, it is surely a cop-out, false modesty, because one way or another it was human conceits that made conservation, stewardship, necessary. The biblical resonance of this realisation is so clear, it is almost tangible: by our very nature, it was inevitable that we would 'humanise' (subdue) the planet, but that this must be done with due care for the rest of Creation (Genesis 7-9), for all our sakes, is also clear.

But it is one thing to recognise that ecological restoration is desirable, assuming it is possible, and quite another to know whether restoration is always the *right* course of action. This is because humans *are* here, and because the earth we now inhabit *has* been 'humanised', the most significant question we face is 'what sort of a system are we restoring?' In Britain we confront these choices as starkly as anywhere, with the reintroduction of species that have been lost from these islands through human action. Before the arrival of humans during the present interglacial, wild Britain supported many species not found today.

The presence of large predators such as bears and wolves attests to an abundance of prey such as deer and wild boar, and the vast unbroken tracts of wild forest may have supported European species now lost through forest fragmentation. For example, the Black Woodpecker, which requires extensive mature forests, may once have been common in Britain. But the semi-natural habitats of Britain today are but a reflection of the wetlands and forests of wilderness Britain. The plant species-composition of our coppiced woodlands may reflect that of the wildwood from which they were derived, but they are coppiced woodlands nevertheless, they are not wildwood, and much heated debate continues over the desirability of restoring coppice management to neglected woodlands.

Of paramount concern in the ethical consideration of animal reintroduction is the welfare of the animals concerned. To reintroduce a species to an area where the causes of its extinction have not been identified and/or removed, will not only surely fail, but may subject to immense suffering those released individuals that are unable to find a territory with sufficient food, free from poisons, risk of vehicle collision or being shot. Where a species, such as the Red Kite in England, has been lost

by direct human persecution, but suitable habitat remains, clearly it may be right to reintroduce that species now that laws, hearts and minds, have changed. Indeed the Red Kite reintroduction has been hailed as one of the greatest conservation successes. But we must take care that our yearning for wild, pristine, pre-human, Britain does not lead us to unethical decisions: European Beavers in Scotland, yes probably; Grey Wolves – I'd love to see it, but is it sustainable? Our guiding light in this must be to ask whether the wolves themselves would suffer.



Because the earth we now inhabit has been so 'humanised', the most significant question we face is 'what sort of a system are we restoring?'

GOING DUTCH

A Rocha Netherlands is the UK's nearest A Rocha neighbour, yet there are some striking differences in the way A Rocha has developed in the two countries. UK National Director Dave Bookless talks to Petra Messelink, who co-ordinates A Rocha Netherlands jointly with her husband Embert.

A In the 1980s there were several Christian environmental groups that were active for a while, but faded away. They became overwhelmed by the scale of the task, feeling 'What I'm doing can't make a real difference'. I believe this was because their focus was horizontal – on our relationship with nature – and was divorced from our relationship with God – there was very little biblical basis. We've been trying to learn from this, since A Rocha Netherlands started in late 2002.



Petra and Embert Messelink with their children

vision after staying at A Rocha France. It brought together our common interests and we both felt 'This is it!' Another couple spent 5 months in New Zealand, are now in Rotterdam setting up an A Rocha group, and want to learn from A Rocha UK about how to run an urban project! So, you see, the worldwide A Rocha family is our inspiration in growing A Rocha Netherlands.

Now though, our plans for a Field Studies Centre and project are finally moving forward. We hope to have a centre near Archem, in east central Netherlands 30 km from the German border, based at two nearby farmhouses. It's an area of natural beauty and popular with Dutch cyclists and kayakers. We've been building relationships with the local farming community, which is often suspicious of environmentalists. We aim to help farmers support biodiversity in a financially sustainable way partly by encouraging A Rocha visitors to stay with local farmers. The Dutch government wants to return this area to a more natural state, allowing the river to recover its meanders for instance, and we want to play a role in monitoring the effects of these changes on biodiversity.

Our message is not 'join A Rocha and we'll save the world for you!' A Rocha is not a solution to all the environmental problems. It's just doing things locally in your community in response to God.

We're just trying to do what God wants, not trying to save the world!

In the Netherlands, our supporters are younger on average than A Rocha UK's. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, when Embert and I got involved we recruited our own network of younger friends. Secondly, we have an active group at Wageningen University, which is the top place for environmental studies. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, we have had a strong emphasis on active volunteering, especially internationally. We've sent volunteers to A Rocha Canada, Czech Republic, France, Kenya, Lebanon, New Zealand, Portugal and the UK. Some have been students, others whole families going for anything from two weeks to several months. We've had international working parties in France and Czech, combining a 'nature retreat' with practical work like painting and decorating.

