

ANDROS CONSERVANCY AND TRUST NEWSLETTER

BIODIVERSITY = ALL LIFE ON EARTH

PLEASE TAKE NOTE

- 1 in 4 mammals
- 1 in 3 amphibians
- 1 in 8 birds
- 1 in 3 corals
- 1 in 5 plants

ARE ALL IN DANGER OF EXTINCTION IN THE WILD

Globally, we now require the equivalent of 1.4 planets to support our lifestyles. This is humanity's current Ecological Footprint - the demand people place upon the natural world.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PELICANS	2
HONEY BEES	2
NATURAL CURES USING HONEY	
SAVE OUR SHARKS	3
EASY MONEY SAVING HINTS	3
HEALTHY LIVING	3
ANDROS WEATHER STATIONS	4
ANCAT RECEIVES HELP	4

Biodiversity is a word to describe the variety of life on Earth. Biodiversity refers to ALL the ecosystems, ALL the plants, ALL the animals, so we can say that biodiversity equals life and we ALL depend upon it.

Humans sometimes forget that we are a part of nature and depend on it for our existence, both now and in the future. We rely upon biodiversity of life to provide us with food, fuel, medicine and everything we cannot live without, such as purification of air and water, prevention of soil erosion, regulation of climate, pollination of crops and material for clothing. Plus, the beauty of the natural world is an incredible wonder, beyond price.

Healthy biodiversity is essential to human wellbeing, sustainable development and poverty reduction.

It is important to know that the world's biodiversity is under great threat, and **extinction is the end of a species.** The moment of extinction is generally considered to be the death of the last individual of the group.

Right now the predictions for species

extinction are frightening : 1 in 4 mammals, 1 in 3 amphibians, 1 in 8 birds, 1 in 3 corals and 1 in 5 plants are in danger of extinction in the wild. The journal of Science tells us that 50 species of animal move closer to extinction each year due to the impacts of agriculture, logging, over exploitation and the invasion of invasive species. Over the last 50 years human activities have changed ecosystems more rapidly than at any other time in history. As a result thousands of plants and animals currently face extinction with devastating implications for our human species.

The peril of so many species is a terrifying signal for the future of our own species. It is vitally important to protect the environment that sustains us and biodiversity is everywhere. It occurs both on land and in water, high up on mountains and low down in deep ocean trenches and it includes all organisms, from microscopic

bacteria to fishes to plants. The total number of species on Earth ranges from 5 to 30 million and only approximately 2 million species have been identified. We are all part of the web of life and we need to protect it, because quite frankly

it protects us.

It's the smallest thing but possibly the grandest gesture you can do today... Plant a tree seed. All you have to do is make sure they are the seeds of trees that are "native" - to the place in which you live. Your one single action gains significance as it grows, because the idea, the thought, perhaps the hope grows that we all **can** do something to save this planet. Visit ecoguru.panda.org and see how you can green your lifestyle.



COOLER BUILDINGS

If you are building a new house here are some sensible building hints to help your construction project become the comfortable dream habitat you deserve. Before you begin take some time to study your lot, note the direction of the sun and the prevailing winds. Remember the south side will be the sunniest wall and here you should make the windows a little smaller or leave trees to block the sun's summer rays. Position your building to catch the prevailing

coastal winds. Do not put the bulldozer on the lot, take time to hand clear, leaving some native trees for shade, the bulldozer will crush the rock and destroy the natural drainage holes, leaving you to live in deep mosquito infested puddles in the rainy season. Inside, make your ceilings a little higher, warm air rises and becomes trapped in houses with



low ceilings, this makes the house unbearably hot in the summer and you'll be spending plenty of money on keeping the room cool. Line up your windows to allow for the air to move through the building and put overhangs on windows which face the sun. Using pressure treated wood will avoid termite infestation and make your building stronger therefore it will last much longer. A home is a major investment, sensibly built it will serve you for years.

