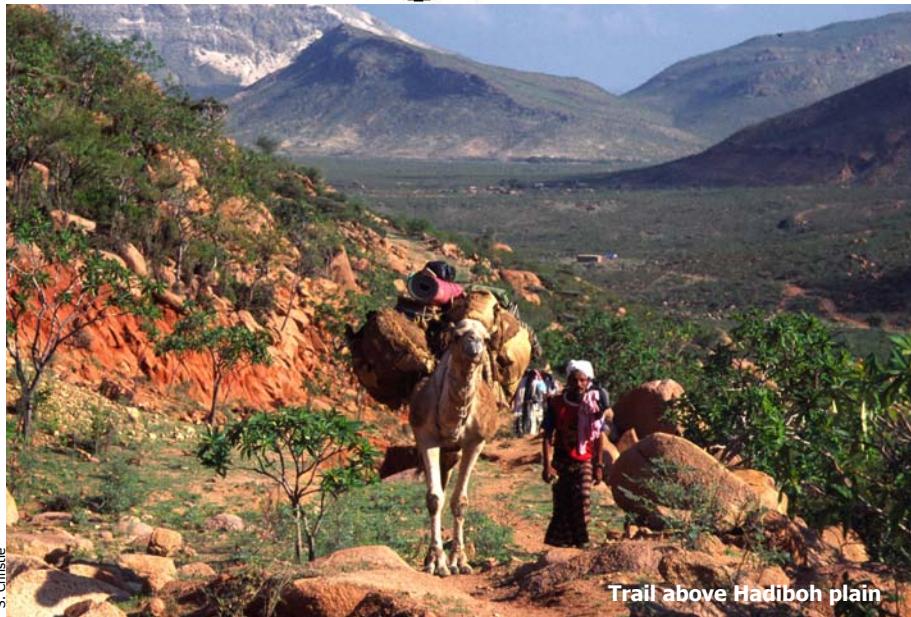


# Dioscorida

ISSUED BY FRIENDS OF SOQOTRA

اصدقاء سقطرى



## Friends of Soqatra

**Welcome to the first issue of Dioscorida, the newsletter of Friends of Soqatra**

Friends of Soqatra (FoS) brings together people throughout the world who have an interest in the Soqatra archipelago. It was formed in 2001 at an inaugural meeting at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh attended by over 40 people representing eight countries. The distinctive rationale for FoS is that it brings together people with backgrounds in scientific research and those with a more general interest and develops the synergies between them.

Friends of Soqatra was established to promote the sustainable use and conservation of the natural environment of the Soqatra island group, to raise awareness of the archipelago's biodiversity and the unique culture and language of the islanders and to help improve the quality of life of the island communities and support their traditional land management practices.

This Newsletter contains information on various activities relating to Soqatra. More information is found on the Friends of Soqatra website—[FriendsofSoqatra.org](http://FriendsofSoqatra.org), or is available from contacts listed in the various articles. If you would like to join FoS, including a subscription to this Newsletter, please contact us as listed on the last page. We welcome contributions to the Newsletter, and would be happy to include short articles you submit. We hope you enjoy this edition, and welcome your suggestions for future issues.

This newsletter is called **DIOSCORIDA**, which is the name under which Soqatra appears in the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea and which is said to be Sanskrit for 'the island of the abode of bliss'. An article in the next newsletter will provide more information on the origins of this name.

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## Ditwah Lagoon Threatened by Road Building

The main road currently being constructed to link Hadiboh and Qalansiyah is currently being built across rather than around Ditwah Lagoon, near Qalansiyah. The Socotra Conservation and Development Programme, Environmental Protection Authority, Ministry of the Islands and many other concerned parties are seeking to alleviate this threat. Unfortunately, the contractors seem to be ignoring instructions from the Government of Yemen to construct the road along its original course to avoid damage to this scenic and environmentally important site.

Ditwah lagoon is a sheltered sandy lagoon. This type of marine habitat is extremely fragile and vulnerable to any type of disturbance. Ultimately any development within the proximity of this lagoon will degrade the presently pristine nature of the habitat and may result in its complete loss.

In their efforts to save time and costs, those constructing the road are not following the agreed line but are taking the most direct and inexpensive course. This will cut directly across, rather than going around, Ditwah, a major coastal lagoon. This lagoon embodies many of the features of the island which will be vital for the future of its inhabitants; it is scenic, of high ecological value and of strategic importance to the local people. It is vital for the future of the island's people that its value for tourism is not diminished as would happen if the course of this road is not returned to its original route to avoid damaging the Lagoon.