Our international emphasis has had both costs and benefits. It's hard that we can get grants for A Rocha in Africa but not here. We still don't have a major project or any paid staff and Embert and I have to juggle A Rocha with part-time journalism and bringing up our family. However, the international experience is laying very strong foundations. A Rocha Netherlands started with Petra van Rijssen (now Crofton) visiting Portugal and France to volunteer ... and we caught the

The last few years have been very hard work for Embert and I. Please pray we will be strengthened and encouraged, and especially that the Archem project will become reality soon. We're just trying to do what God wants, not trying to save the world!

The proposed Dutch centre near Archem



OPPORTUNITIES IN PERU

Peru – to many people in the UK it sounds exotic and perhaps obscure ... somewhere far away in South America ... perhaps the place Paddington Bear came from?

Yet Peru is a very strategic place for A Rocha to be working. It contains an amazing variety of habitats – over 80% of the world's ecosystem types, nearly 6,000 species of endemic plant or animal, and almost 20% of the world's bird species. At the same time, Peru is 98% Christian (mostly Catholic, with a significant Evangelical minority), making the potential for a biblical vision of the study and care of God's creation hugely important. A Rocha Peru was established in 2004, and is already growing in influence in more than one part of the country. Dave Bookless met up in Kenya with National Director Oscar Gonzalez, and Environmental Education Officer Eduardo Calderon-Urquiza to find out more ...

What's your vision for A Rocha Peru?

Our vision is to demonstrate that human societies can coexist in harmony with nature following the Biblical principle of stewardship. To show this, we want to conserve key species and habitats. Long-term we want to have a network of A Rocha centres, because of the huge variety of ecosystems in Peru. To start with we need to establish a proper office in Lima (where all resources, and 1/3 of the population are based), and then we hope a project in the Cuzco rainforest in the tropical Andes ... perhaps the greatest biodiversity hotspot in the world!

What would A Rocha's distinctive contribution be?

We would be able to work with the local indigenous church communities – where sadly there has been little teaching

Environmental Education Officer Eduardo Calderon Urquiza and National Director Oscar Gonzalez



on creation-care and missions have sometimes had a poor reputation for destroying cultures and relationships with the land. As well as this, we are developing a partnership with the Government Institute of Natural Resources. They need volunteers to help in reserves, and A Rocha Peru hopes to help provide these.

What kind of volunteers are you looking for?

We need adults (18+), who can speak at least basic Spanish, share A Rocha's Christian ethos, and have biological or social skills to share - they may be botanists, foresters, agriculturalists, ornithologists, teachers, engineers ... They might come for anything from 3 weeks to 3 months and would need to cover their own travel costs, as well as cover A Rocha Peru's costs in providing welcome, training, and support and advice. If you're interested, you can apply through the volunteering form on the website – www.arocha.org.

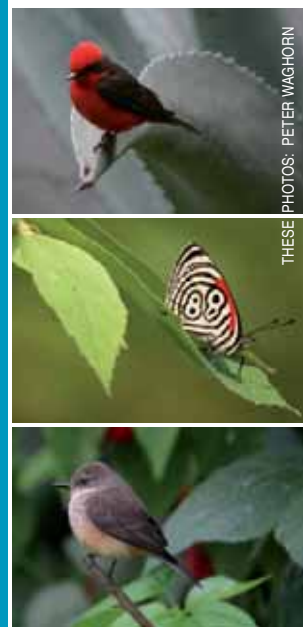
Finally, I know most of your team (including National Director Oscar) are doing this on a voluntary basis ... yet there are many other projects you're already undertaking. How do you manage?

We have very committed supporters – many are students or professional biological scientists and some are pastors. We've also been very grateful for financial support from a couple of A Rocha UK supporters. In Trujillo we have a group headed by a pastor-biologist, which is working to conserve an unprotected wetland area. We're also working with a local community in trying to get a proper management plan for the Santa Rosa wetland north of Lima. In Lomas de Atocongo we've worked in a slum area, conducting a workshop on sustainable forestry and an ecological puppet show! We may be over-stretched, but we're certainly not short on ideas and commitment!