PELICANS

The Bahamas is home to the brown pelican, a bulky seabird which is rarely seen inland. The adult brown pelican is a large gray brown water bird with white about the head and neck. Immature pelicans are gray brown above and on the neck, with white under parts. The pelican's bill is longer than their head, it has a huge naked skin pouch which is suspended from the lower half of the hooked bill, this skin pouch helps the bird to cool down in extreme heat. Pelicans are exceptionally buoyant due to the internal air sacs beneath their skin and in their bones, and as graceful in the air as they are clumsy on land. They fly with their heads held back



on their shoulders, their bills resting on their folded necks. Pelicans can often be seen along the beaches on Andros, they glide effortlessly close to the waves. Known for its dive bombing skills the pelican dives from great heights of up to 70 feet for food. The pelican uses keen eyesight to locate fish under the water. Pelicans dive straight down using the large pouch on their bill as a dip net to catch one or more fish at a time. They hold their catch and let the water drain from the corners of their mouths before they swallow. Fish are never carried in the pouch but in the gullet or esophagus. Young



pelicans feed by sticking their bills into their parents' throat to retrieve food. Brown pelicans lay 2-3 chalky white eggs and incubation is about 28-30 days. They either nest on the ground or in trees, their young walks out of the nests on the ground about 35 days after hatching, but do not leave treetop nests for approximately 63-88 days for their first flight. The pelican's four toes are webbed, making it a master

Swimmer. These web footed birds incubate their eggs with their feet. They hold the eggs under the webs and stand on the eggs until hatching time.

In the 1960's brown pelican populations decreased dramatically due to their consumption of fish that contained DDT and other pesticides. DDT causes the egg shells to become so thin that the young can not survive also the incubating parents frequently cracked their eggs when they were standing on them. Since the banning of DDT in USA the pelican population has increased.

'A wonderful bird is the pelican, its beak holds more than its belican.'

By D.L.Merritt



HONEY BEES



One out of every three bites of food a Bahamian eats is directly attributed to honey bee pollination. Bees are responsible for pollination of over 100 crops, including fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds.

Sudden and widespread bee deaths over the last few years have led to alarm over the future of our food supply. Bees are dying by the tens of billions due to a bizarre phenomenon called 'Colony collapse disorder' (CCD) And the scary thing is scientists don't know the cause or how to stop it. With the death of bees we have to understand that there is no way we can pollinate crops by hand or any other

mechanism. It has to be noted that while bees are known honey thieves, healthy ones avoid hives where CCD has taken hold.

There is a lot we can do now to help honeybees:

Buy local honey and eat more of it, the best way to keep bee keeping viable and happening in our island is to support the industry. Honey boosts the immune system and improves general health.

Eat organic food and garden without pesticides, pesticide does affect bees.

Raise bees, Beekeeping is a fascinating activity.

Plant a bee garden. Choose plants that are attractive to bees.

Honey bees require water, so leave clean water in the yard.

Select insect specific insecticides. Leave flowers on your plants until the blooms are gone, as the bees will make the most of the flower. Select bees that are local, these will be used to the plants we can grow here. Fresh honey is for sale at the Mennonite farm in North Andros.

Natural cures using HONEY

WARNING : Never give honey to an infant under 12 months.

For at least 2,700 years honey has been used to treat ailments rubbed onto a cut or drunk for the remarkable healing power.

Honey for pain relief: Mix 3 spoonfuls of honey in boiled water and drink. Honey has natural pain-relieving powers.

Honey Relieves Coughs: boil a whole lemon slowly for 10 minutes. Cut the lemon in 2 and extract the juice, add half a cup of honey and stir well, drink when needed.

Honey for Burns: Apply to burn, cover with a soft bandage.

Honey for Hangovers: Eat honey on bread or crackers. The fructose in the honey helps to flush out the alcohol in your system.

Put honey on sores, because honey contains potassium, bacteria cannot survive in it, therefore it is good to put on sores..

Honey for the cold: Mix the juice of a lime, a large spoonful of honey and hot water, stir and allow to cool, drink it down, great at bedtime especially on cold nights, refreshing the body and mind.

Honey promotes healing and prevents scarring. Honey is a natural cure all and available right here from Andros Island.

SAVE OUR SHARKS

The Bahamas currently boasts the healthiest and most diverse shark population in the Atlantic and Caribbean. Currently there are no specific shark fishing regulations in The Bahamas, but it is feared that given the economic trade agreements between China and The Bahamas, without protection, a shark fin fishery will inevitably develop for export to China.