It is most important that the local people see that the outside world and their own Government Departments are willing to place an economic and social value on the preservation of the natural environment of their island. The battle to reroute the road is thus highly significant for the island as a whole as well as for this site in particular.

The Soqatra Cistocola (*Cistocola haesitatus*) is one of the island's endemic breeding birds, living on low-lying plains where it could be effected by uncontrolled development.

R. Porter (BirdLife International)

# FRIENDS OF SOQOTRA—THE FIRST YEAR

## Miranda Morris, Chairman 2001—2002

The original idea, as envisaged by the Global Environment Facility in 1997, to "Establish the Friends of Socotra, a non-profit making society of scientists, conservationists and students of both local and foreign origin, to strengthen exchange of scientific findings and conservation experiences, and coordination of activities of the islanders through newsletters, correspondence and functions", a society which would act to support the Socotra Conservation Fund discussed in the same document, has not been realised exactly as intended. However, five years later, both the Friends of Soqotra and the Socotra Conservation Fund have been established. Only the future can show how both organisations will fulfill their different remits in practice. We entirely endorse what Edoardo Zandri, the Adviser to the Socotra Conservation Fund, wrote in August 2001: "As I said and wish to reinforce again: ideally, the FoS and SCF should become close partners, with FoS being the European "supporters" and top advisory team of the SCF, promoting awareness, raising funds, bringing in visitors in the right way, supporting small and feasible projects in Socotra. Projects should be driven and implemented by Socotrans with some external advice," and shall continue to work towards those ends.

As is so often the case with any new enterprise, the first year of the Friends of Soqotra has at times been difficult. The political situation has made things even more delicate, but has not been the sole reason for the misrepresentations and misunderstandings that have periodically beset our efforts. Members -and the many non-members for some reason similarly targeted- who have been depressed by the amount of material landing in their e-mail which has little or nothing to do with helping Soqotra and Socotrans have my sympathy. We met in Edinburgh hoping to actually achieve something, not to get bogged down in bureaucracy and the various possible interpretations of political correctness. I think, at worst, we in the Executive were naïve and inexperienced, but have benefited from a steep learning curve and can now be considered well on the way to recovery!

Despite the problems, many things have been achieved in this first year : - FoS has been launched; through discussion with people inside and outside the organisation, in Europe, America and Yemen, its Constitution has been finalised, and has been translated into Arabic; a leaflet which summarises the aims and proposed activities of FoS has been prepared, and this too translated into Arabic; a bank account has been opened and an accountant appointed; and, during a trip to Sana'a by an FoS delegation in September last year, many extremely useful meetings were held with individuals, groups and institutions in Yemen and Soqotra, and a draft *Memorandum of Understanding* has been drawn up with officials of the Socotra Conservation Fund. All this has gone a long way towards clarifying past and potential misunderstandings, and has also made it clear to us that, whereas a good working relationship with the Socotra Conservation Fund is essential, there are many other groups and organisations with which FoS can and should also work. We must now work, in Yemen and elsewhere, to build on the positive relationships established with many of these, while, at the same time, do our best to avoid any further sources of conflict through careful selection of non-controversial activities for the moment.

So the first year has not been unproductive. The way has now been cleared for FoS to begin to expand its membership and to publicise its existence and activities. In particular, I feel that we must now embark on working to encourage and re-enthuse our current members, for whom this first year

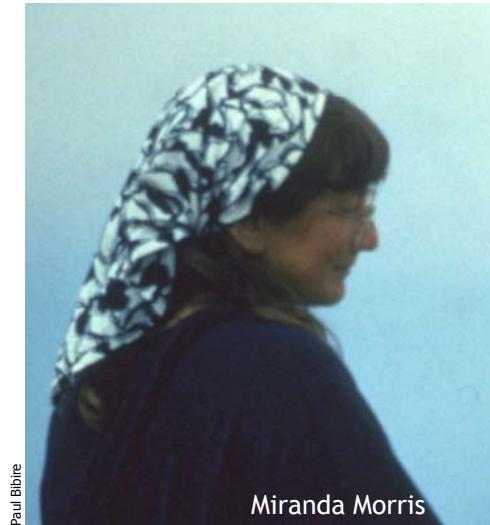
has been both puzzling and disappointing. Although the Executive has been working hard throughout the year, little of this has been apparent to the membership, nor can it have seemed very productive. However, we must put the past behind us: this is a new year, and we have a very positive programme ahead of us, as you will learn from our new Chairman on the page opposite.