The Cuzco rainforest in the tropical Andes ... perhaps the greatest biodiversity hotspot in the world!



Scarlet Macaw



THESE PHOTOS: PETER WAGHORN



Special Species Turtles in Kenya

Pictures of the critically endangered Hawksbill Turtle

Through all this work, turtle nests in Watamu & Malindi rose in 8 years from 16 to 61

Sea Turtles are the most amazing creatures. They can live as long as people (60 – 90 years), and spend most of their lives in the world’s deep oceans, only coming to land to breed – almost always to the exact beach they were hatched on. Fossil records show many different species, going back to the time of the dinosaurs, but there are 8 species alive today. All of these are considered as threatened.

At the recent A Rocha International Forum in Kenya, Steve Trott of ‘Watamu Turtle Watch’ reminded those present about the conservation needs of sea turtles along the Kenyan coast. Five species of turtle are found here: Loggerhead, Leatherback, Hawksbill, Olive Ridley and Green. The last three of these are globally ‘Red-Listed’, and Hawksbill Sea Turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) are seen as critically endangered, and despite being found in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans, some estimate the global population as only 8,000 females (www.euroturtle.org).

Why are sea turtles so threatened? There are many reasons, most to do with direct and indirect human pressures. Traditionally, in Kenya as in many parts of the world, turtle eggs and meat have been used for food. As human populations increase, this has often become unsustainable – but because turtles live so long, local people may not see the problem ... there will

still be adults coming back to lay eggs for perhaps 70 years before the real problem is obvious. Also,

turtle shells have been used for decorative ‘tortoiseshell’

jewellery products.

Global demand means that the

trade in these today is now decimating populations – please make sure you avoid these products if travelling.

Indirect threats are numerous: fishing methods where turtles (like dolphins) are accidentally caught, insensitive development along nesting beaches, over-use of beaches by people, pollution of the seas, light and noise pollution along beaches ... the list goes on and on.

Although this is a huge global problem, local action can help. A Rocha Kenya works closely with Watamu Turtle Watch, which was founded by Barbara Simpson, whose former guest house now forms ‘Mwamba’ – A Rocha Kenya’s centre. Working closely with the local community, the Marine Reserve around Watamu is slowly seeing improvements. There are patrols to prevent egg collection, regular beach clean-ups and small rewards for fishermen who hand in accidentally caught turtles for rehabilitation. In addition, A Rocha’s ASSETS community conservation and environmental education programmes have helped raise awareness that these amazing creatures are a vital part of a healthy local eco-system. Through all this work, turtle nests in Watamu & Malindi rose in 8 years from 16 to 61, although there is a long way to go. These figures are perhaps 1/5 of what people remember from a generation ago.

PLASTIC KILLS! Discarding plastic can be devastating for Turtles – they can swallow it and feel full when in reality they’re starving. The air trapped in plastics can prevent them from diving, and the chemicals in plastic can reduce their resistance to disease, and their ability to reproduce. (source www.medasset.org)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

- www.euroturtle.org
- www.watamuturtles.com
- www.seaturtle.org



INTRODUCING A ROCHA UK PEOPLE

Debbie Wright talks to Victoria Beale about her long enthusiastic support for A Rocha and her new role as A Rocha UK's Regional Representative for Scotland

Your job title sounds quite a mouthful. What does it actually involve?

I started in March, so the job is quite new. I am basically the link between Scotland and A Rocha UK, if you like the person on the ground. All queries, requests for speakers and materials will come through me. I am also going to be proactive and help and facilitate supporting churches, friends of A Rocha and support groups with conservation days, events and conferences.

You are just a few months into the job. What have been the challenges so far?

Firstly, Scotland is an enormous place and at the moment there is just me working part-time and A Rocha is not really very well known here. Secondly the UK flagship project – Living Waterways in Southall seems a very long way away from people living in Aberdeen or Glasgow. I want to make A Rocha more relevant to people's everyday lives, so that we are not just supporting projects in the South East and abroad. I want us to be involved in practical conservation projects here as well as prayer and support.

You have also said that sensitivity is also needed in your role in Scotland ...

Yes, obviously Climate Change is a much talked topic and it can seem easy to point the finger. For instance in our Church in Aberdeen, two thirds of our congregation work in the oil industry and have done so all their lives. Making the oil companies the bad guys is not helpful for the debate and the way forward. Obviously as Christians we need to be open to each other and all to be challenged in how we can care responsibly for our planet.



