

TRIBULUS



Journal of the Emirates Natural History Group

Vol. 15.2

Autumn/Winter 2005



TRIBULUS

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

TRIBULUS is the Journal of the Emirates Natural History Group and was launched in 1991. The Group was founded in 1976, and over the next fourteen years, 42 issues of a duplicated Bulletin were published.

TRIBULUS is published twice a year. The aim of the publication is to create and maintain in standard form a collection of recordings, articles and analysis on topics of regional natural history, heritage, geology, palaeontology and archaeology, with the emphasis on the United Arab Emirates and adjacent areas. Papers, short notes and other contributions are welcomed from anyone but should not have been published elsewhere. Guidelines are set out below. The information carried is as accurate as can be determined, in consultation with the Journal's Advisory Panel and referees, but opinions expressed are those of the authors alone.

All manuscripts received are reviewed by the Editorial Board and appropriate Advisory Panel members and, where appropriate, are also submitted to blind peer review.

Correspondence and enquiries should be sent to:

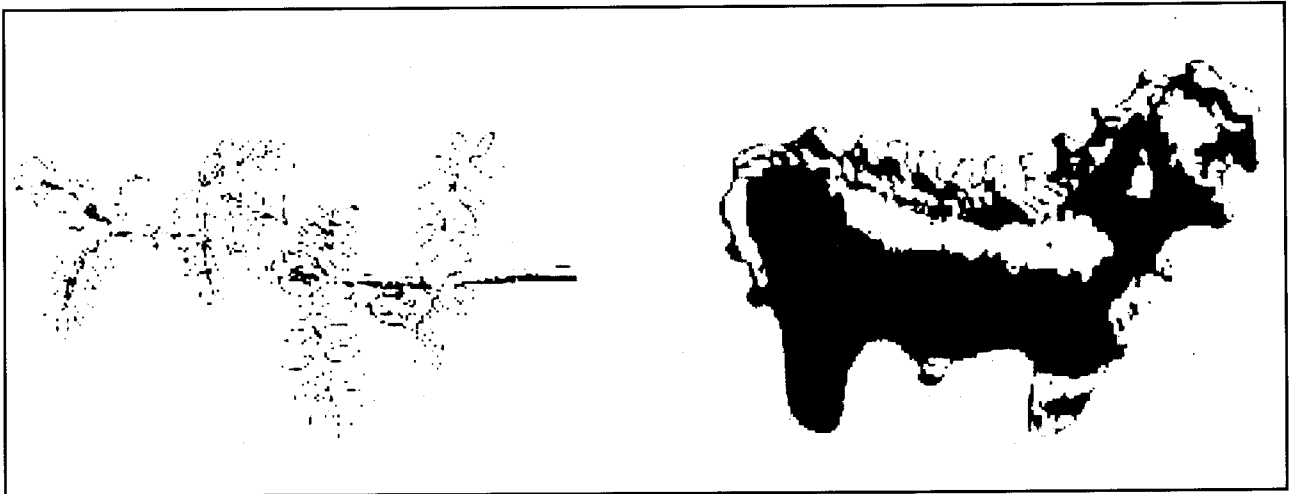
The Editor,
TRIBULUS,
P.O. Box 45553, Abu Dhabi - U.A.E.
or by e-mail to: hellyer@emirates.net.ae

Editorial Board:

H.E. Sheikh Nahayan bin Mubarak Al Nahayan, Patron,
Peter Hellyer, Managing Editor,
Simon Aspinall, Deputy Editor,
Dr. Michael Gillett,
Professor Drew Gardner,
Dr. Mark Beech

Advisory Panel:

Professor Jens Eriksen (Life Sciences)
Professor Graham Evans (Earth Sciences)
Professor Dan Potts (Archaeology)
Michael Gallagher (Fauna)
Dr. Geoffrey R.D. King (Archaeology)



The plant motif above is of the genus *Tribulus*, of which there are six species in the UAE. They all have pinnate leaves, yellow flowers with free petals and distinctive five-segmented fruits. They are found throughout the country, except in coastal sabkha.

The animal motif above is of a tiny golden bull, excavated from the early Second Millennium grave at Qattarah, Al Ain. The original is on display in Al Ain Museum, and measures above 5 cm by 4 cm.

Manuscripts should be submitted in electronic form, with a printed copy, typed on one side only, and double-spaced. A short abstract should precede the article, with the address(es) of the author(s) at the end. Photographs may be submitted and should be clearly captioned. Line drawings and maps, if not submitted in electronic form, should be in black ink on strong white or translucent paper. References should give the author's name, with the year of publication in brackets, and with the list of articles, showing title and publisher, in date order. Scientific names should follow customary nomenclature in Latin, while the English and, if appropriate, available local Arabic names should also be supplied.