There are many things for us to do: among them raising awareness of the islands and their people through talks and articles; developing our contacts in Yemen and elsewhere and encouraging their involvement in our activities and those of the Socotra Conservation Fund and any other organisation with similar objectives; pooling our information and discussing how it can best be used to further our objectives, be it in small and practical projects such as mapping, the production of informative booklets or of posters and postcards, or in developing co-operative, multi-discipline projects; for the scientists amongst us, continuing with our own research and seeing how we can involve our Yemeni colleagues in this (sharing publication with them, for instance, or helping to proof-read their documents in English); trying to develop exchange visits and training for local people; putting people in touch with others with similar interests; encouraging people to visit Soqotra - those who want to see the islands for themselves and those interested in carrying out valid scientific studies - and helping them to follow the proper procedures and advising them on ways of working on the island.

We need to keep in touch with one another, and the Website and Newsletter are now ready as the channels for doing so. We look forward to hearing your comments and reading your contributions, and especially to meeting you at the next AGM.

*Best wishes,*

*Miranda Morris*



# FoS—WHERE TO NOW?

## Roderic Dutton, Chairman 2002—

It gives me great pleasure to be able to introduce this first edition of the Friends of Soqotra newsletter.

I am delighted to be able to tell you that FoS held its AGM on November 30th 2002, in the light of September/October meetings in Sana'a and visits to Soqotra. All present agreed that FoS has a valuable role to play and needs to expand its membership by being seen to be a focal point for information and understanding about the Soqotran archipelago and its people.

We are all very aware that there were some unfortunate misunderstandings about FoS during 2002. But happily these have now been sorted out so that we are able to plan and carry out a range of activities

During 2002 the Socotra Conservation Fund (SCF) formally came into being. We offer congratulations to all those who worked hard to bring this about, and we wish the Fund every future success with its work. SCF is ready to receive applications for membership, so do apply if you wish to. It is perfectly possible to be a member of both organisations as they have complementary remits, with SCF concentrating on conservation and development on the island and FoS primarily concerned with servicing its members and making the wider public more aware of the islands' heritage.

With the AGM behind us, there is a lot to do. From discussions at the AGM came a list of agreed priority activities for the coming two years. I would here like to single out one

activity to which, we hope, all members will, in one way or another, be able to contribute. This is the Exhibition and Seminar that will be mounted by/at the Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh during the Festival period in the summer of 2005. This will be an opportunity greatly to increase general public awareness of the special nature of the Soqotra archipelago and the traditional and changing dependencies that exist between the inhabitants of the islands and the unique and world-renowned plant and animal diversity that is their inheritance. A meeting held at the Garden on December 19<sup>th</sup> 2002 produced many varied and exciting ideas for the exhibition – but there is still plenty of time for more ideas from readers of this newsletter to be considered. And your support, in ways that will be explained, is vital.

The following other activities were also agreed as priorities for the next two years:

- **Establish the Web Site, Newsletter and other Members' services.**
- **Promote FOS Membership.**
- **Establish mutual support networks among members.**
- **Establish links with Yemeni NGOs, and other relevant Yemeni and international organisations working in and/or with interests in Yemen to facilitate the servicing of Yemeni Members.**
- **Plan the 2003 AGM to be an attractive event for Members to attend.**
- **Compile a resource base of Soqotran data from Members to be used to identify available information and expertise.**
- **Build up close relationships and encourage co-operation with like-minded organisations in Yemen and elsewhere.**
- **Continue to promote Soqotra and interest in it through talks, articles and publications.**

We are already making good progress on the website, which will be both lively and informative. This will be a great way to keep everyone in touch with what is happening

and with the interests and activities of other members.

This newsletter is but the first edition. We are very keen for members to make contributions to this in the form of short notes of an activity or interest, not to exceed 200-300 words. Please do send us your contributions - if possible by email—to me or to Sue Christie. Otherwise write to the FoS address.

Of interest to all members - membership fees paid for 2001/2 will cover also the period 2002/3 since, because of the uncertainties during 2002, FoS was not then active on behalf of its members.

Minutes of the AGM and the annual report and accounts are available on request.