Fining involves fishermen slicing off the fins of sharks while the sharks are still alive. Their bodies are then dumped overboard to let the helpless creature die an agonizing death at the bottom of the ocean. An estimated 73 million sharks are slaughtered worldwide every year for their fins, which are used to make shark fin soup, an Asian delicacy.

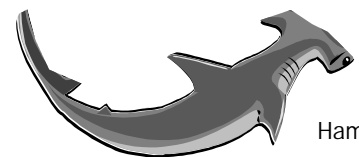
The Bahamas is internationally considered the **"Shark diving capital of the world"** National Geographic describes The Bahamas is an Eden for sharks. These island serve as a pupping grounds and populate the wider region.

Scuba divers love to dive with sharks, they enjoy the thrill of being in the water with these mighty predators, observing their movements and behaviours first hand.

The economic value of maintaining a healthy shark population in Bahamian waters is one reason alone which should have legislators rushing to protect this



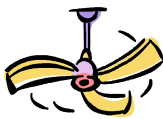
valuable resource. It is estimated that sharks have added more than \$850,000,000 to the Bahamian economy over the past ten years... serious money ! A single shark is worth \$250,000 for tourism over its lifetime if kept alive on the reef. However if the same shark is killed and put on the dinner plate, it merely generates a one time income of about \$55. Clearly sharks are worth substantially more alive than dead. Furthermore the depletion of these key predators risks the health of entire ocean ecosystems. And will have dire consequences for the marine health of the Bahamian archipelago. Sharks are necessary for the vitality of coral reefs. If you remove the sharks from the food web, the delicately balanced marine ecosystems will be disrupted. An ocean without sharks will be a very sick ocean.



Hammerhead shark

EASY MONEY SAVING HINTS: EASY MONEY SAVINGS HINTS

Clean your fans, all the accumulated dust on a fan's blades slow it down, cut down on the breeze and waste your dollars as the fan is using more electricity to keep you cool. Simply wiping the dust off the blades once a month helps a fan run more effectively.



Leave your milk in the main body of the fridge, it is much colder here.



Milk left in the door of the fridge will go off quicker as it is warmer there.

Use a reusable water bottle, and fill it from a 5 gallon jug or buy larger cans of juice and fill your bottle at home. When you have finished the juice take off the can's top and use the can body as a plant pot for tomatoes or sweet peppers

Use orange and grapefruit peel as air fresheners. Old clothes can be torn up and used for cleaning jobs, polishing windows and the car. Add crushed glass to your cement to make it stronger. Plan your meals in advance and bulk buy the groceries you need. Bulk buying really cuts down on your bills. Eat IN more often rather than buying cooked food

We live in a consumer society where waste is a huge problem. If we could all use and consume less there would be less waste, less power consumption, and the benefits for you are SAVING MONEY

HEALTHY LIVING POSSIBLE ON ANDROS

Androsians WAKE UP, GET UP and take control of your life. Here on the island we are SO LUCKY, our streets and beaches are safe and quiet. If we take a fifteen minute walk each day, it is guaranteed that we will feel so much better, the benefits include: clearer skin, loss of weight, positive thinking, sounder sleep.

And if we combine this exercise with little changes in our eating habits, such as eating the delicious fruits and



vegetables we can grow here on the island such as: our home grown sea grapes, coca plums, juju, ganep, cherries, pomegranate, avocado, coconut, pa paw, tamarind, hog plum, guava, scarlet plum, dilly, grapefruits, pineapples, banana, mangoes, cassava, yams, onions, okras, cucumber, pumpkin, watermelon, cabbage, plantain etc. Also we can use some bush plants for teas.

These simple life changes and we will live longer and be healthier, with no high/low blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, colds, and your energy level will increase, you'll feel better about yourself and the world and be able to THINK clearly and creatively. STOP poisoning yourself with packaged food, sometimes it was processed years ago in faraway places, make healthy fruits and vegetables a part of your lifestyle and exercise a daily routine. It is NEVER too late to start no matter your age or condition. Be encouraged to start TODAY.



Make EXERCISE a part of your daily life

We are on the web

Www.ancat.net

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A N C A T

Protecting, preserving, restoring and enhancing the natural and marine resources of Andros through education, conservation and management for future generations.