Victoria, Colin and Emma Beale

You and your husband Colin have has a long association with A Rocha ...

Very soon after I became a Christian I was studying wildlife management in Reading and Mark and Jane Bolton the Wardens for the Portuguese project came to speak at my church. I eventually became Assistant Warden in Portugal and through A Rocha met Colin. We settled in Scotland where Colin was working on his PhD and we have been involved with leading A Rocha UK holidays and setting up a supporters group.

What is it about A Rocha you find inspiring?

This is an interesting question as my motivations have changed. I started off just loving wildlife and God's wonderful natural world and hated seeing it being destroyed, wanting to preserve and protect it. Several years later I now see that the degradation of the environment has a huge impact on people especially poor people around the globe. I still have a huge sense of love and wonder for the natural world, but now my relationship with God means that there is a responsibility, and compassion for people who are vulnerable to changes and degradation of the environment. And this is just what A Rocha is highlighting and doing something about!

I know you have a big vision for A Rocha in the future.

I would love there to be a centre, no two A Rocha centres in Scotland. One in a city like Glasgow where the urban deprivation and lack of green spaces is similar to Southall. We would also have to have another up in the highlands where people could come and visit the wild beautiful landscapes and take something in of God's creation.

I want to make A Rocha more relevant to people's everyday lives ... I want us to be involved in practical conservation projects here as well as prayer and support.



Victoria and daughter Emma at Stonehaven

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

AR-KIDS

This page is especially for our younger readers.
In this issue, we take a look at Dragonflies

DRAGONS!

The name may sound scary, but there's nothing to fear in a dragonfly. They don't breathe fire and they don't sting. Dragonflies have colour, speed and an amazing life story. The summer is a great time to watch them. You can see them in lots of places, but ponds, lakes and rivers provide some of the best dragonfly watching. Dragonflies are particularly active during the heat of the day, so wait until the sun shines and head out with a lunch-time picnic. Enjoy the dragons!

Dragon or damselfly?

There are about 40 species of dragonfly in the UK. They are all in a group of insects that entomologists call the Odonata. This includes the 'true dragonflies' and the damselflies. Telling a damsel from a dragon is not difficult. **Damselflies** have thin, matchstick-like bodies and eyes that are clearly separated. Their flight is weak and fluttery and when they rest, they fold their wings along their back, or hold them partly open. The 'true' **dragonflies** are much chunkier insects and much stronger fliers. Most species have eyes that touch. When they rest, they hold their wings out more or less at right angles from their body.



A red damselfly with dark markings on its abdomen ('tail'). Its black legs distinguish it from the Small Red Damselfly



A 'true' dragonfly. Big and mostly brown with brown see-through wings

Ace-pilot or scuba diver?

Dragonfly eggs are laid in or close to water. They hatch into larvae, which live underwater. Most stay underwater for a year or two. The Golden-ringed Dragonfly stays under for over five years! To grow, they shed their skin, some doing this 14 times before reaching adulthood. Imagine having to shed your skin to grow! When the time is right, the larva climbs out of the water, and a free-flying adult emerges. Most adults survive for two weeks or less.



Aerial masters

Find a true dragonfly and watch it fly. They are remarkable fliers. Their ability to quickly change direction in mid-air is far better than any flying machine man has invented.

Hunters

The larvae are ferocious underwater predators and the adults terrorise the skies! Dragonflies eat lots of insects, plus other invertebrates. Some of the big larvae might eat a small fish or tadpoles.



Ethical Shopping



You'd think I'd been on a UN mission, weighing-up global environmental issues. The truth is I'd been to the supermarket!

Do I buy a fair-trade pineapple, helping overseas farmers but with air-miles adding to CO2 emissions? Do I buy organic beef from Argentina or non-organic British beef with possible animal welfare issues and dubious additions to their diet? Do I buy an English cucumber, grown in winter in a heated poly-tunnel, or one that has been flown in? Perhaps I should shop on-line and have it delivered but what about all those plastic bags... ?

LOAF – FairTrade is only part of the equation. Christian Ecology Link promotes the LOAF campaign, suggesting our shopping should be Local, Organic, Animal-friendly and FairTrade (www.christian-ecology.org.uk/loaf-principles.htm). Add to this the consideration of how much packaging is used, and our shopping baskets could look very different!