A word about myself: I was elected Chairman for the year 2002/3, with Tony Miller as Vice Chairman. Miranda Morris and Wolfgang Wranik will remain actively involved and on the Executive but both suggested it was time for a change of people to take the roles of Chairman and Vice Chairman. For those of you who do not know me, I have, while at the University of Durham, been actively involved in a long series of R&D activities in North Africa and the Middle East, including almost 25 years in Oman and over a decade with an on-going programme in Jordan. In the autumn of 1999 I was a member of the first phase of the EU funded project on Soqotra. I also have an interest in the economic potential of *Aloe perryi*, on which I am working with Sue Christie and others.

I very much hope to hear from you with your ideas on how FoS can help you and best promote the islands' heritage. We look forward to an active year.

*With best regards,*

*Roderic Dutton*

Roderic Dutton, with *Aloe perryi*



## Semaphore Geckos

The majority of the known reptiles from the archipelago are geckos. Seven species, all endemic, belong to the semaphore genus *Pristurus*. They can be divided into two groups. The main difference between them is the presence or absence of a tail crest. The first group comprises *Pristurus sokotranus*, *P. abdelkuri*, *P. guichardi*, *P. obsti* and *P. samhaensis*. All share a number of external features, such as body shape, lateral markings on the neck and shoulder region, and a dorsal tail crest which is more distinct in males. *Pristurus insignis* and *P. insignoides* form the second group. They are more slender in build and without a crest of enlarged scales on the tail in either sex. The few records in some species and the difficulty in distinguishing



these swift moving animals in the field means, however, that it is not possible at present to assess their status and distribution in detail. Their diet consists to a large extent of ants, termites and other insects.

***Pristurus sokotranus* PARKER, 1938.**

Length up to almost 100 mm. Endemic, known only from Socotra. Widespread and common from the plain to the mountains,

and generally found among the larger rocks or on boulders in the dry beds of watercourses, where they may frequently be seen sunning themselves, but they also occur in the villages. Occasionally they climb on trunks of trees. They are active all day, constantly on the alert for danger and swift in their movements, taking refuge in crevices.

**Wolfgang Wranik**

## DORSTENIA GIGAS - KARTAB - SOQOTRAN FIG

*Dorstenia gigas* is the largest of a genus of 170 species widespread in tropical and East Africa. *Dorstenia* belongs to the Moraceae, which includes Mulberries and Figs. The trunks of *D. gigas* can reach 1.2m tall. The main stem is greatly enlarged toward the base and is flask-shaped to nearly spherical, though plants growing in protected, non-vertical habitats may have a proportionately tall, thickened trunk that is not swollen at its base. The flowers of the genus are tiny and grouped in flat or saucer-shaped, fleshy inflorescences. When ripe the seeds are released under hydraulic pressure. The leaves, generally clustered toward the branch tips, are semi-glossy and deep green, with intricately branched, sunken veins. Before they fall, individual leaves turn bright orange.

A Soqotran endemic, *D. gigas* is largely restricted to cliffs with a notable colony at the top of Muqadrihon Pass. It also colonises large limestone boulders (for example at Wadi Zedig on the Diksam Plateau). Opinion is divided as to why the plants are restricted to these habitats, it may be the inaccessibility to grazing goats (although goats only eat the leaves if they are very hungry) or the combination of water supplied from fissures in the rock substrate and drainage from the near-vertical cliffs.

The plant is sometimes used as drought fodder for animals. If goats are fed generously on the plant they remain sleek and in milk, and can go for longer without water. It does, however, taint the meat of the animals and make the milk bitter. The bark is used to strap fractures, especially in small livestock and the stem is used in a wash to treat mange. The Soqotran word for the plant is Kartab which means 'dried out, withered; stunted'.



As one of the archetypal Soqotran endemics it seems an excellent choice for the FoS logo.

**Neil Oakman**

# TRADITIONAL SOQOTRAN POETRY

Soqatra has a unique culture and language. The language of Soqatra is one of a group of six languages called the *Modern South Arabian* languages (to distinguish them from the *Epigraphic South Arabian* languages). These are spoken only in southern Arabia. All are pre-literate; however, as modern development reaches the remote areas where these languages are spoken, they are in rapid retreat before the Arabic of schools, radio and television.

Soqatra has an extremely rich poetic tradition. This valuable storehouse of Soqotri language and culture is being eroded even more rapidly than the language itself. The western half of Soqatra is the least developed part of the island, its people still largely dependent on their sheep and goats for their livelihood. They are renowned throughout the islands for their poetry, and, with access to schooling as yet limited, the everyday use of poetry is still common here.

