

ARANZ October e-news



Creation Care and Mission

Here is a Biblical reflection on Care of Creation as Mission, by Peter Harris, Founder of A Rocha at: <http://www.arocha.org/int-en/3286-DSY.html>



The graphic features the Scripture Union logo with the tagline 'your adventure begins'. The main text reads 'SUMMER CAMPS 2010/11' and 'A TOTALLY UNIQUE EXPERIENCE'. Below this, various activities are listed: KAYAK, HORSE RIDE, EXPLORE, TRAMP, SAIL, SURF, and SWIM. To the right, a calendar shows the schedule for December 2010 and January 2011. The December 2010 calendar shows 'EQUINE EXPERIENCE' from Dec 16-20 and 'HIKUMUTU HILLBILLIES' from Dec 28-30. The January 2011 calendar shows 'RUGGED RIDERS' (Junior and Senior) from Jan 6-10, 'TONGARIRO ECO-ADVENTURE' from Jan 12-16, 'MANGAWHAI MARINE' from Jan 14-16, 'OKATAINA' from Jan 14-16, 'HARD CORE' from Jan 16-20, 'PONY PALS' from Jan 24-28, and 'CRAGIEBURN CAPERS' from Jan 20-24. At the bottom of the graphic, there are icons for 'scriptureunioncamps' and a photo of a person on a swing.

TOGARIRO ECO-ADVENTURE 2011!!

Please pass this information on to anyone you think may be interested to join in the camp!

Powerful volcanoes, wild rivers, magnificent forests, delicate alpine flowers, beautiful birds, extraordinary insects... This summer A Rocha is teaming up again with Scripture Union for the second annual Tongariro Eco-Adventure. Together we'll explore the amazing ecosystems of Tongariro National Park, help on a conservation project and get to know the wonderful God who created us and all other creatures. If you are a bit older than the age range, but are keen to be involved, please contact us - we are looking for leaders and a head chef!

WHERE: Crusader Lodge, Whakapapa

DATES: 9-15 Jan 2011

WHO FOR: Yr 11 Secondary – 1st year Tertiary Co-ed

COST: \$190

TEAM LEADERS: Richard Storey & Keith Hamill

CONTACT: Richard 07 856 3241, 027 366 0481 or richard.storey@arocha.org

http://www.scriptureunion.org.nz/camps/summer_2010/tongariro.html

Report from A Rocha 2010 Leaders' Forum, June 8-13, Les Courmettes, France

The 2010 A Rocha leaders' forum was held in the new A Rocha France field centre at Les Courmettes, near Nice, from June 8-13. About 60 people, including the A Rocha International (ARI) management team and trustees, and up to 3 people from each A Rocha national organization (ARNO) attended the forum. A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand was represented by Kristel van Houte-Howes (National Director), Carolyn Robertson (Trustee) and Richard Storey (Chair).

1) From Richard Storey:

The forum was a valuable time to build or renew relationships with people from other ARNOs, learn from the experience and expertise of other A Rocha leaders, study the Bible and worship the Creator together. At this forum, we also helped ARI plan its strategy for growing over the next few years.

Each morning we gathered to hear Rikk Watts, a New Testament scholar from Regent College in Canada. Over 4 days, Rikk outlined the biblical picture of creation as the temple of God and of humans as God's image bearers. For most of us there was a lot of new and exciting material in his message, as he explained the Genesis account in the light of, and a triumph over, Egyptian mythology (which was the context and language which the original Israelite audience were familiar with). The repeated theme in Rikk's message was the importance of love – for one another and for all of creation. For me (Richard) the main take-home message was how tremendously affirming and motivating it is to immerse ourselves in the biblical view of creation. It was a reminder of the tremendous value of keeping the Bible at the core of all we do.