Meat – Many of us eat cheap meat daily, but animals take huge quantities of food, energy and transportation. Often those bargain cuts come at a

cost to others, including the animals. Perhaps we need to eat less meat, but of a much better quality and at a more realistic cost. Greenpeace allege that much

of the soya animal feed arriving in the UK from Brazil is a product of “forest crime”. The rapid expansion of the soya industry in Brazil has placed the fragile ecology of the rainforest under dire threat (www.greenpeace.org). However, harvesting of Brazil nuts from the Amazon forests can be a very ethical process, protecting areas from deforestation.

Fish – Our love of Fish & Chips could become history. Over-fishing is a huge threat to marine wildlife and habitats. Many fish stocks are in serious decline and hundreds of thousands of marine mammals, turtles and seabirds are killed



in fishing gear. Deaths could be reduced by using ‘friendly’ devices

and avoiding prohibited fishing areas. To know which fish to buy and which to avoid, download the “Pocket Good Fish Guide” from www.fishonline.org.

Fruit & Veg – An organic box scheme or local farmer’s market is probably the best way of buying your fruit and veg as long as the items haven’t been flown half way round the world! Able and Cole have a “zero airmiles” policy www.abel-cole.co.uk. Supermarkets give so much choice, but it gets ridiculous. Transporting 1kg of apples from New Zealand adds 1kg of CO2 to the



atmosphere. Fruit from local trees emits none; indeed the leaves even absorb some!

Seasonal – Sometimes it’s confusing. I might buy English tomatoes in January rather than ones flown from Italy, only to discover that British glasshouse-grown out-of-season vegetables use more energy per kg than any other food (www.soilassociation.org/foodforlife). If we celebrate what’s in season, decisions get easier. If it’s out of season, choose something else (www.bbc.co.uk/food/in_season)! Initially it sounds restricting but there is variety out there and we can encourage it.

Ethical shopping isn’t limited to food – it touches everything we buy. To get the bigger picture, look up www.ethicalconsumer.org, a fascinating and informative website. Don’t be scared to go shopping. If you shop ethically, you can be ‘right’ in a variety of ways – by avoiding air miles, considering organic or FairTrade, or avoiding some products completely. Your final choice is personal, but do remember that by shopping ethically is a key way to love your neighbour.

By Jenny Hawkins

Bible Study: People & Wildlife



By Rev Dave Bookless

SECTION 1 – SETTING THE SCENE

How should people and wildlife relate in a world where there's not enough for both? As the human population rockets towards 7 billion, there is less space, less water, less food, less habitat. Humanity today uses up 25% of the earth's land surface simply to feed itself, but what about the millions of other creatures God made?

Should our notion of 'community' only include humans, or include all creation? Today there are two extreme views. Some (including many Christians) see the world as first and foremost for people. If there's a conflict – such as the problems A Rocha India has been tackling between humans and elephants – people should always win. Never mind the



fact that people have taken over ancient elephant routes or feeding areas, the elephants have ultimately got to go. Others (probably including fewer Christians, but including many deeply moral environmentalists), see humans as causing all the problems. Some even ask "Wouldn't the world be a better place without human beings?" and refuse to have children themselves. According to American philosopher Peter Singer, we are 'the virus species' and other creatures would thrive if we became extinct.



DISCUSS:

- Which of these two views do I have more sympathy with?
- Is there one that seems instinctively 'more Christian' and if so, why?

SECTION 2 – IN THE BEGINNING



READ: Genesis 2.4-25 (Read the whole passage together, perhaps in 'The Message')



DISCUSS:

- What was Adam made from (v.7)? What does this tell us about our relationship with the earth and its creatures? (NB the name Adam means 'made from the earth'.)
- What is Adam's job description within the family of creatures (v.15, 19-20)? The words in v.15 mean 'serve and preserve' – how does this affect how we should see other species today?
- In Genesis 1.28 God encourages people to 'increase in number'. Cyprian of Carthage, writing in the 3rd century AD said this was only for when "the earth was uncultivated and empty" and that now "those who can, receive contingency". What do you think is a Christian response to overpopulation?

SECTION 3 – LIVING TOGETHER NOW



READ: Deuteronomy 22.6-7 & Matthew 10.29-31



DISCUSS:

- Does God value all species equally? If not, what value does he put on non-human species? Who notices if sparrows die?

- According to Deuteronomy, what happens if we obey these principles of sustainable living ... and what do you think happens if we don't?
- In this magazine, Miranda Harris points out that 'the creation community' is our first place of belonging, and Andy Gosler reminds that it is inevitable that humans 'subdue' the earth by organising and controlling our environment. Can these ideas be held together, and if so how?