**Poems transmitted by Tanuf Salim Nuh II Kishin,  
Notes and translation by Miranda Morris.**



*Euphorbia arbuscula*

S. Christie

## A Poem to *Ziziphus*

In the long months of the dry season, the most important plants for goats are *Ziziphus spina-christi* and *Euphorbia arbuscula*. Their owners climb into the trees and lop leafy twigs from these plants; they then make a special call to the goats to come and feed.

*Ziziphus spina-christi*: The fruits are one of the most important plant foods on the island, especially as they are at their best in the summer months when other food is often scarce. As on mainland Yemen, the tree is famous for its honey, especially the honey made in the summer months - the best and most expensive of the island. The wood is close-grained and hard and was much used for making implements. It also provides the best timber on Soqatra, and it is much in demand for building. The foliage is also important medicinally.

These trees have to be managed if they are to be properly productive. In particular, they have to be pruned at regular intervals, and this is reflected in the short poem below, where the tree is speaking to the islanders: -

**"You don't bring me good news by  
telling me of forthcoming rain,  
Of a leaden sky from which rain will  
fall in sheets.  
But rather (by bringing me) the sharp,  
curved blade  
To prune my branches round and  
round."**

(Normally news of rain is the best news anyone can bring).

## A Poem to *Euphorbia*

*Euphorbia arbuscula* appears to be a strange plant to use as fodder, as it responds to the least injury by pouring forth masses of extremely caustic latex which burns the skin wherever it comes into contact with it. Indeed, the herder going to harvest the trees has to wear his oldest clothes or cover himself with sacking as protection. Despite this, the leaflets are readily eaten by hungry goats both when they are fresh and green, and later on when they have dried out. The latex is very important for a variety of medicinal, veterinary and other uses, including being used to stupefy and capture the fish of the smaller lagoons in the hungry summer months.

This valuable fodder has to be harvested correctly if the tree is to fully recover: older herders complain that the younger generation nowadays are careless in the way they treat the trees, chopping off whole branches, or beating the branches with a heavy club to knock off the leaflets which they then leave strewn on the ground for the goats to eat as and when they can. The following poem warns about the dangers of the latex and careless use of the knife.

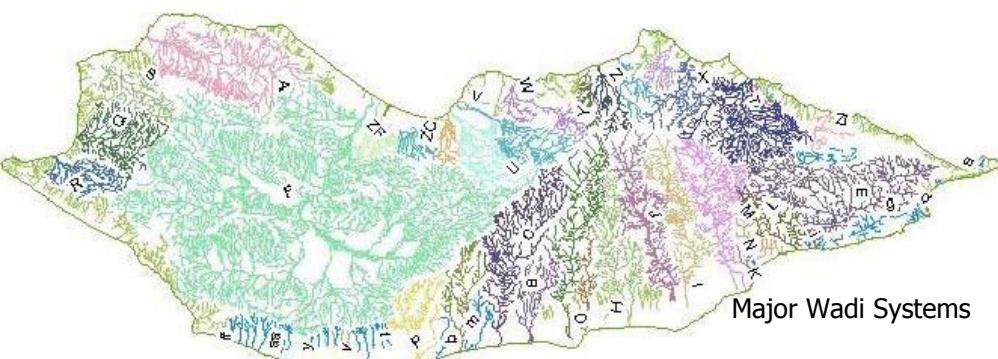
**"Take all care lest the caustic latex damage the goats!  
Take care lest it harm their owner!  
And the sharp, curved blade  
Take care lest it damage the *Euphorbia arbuscula* trees!"**



*Ziziphus spina-christi*

S. Christie

# SOQOTRA RESEARCH NOTES



Major Wadi Systems

## Mapping Soqotra

I am currently developing an accurate map of Soqotra on which roads, villages, wadis and other natural and man-made features can be plotted. This is based on existing maps, aerial photographs and GPS tracks obtained in recent trips, cross-referenced to information from Miranda Morris and others on features of the island. This map will allow those visiting the island to know more accurately where they are. It will also allow more accurate plotting of distributions for plants and animals.

Contact: [r.w.dutton@durham.ac.uk](mailto:r.w.dutton@durham.ac.uk)

## Conservation Status of *Duvaliandra dioscoridis*

*Duvaliandra dioscoridis* (Lavranos) M. Gilbert, a small clump forming succulent herb belonging to the Family Apocynaceae (Asclepiadaceae), had been reported only from one locality on the island of Soqotra. This project, carried out in January 2002, set out to examine the status of the population, study some of the ecological factors affecting this species and determine to extent of its distribution. Although this population is apparently healthy, the species must continue to be regarded as critically endangered because of its restricted range. Possible threats to the species include: consumption as a local food, habitat destruction due to collection of building stone, predation by invertebrates and plant collection for illegal export.