International Standard Serial Number (ISSN): 1019 - 6919.

recruited a British environmental expert, Robert Llewellyn-Smith, to establish its new Wildlife and Protected Areas Division. Llewellyn-Smith (a former contributor to *Tribulus*), has fifteen years of experience in wildlife conservation and protected area management, gained mainly in Middle East/Arabian Peninsula, Africa and Europe.

Before he joined EPIDC, Robert worked for the Earthwatch Institute (Europe), an international environmental organisation based in Oxford, UK, where he built up and managed its African Programme. Prior to that, he worked in the UAE from 1999 to 2001 for the Sharjah-based conservation charity, the Arabian Leopard Trust, during which period he carried out various surveys of Ra's al Khaimah's natural habitats in collaboration with the EPIDC, presenting various plans and recommendations for conservation of key habitats and wildlife.

Ra's al-Khaimah's EPIDC was established in 1999 to tackle environmental impacts caused by local cement and quarry industries. EPIDC is the competent authority within the emirate of Ra's al Khaimah entrusted with the implementation of the requirements of the Federal Law No. (24) of 1999 for the Protection and Development of the Environment. With the approval of Ra's al-Khaimah Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler Sheikh Saud bin Saqr al Qassimi, EPIDC is now widening its remit to cover wildlife and natural habitat conservation.

(Robert Llewellyn-Smith)

Publications

Books

Review

Reef Fishes - UAE and Gulf of Oman. Field, R.F. (2005). Motivate Publishing, Dubai. ISBN 1-86063-161-4. 144 pages. 303 colour plates. 21cm x 15.2cm. Spiral bound. Price 55 UAE Dirhams.

Richard Field built his first underwater camera housing when living in Port Sudan in 1964, where he spent much of his free time diving along the Sudanese Red Sea coast. After living in various Far East locations he spent some time in Jeddah on the Saudi Arabian Red Sea coast. It was during his stay there that he and his wife Mary published the book "Reef Fishes of the Red Sea". Richard is a retired Chartered Engineer now resident in Qurm in the Sultanate of Oman. This new book "Reef Fishes - UAE and Gulf of Oman" is a labour of love which represents many hours of diving and photography in the waters of the region. The majority of the pictures taken in this book were taken by the author (or in some cases, by his immediate family) in the Gulf of Oman, Red Sea or Arabian Sea. A conscious effort was made to ensure that the photographs selected truly represent species that are seen in the Gulf of Oman or Arabian Gulf. This is particularly important when using Red Sea examples since species can exhibit different colour forms according to the particular regions they inhabit.

The book, designed as "a reference book for divers and snorkellers", is beautifully illustrated by more than three hundred underwater shots of reef fishes. Its handy size and spiral-bound format make it easy to handle and practical for field use. It will undoubtedly become a popular handbook for the diving fraternity in Arabia as well as others with a general interest in marine life of the region.

The introductory pages to the book outline the oceanographic background to the study region. There is a brief mention of the Daymaniyat Island National Nature Reserve in Oman and the proposed reserves at Barr al-Hikman-Masirah Island, Musandam (Khawr Quway-Jazirat Um al-Ghanam) and Dhofar (Raaha) in Oman, as well as the Al Yasat area in the UAE. It is a pity that no mention is made

of the 5561 sq km Marawah Marine Protected Area in Abu Dhabi emirate in the UAE. This is the largest marine protected area in the entire region, which was designated in 2001 and is managed by the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi. The author makes an important point when he says that "... Marine Reserves have no value as simply a shaded area on a map" (p.9). Marine protected areas can only be successful if there is monitoring, patrolling and enforcement to effectively manage them.

A useful feature of the book is a checklist of species within the three main distribution areas, namely the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea. The checklist, in combination with the index, are extremely useful for quickly looking up details on particular species. It is a shame however that no effort was made to include local Arabic names for the fishes. Local names could have been added in Arabic, as well as English transliterations of their names. The author states that "...Arabic names are not included, since no standard list of names is available" (p14). However, lists of Arabic names have been publicly circulated by the Ministries of Agriculture and Fisheries in both the UAE and Oman. Many Arabic names are also available in the FAO 1997 publication (K.E. Carpenter, F. Krupp, D.A. Jones and U. Zajonz - 1997 - The Living Marine Resources of Kuwait, Eastern Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. FAO Species Identification Field Guide for Fishery Purposes. FAO, Rome), as well as on the internet via Fishbase (www.fishbase.org).