ANCAT RECEIVES HELP

Ancat would like to thank **The Royal Bank of Canada** who through the **RBC Blue Water Project Community Action Grants** have given Ancat a donation to assist with our work to safeguard the fresh water here on the island. In September and December Ancat arranged cleanup days at Captain Bill's Blue Hole in Love Hill. During this time scuba divers managed to remove almost two trucks full of bottles and cans which had been carelessly discarded in this, the most accessible Blue Hole in the area. It is believed that thousands of Bahamians and tourists visit this local beauty spot every year. Ancat now feels that the hole is much cleaner and safer for human enjoyment. Further to the work in Love Hill the grant has assisted in other ways, namely to remove the land based waste around the Gubler Hole in Bowen Sound also

to complete the trail started by Andy and Steve Smith in their work to open a pathway through to a blue Hole in Cargill Creek.

Thanks is also extended to **Bahamas Telecommunications Company (BTC)** for a grant to support our sustainable livelihoods programme, these funds will be used towards teaching up to ten youths / young adults to scuba dive in the Spring of 2011. These persons will be given the opportunity to wear a tank and descend beneath the waves to witness the majesty of the coral reef and its marine life for themselves. If you would like to be considered for this experience, please contact the Ancat office to sign up, only strong swimmers need apply. Once again the **Lyford Cay Foundation** has chosen to



support Ancat in our efforts to teach the youths of Andros about the importance of protecting the natural resources. Shanta Brown will be going into Fresh Creek and Bowen Sound Primary Schools regularly in 2011 to work with the children. It is planned to adopt pieces of the mangrove and to learn about the fishes and birds seen there, the children will be collecting data about the species seen and their sizes. This funding will also assist in the ongoing restoration work in Fresh Creek, helping us to remove more of the accumulated waste. Furthermore, Ancat plans to publish four child centered newsletters to educate and entertain our children with interesting stories and puzzles suitable for youngsters in an easy to read format. Ancat is committed to working with the people of Andros, both young and old, inspiring the next generation to become the greatest custodians of our marvelous home.

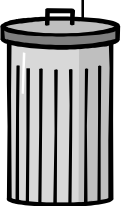
Sincere thanks to :

- The Royal Bank of Canada
- Bahamas Telecommunications
- Lyford Cay Foundation
- Russ Deatherage
- Forfar: Ben, Ryan, Austin, Andy, Laura, Kevin, Lindsey, Brian, Casey, Aaron, Kristen
- Small Hope Bay: Mel and Joe

Save on paper

pass this newsletter onto another person when you have finished reading it

**HELP KEEP
ANDROS CLEAN
FIND A BIN
TO PUT YOUR
TRASH IN**



Andros schools get weather centers

In November the science departments in the four High Schools of Andros received weather centers from the IWCAM project organized by The Nature Conservancy and funded by the Global Environment Facility. The weather stations included instruments to enable the students and staff to collect data about our weather. The schools will now be recording data about the wind speed, the rainfall and the temperatures. This data will be sent to a global data bank enabling the students to share their data with other stations around the world, therefore they will be contributing to the global weather monitoring effort. It will be possible to see the data on the internet as the Met office are supposed to be linking these weather stations to their network. The schools also received books to assist the students to learn more about the natural world, The Bahamas and our wonderful flora and fauna. Thanks go out to Miko Thompson (BNT), Eleanor Phillips and Sharrah Moss (TNC) for their time and work towards making these weather stations a reality. For more information about the project and the results visit the website at www.nature.org/androsIWCAM

Ancat membership grows to 388 members, become a member, join today!

Get involved in Ancat, we only survive because of gifts, donations and grants, if you would like to see our work continue in Andros, please make a donation. Cheques can be made out to Ancat and sent to the address at left. In 2011 we plan to continue to work on the following projects: a green bag drive, complete restoration of Captain Bill's Blue Hole, Gubler Hole and Cargill Creek blue holes, complete the restoration of Fresh Creek, and commence restoration work in Cargill Creek, instruction of ten young persons to scuba dive, Ancat Summer School for 15 deserving youngsters from Fresh Creek, and the development of a waste management plan for Central Andros. ANCAT doing things that need to be done to ensure a positive future.