Later each morning we grappled with some of the big issues that A Rocha International is facing. We provided feedback on their new vision and mission statements, and discussed ways that A Rocha can strengthen its scientific research base. A key issue was deciding on criteria that A Rocha should use to affiliate more national organizations. At present there are 20, but ARI has had requests from another (roughly) 30 countries, and doesn't have the resources to affiliate them all. We also discussed the importance of agreeing on a theological framework for conservation – one that is consistent with the biblical picture and with current science. Peter Harris (A Rocha founder) pointed out that Christians engaged in conservation work may have one of several different theologies, and each may ultimately lead to a different outcome.



After lunch, a variety of workshops by ARNOs and ARI team members gave us insight into various specific issues that are relevant to us as A Rocha Aotearoa NZ. Richard attended sessions on Governance and Risk Management, the relationship between National Team and Trust Board, which provided valuable insights on how to improve our structures, systems and lines of communication. Another workshop called "What does an A Rocha-shaped church look like?" gave insights into the very impressive work that A Rocha UK has been doing with churches, and inspiration for what we could do in the future.

As is often the case at conferences, some of the most valuable fruit came during discussions outside the main sessions. One of the most interesting discussions was about the "dispersed"

structure that ARANZ and several other ARNOs (e.g. the Netherlands and USA) have, consisting of local groups in various towns or cities vs. the more “classic” A Rocha structure of one or two field studies centres (e.g. in Canada, Kenya, etc.). It seems that most of those focused on a field centre are trying to grow more local groups, while most of those with the dispersed structure are aiming to develop one or two “flagship projects”. Those striving for more local groups talk about benefits of developing A Rocha as a movement, or a catalyst for change, across the whole church. Those aiming to develop flagship projects talk about the importance of living in community 24:7, and the value of field centres as places for training and sharing the A Rocha “DNA”. There is real food for thought here as we plan how we will grow.

We also heard from A Rocha Canada what a wonderful job Lynton and Anna are doing, and realized again the value of these exchanges. We heard of many opportunities for Kiwis to serve in other ARNOs and encourage people in our ARANZ family to consider spending time in another A Rocha project.

2) From Carolyn Robertson:

The conference was a great opportunity to better understand the A Rocha ethos and meet some key personalities. The morning theology reflection was inspiring while the afternoon seminars were informative. For me personally I really appreciated hearing about some of the peripheral aspects of A Rocha such as “Climate Stewards” [A Rocha’s project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and offset unavoidable emissions through tree planting projects in Ghana, Kenya and Peru] and “Eco-congregation” [a project to enable churches to reduce their environmental impact and incorporate creation care into the life of their churches]. I look forward to researching and implementing Eco-congregation in the New Zealand context.

I also felt the forum was useful for reinforcing the steps we need to take at these initial stages of organisational growth. It was good to hear information around fund raising and capacity building that was relevant for where we are at.



3) From Kristel van Houte

As Richard and Carolyn have already written – the conference was a wonderful opportunity to meet new faces from A Rocha around the world and reconnect with old friends too. It’s always great to see the huge family network that we are a part of – especially being so isolated from the rest of the world here, down under. As Richard mentioned Rick Watts talks in the morning were great – good to get into some theology, which inspired me to think of doing some study in this area.. . sometime???. Workshops included the science and art of fundraising – something we have been doing lost of lately!! – so it was great to get some insights into that, and the climate steward project – something we could consider incorporating into our own planting projects in future perhaps? Great to hear about the various other projects around the world – some wonderful stuff going on – have a look at the AR webpages and the CD’s that Richard will be sending out to you – they have the posters from the conference on there too.

Great to know that there is some wonderful expert support out there for us too at an international level – in regards to setting up systems and databases at a national level – which we

will definitely be tapping into in the future. I loved the hikes up the mountain from Les Courmettes, morning wanders through the traditionally farmed meadows and a visit to a nearby national park – where we hiked far enough up to touch the snow – something the Kenyans don't get to do very often! The hair pin corners of the French Alps were a little bit too much for me though! Overall an inspiring time. 😊

On another note ...

We now also have a wonderful lady called Tash looking after our accounts. Any queries about financial processes, deposits etc please let us know and she will help you out where needed.
Aroha

Kristel

A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand
PO Box 19104, Hamilton 3244

www.arocha.org
(click on NZ/Aotearoa)