As all biologists know, there is no such thing as a perfect checklist of species. Name changes and frequent taxonomic revisions complicate things. A further complication is the fact that comparatively little detailed research has been undertaken on Arabian fisheries. It is stated in the book that the checklist provided is compiled from "trusted authors" plus the author's own observations. It is a pity that these sources are not listed since those interested in reading further would have appreciated details of some of the key references. A minor gripe, yet one that is very important for fish taxonomists, is the way the checklist has been prepared. The convention in taxonomy is that authors who first describe a species have their surnames as well as the year it was named following the genus and species name. If there has been subsequent revision of the genus and/or species name then the new authors' names and year are placed in brackets, e.g. *Epinephelus coioides* (Hamilton, 1822). In the checklist given in this book all brackets have been removed! This is probably an editorial oversight by someone not familiar with taxonomy.

As someone who has worked on fishes predominantly within the Arabian Gulf region I noticed one or two biases in the book towards the representation of Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea fishes. Some of these are as follows: (1) the most common grouper represented in UAE Arabian Gulf waters is the brown-spotted grouper, *Epinephelus coioides*. This is not described in the book and there is no picture of this species, although it does appear in the checklist. (2) some other examples of common fishes occurring in the Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Oman which are omitted from the main text and are not illustrated include marine catfish (Ariidae), flatheads (e.g. *Platycephalus indicus*), sea bream (e.g. *Acanthopagrus latus* and *Argyrops spinifer*) and the longtail tuna, kawakawa (*Thunnus tonggol*). This is not surprising considering the bulk of the material was gathered for the book in Omani waters. Users of this book based in the Arabian Gulf should therefore be cautious in using this book to identify some species which only appear as a mention in the checklist but which are not described or illustrated in the main text.

This book was published with the support and encouragement of Nakheel, the Dubai developers responsible for the Palm Island projects, who boldly advertise

their ongoing projects on pages 21 and 39. Nakheel have recently been subject to criticism over their handling of recent coastal development in Dubai and its impact on the marine environment. They should be commended here, however, for supporting the publication of important information on the marine fauna of the region. The book should go some way to engendering respect and awareness of the variety of reef fishes in the region. The author should be commended for producing such an excellent book. Let us hope that future editions will include updates as new research reveals the presence of further species recorded in the region. It is important, however, that such publications are translated into Arabic as well as English so that the information can be disseminated far and wide to local communities.

Dr Mark Beech
E-mail: adias@ead.ae

The Emirates - A Natural History. Hellyer, P. & Aspinall, S. [eds.] (2005). Trident Press, UK. ISBN 1-905486-2-2. 580 colour photographs, 428 pp.

To be reviewed in the next issue. This book, the first detailed study of the UAE's flora and fauna (both terrestrial and marine), also includes an overview of geology and palaeontology, and contains a 20,000 word bibliography and species check lists. UAE price: Dh 400.

Emirates Heritage Vol. 1 - Proceedings of the 1st Annual Symposium on Recent Palaeontological and Archaeological Discoveries in the Emirates, Al Ain. Hellyer, P. and Ziolkowski, M. [eds.]. 2005. Zayed Centre for Heritage and History, Al Ain. ISBN 9948-06-130-6. 139 pages.

Contents:

- al-Naboodah, H.M., Foreword (p. 3).
- Hellyer, P. and Ziolkowski, M., Introduction (4-5).
- Beech, M. and Higgs, W., *A New Late Miocene Fossil Site In Ruwais, Western Region of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates* (6-21).
- Higgs, W., Gardner, A. and Beech, M., *A Fossil Proboscidean Trackway at Mleisa, Western Region of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates* (21-27).
- Jasim, S.A., Uerpmann, H-P. and Uerpmann, M., *Neolithic Life and Death in the Desert - 8 Seasons of excavations at Jebel al-Buhais* (28-35).
- Hilal, A., *Excavations at Qarn al-Harf 67, Ra's al-Khaimah, 2001* (36-46).
- Gruber, C., Ayoub, S., Brückner, H., von den Driesch, A., Manhart, H., Qandil, H., Werner, P. and Zander, A., *The site of Al Sufouh 2 within the Internet City of Dubai, UAE: Preliminary report on four campaigns of excavation (03/2001-11/2002)* (47-69).
- Benoist, A., *Excavations at Bithna, Fujairah: First and Second Seasons* (70-87).
- Velde, C., *The Residence of Falayah* (88-100).
- Ziolkowski, M.C. and al-Sharqi, A.S., *Bayt Sheikh Suhail bin Hamdan al-Sharqi, al-Fara, Fujairah, United Arab Emirates (preliminary study)* (101-119).
- Qandil, H., *Survey and Excavations at Saruq Al Hadeed, 2002-2003* (120-138).