SECTION 4 – WORLD WITHOUT END



READ: Isaiah 11.6-9 & Hosea 2.16-23, explaining that these are visions about the 'new creation'



DISCUSS:

- Although these passages are about an ideal future when all suffering and evil will be removed, how can they help us and motivate us today?

- What values should Christians encourage in how we relate to other species? These could be written onto a large sheet of (recycled!) paper. Ideas might include: interdependence;

cherishing; delight; service; restraint; responsible use.

PRAY: Spend time in prayer as a group:



- Praising God for the amazing variety of creation, and his care for each creature.

- Saying sorry to God for ways in which we fail to care for his creatures as we should.
- Praying for all who make important decisions about resource use, wildlife protection, population control ... and for ourselves as responsible consumers and stewards of creation.

It's all about you!

– A Rocha events



There are more details listed on the website www.arocha.org.uk. Please inform us if you are planning a local A Rocha event. Our partners John Ray Initiative also have good events listed at www.jri.org.uk

7th July STORM OF HOPE – Christian Ecology Link 25th Anniversary Celebration in London – speakers include Ann Pettifor & Dave Bookless – visit www.christian-ecology.org.uk/stormhope for details.

8th July CHILTERN GATEWAY PROJECT OPEN DAY – from 4pm. Nature walk, open-air swimming, labyrinth, childrens quiz, BBQ & wine. Entry £5 for car parking. All proceeds to A Rocha/Adwell Church. Location: Adwell House, Adwell, OX9. Contact jane.pendleton@arocha.org.



21st July HOPE FOR THE PLANET – conference in Wellington, Somerset – speakers include Steve Hughes, Jo Rathbone, Prof. Sam Berry. Cost £10. Contact Simon Ratsey on simonratsey@hotmail.com or 01823 666 564

21st July – 11th August NEW WINE CHRISTIAN CONFERENCES

Join us at the Rocha stand! Dave & Anne Bookless are speaking at 'New Wine South & East' (28th July – 3rd August).



Make hay while the sun shines at Minet Country Park



Why not join the annual haycut at Minet? You'll encourage wildflowers and make new friends! Groups or individuals welcome & visits can be combined with a picnic or guided walk. Come for a few hours or longer: 28th July, 1st-4th August, & other dates in August / September by arrangement. Contact sarah.leadham@arocha.org or 07989 307461

22nd September CHRISTIANS & THE ENVIRONMENT – Day conference at the Centre for Practical Christianity, Kendal, with Dave Bookless – Cost £10. Book via hilarybinks@btinternet.com 01539 727207

24th – 28th September GOD'S WORD IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

– Lee Abbey Conference with Dave Bookless speaking. Book via www.leeabbey.org.uk or 0800 389 1189.

28th - 30th September ENJOYING BIRDS AS GOD'S CREATION weekend on Holy Island led by Mark Winter – To book contact mark@birdwatchnorthumbria.co.uk or 01670 783 451.



SPEAKERS' WORKSHOP DAYS

13th October St. Albans, Herts – contact margaret.young@arocha.org

17th November Scotland – contact victoria.beale@arocha.org

Both are practical days to learn more about speaking for A Rocha. Places limited.

8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th November – **THE LONDON LECTURES – Christianity & the Environment** – with Peter Harris & Rev Dr Chris Wright – book via www.licc.org.uk – 4 consecutive Thursday evenings

3rd November HOPE FOR THE PLANET

– major day conference for Church leaders at St. John's College Durham. Speakers being confirmed but include Prof. David Wilkinson & Dave Bookless. Keynote biblical addresses, practical seminars, marketplace, and resources to take home. Subsidised for students. Book via hope@arocha.org or 020 8574 5935.



A Rocha Living Waterways

EVENTS IN HAYES & SOUTHALL

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 2nd & 4th Saturdays at Minet Country Park
- **GREEN TEAM** – Practical conservation parties on Saturdays – contact sarah.leadham@arocha.org
- **MINET EVENTS** – Ask the office to get our new local events leaflet.

I WANT TO HELP CARE FOR GOD'S CREATION

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A 'FRIEND' OF A ROCHA, please click on 'Get Involved' at www.arocha.org.uk and submit the form there, or e-mail uk@arocha.org, call us on 020 8574 5935 or write to A Rocha UK, Freepost (SCE 13093), Southall UB1 3BR.