Articles & Papers

Archaeology

Arabian Archaeology & Epigraphy Vol. 16.1 (May 2005)

Connan, J., Carter, R., Crawford, H., Tobey, M., Charrié-Duhaut, A., Jarvie, D., Albrecht, P. and Norman, K., *A comparative geochemical study of bituminous boat remains from H3, As-Sabiyah (Kuwait), and RJ-2, Ra's al-Jinz (Oman)*

(21-66).

Gaultier, M., Guy, H., Munoz, O., Tosi, M. and Usai, D., *Settlement structures and cemetery at Wadi Shab-GAS1, Sultanate of Oman: Report on the 2002 and 2003 field seasons* (1-20).

Magee, P., *Investigating cross-Gulf trade in the Iron Age III period: chronological and compositional data on Burnished Maroon Slipped Ware (BMSW) in southeastern Arabia and Iran* (82-92).

Potts, D.T., *In the beginning: Marhashi and the origins of Magan's ceramic industry in the third millennium BC* (67-78).

Arabian Archaeology & Epigraphy Vol. 16.2 (November 2005)

Magee, P., Barber, D., Sobur, M. and Jasim, S., *Sourcing Iron Age softstone artefacts in southeastern Arabia: results from a programme of analysis using Inductively Coupled Plasma-Mass Spectrometry/Optical Emission Spectrometry (ICP-MS/OES)* (129-143).

De Waele, A., *Composite bowls at ed-Dur (Umm al-Qaiwain, U.A.E.)* (154-160).

Ziolkowski, M.C. and al-Sharqi, A.S., *Bayt Sheikh Suhail bin Hamdan al-Sharqi, al-Fara, Fujairah, United Arab Emirates: An ethnoarchaeological study (1)* (183-255).

Paleorient Vol. 31.1 (2005)

Past Exploitations of Aquatic Ecosystems in South-West Asia: Environmental Approaches. Edited by Jean Desse and Nathalie Desse-Berset.

This volume includes the following articles of regional interest:

Beech, M.J. and Glover, E., *The Environment and Economy of an Ubaid-related Settlement on Dalma Island, United Arab Emirates.*

Bérgér, J.-F., Cleuziou, S. and Davtian, G., *Évolution paléogéographique du Ja'alan (Oman) à l'Holocène moyen : impact sur l'évolution des paléomilieux littoraux et les stratégies d'adaptation des communautés humaines.*

Martin, C., *Stratégies et statut de la collecte des mollusques marins sur les sites côtiers d'Oman du Néolithique à l'âge du Bronze : apport des sites de Suwayh 1, Ra's al-Khabbah 1 et Ra's al-Jinz 2.*

Rosello-Izquierdo, E. and Morales-Muniz, A., *Gihayu : A Late Stone Age Fishing Station in the Coast of Yemen.*

Saliege, J.-F., Lezine, A.M. and Cleuziou, S., *Estimation de l'effet réservoir 14C marin en mer d'Arabie.*

Sanlaville, P. and Dalongeville R., *L'évolution des espaces littoraux du golfe Persique et du golfe d'Oman depuis la phase finale de la transgression post-glaciaire.*

Tengberg, M., *Les forêts de la mer. Exploitation et évolution des mangroves en Arabie orientale du Néolithique à l'époque islamique.*

Tome, K., *L'exploitation des oiseaux " aquatiques".*

Uerpmann, H.-P. and Uerpmann, M., *Fish exploitation at Bronze Age harbour sites in the Arabian Gulf area.*

Wilkens, B., *Fishing in the Arabian sea : a short note on the prehistoric sites RH6 and Ras al Junaiz 1 in Oman.*

Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies Vol. 35 (2005) ISBN 0953992373. Price £45 + pp.

This features a number of papers of regional interest including:

Bandyopadhyay, S., *Diversity in unity: an analysis of the settlement structure of Harat al-Aqr, Nizwa (Oman)* (19-36).

Barker, D. and Hassan, S.A., *Aspects of east coast Hellenism and beyond: Late Pre-Islamic ceramics from Dibba 76 and Dibba al-Murabba'ah, Fujairah, United Arab Emirates* (319-322).