Contact: [Neil@noakman.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:Neil@noakman.freeserve.co.uk)



*Duvaliandra dioscoridis*

N. Oakman

## Aloe Ecology

*Aloe perryi* Baker, called *teyfin* in Soqotri, is a wide-ranging, locally abundant and highly variable species of social and economic importance. It is used as a medicine by local people and for export throughout the Middle-East. A second species of *Aloe*, known locally as *je'awiyon*, has a more restricted distribution, generally growing at a higher altitude and apparently confined to the southwestern areas of the island. It grows sympatrically with *A. perryi* in some areas and is locally abundant. We are working on the ecology of these two species, as well as investigating aspects of the use of the sap by local people and its collection for export.

Contact: [drsuechristie@aol.com](mailto:drsuechristie@aol.com)

## Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

The population of Soqotra is a mixture of many different ethnic groups and developed its own culture and tradition, such as the spoken language, which is distinct from that of the mainland Yemen. They also developed a unique Environmental conscience, which is heavily threatened by the pressures of the modern way of life.

We reviewed the status of three of the most exploited natural resources, keeping in mind the need to preserve the biodiversity, without neglecting the social and economical requirements of the locals.

Special focus was placed upon three of the main resources; the cropping of *Aloe perryi*, shark fishery and exploitation of sea turtles. In view of the findings, management alternatives must be taken into consideration.

We believe that the Island of Soqotra is threatened mainly by three factors: Immigration from continental Yemen, Uncontrolled development and Loss of the Soqotran peoples cultural identity.

Contact: [Jacopo Monzini, jmtds@inwind.it](mailto:Jacopo Monzini, jmtds@inwind.it)



*Aloe perryi*, Qatariyah

# SOQOTRA RESEARCH NOTES

## Creating an Ecological Network and Agroforestry, Educational and Cultural Doorway for Sustainable Development of Soqotra Island

The project focuses its activities on biodiversity, agroforestry and education. The main idea is to assist with implementation of biotope conservation and to motivate the indigenous population to improve their resource management through pilot agroforestry demonstrations. During the first phase, verification of the existing state of the island ecotopes/biotopes started, including climatological, pedological and floristic/faunistic data collection. Useful data on the state of the tree and bird populations (e.g., age structure of *Dracaena cinnabari*) are available. Classification of biotopes is currently used for land cover map generation (at scale 1:100 000) by means of satellite photograph interpretation. Agroforestry activities have begun with autochthonous tree species testing (promising fruits, fodder, timber, fuel-wood species) and development of community nurseries has been supported. Stimulation of indigenous home-gardening activities by free of charge sapling cultivar distribution has brought first results. A booklet *Brožura* "Plant your Tree" (ar./eng.) has been written and distributed in order to stimulate children's awareness for nature. Material for a permanent environmental exhibition on the island has been delivered to the Republic of Yemen. Further field training and educational opportunities abroad is being provided for the local cadres.

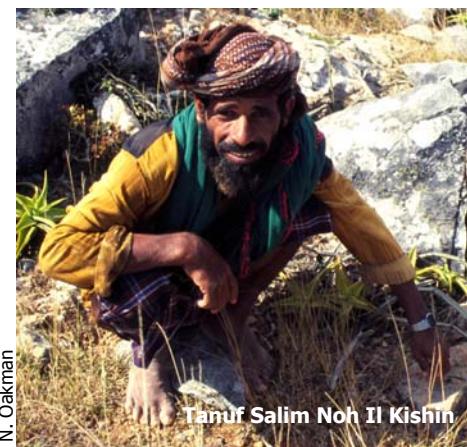
Contact: Jindrich Pavlis ([jpavlis@mendelu.cz](mailto:jpavlis@mendelu.cz)), Mendel University of Agriculture and Forestry



Diksam, looking north

S. Christie

Contact FoS Secretary to be put in touch with researchers if you do not have email access.



N. Oakman

Tanuf Salim Noh II Kishin

## Recording Soqotran Poetry

The American Institute of Yemeni Studies last year awarded Tanuf Salim Noh II Kishin funding towards a research project focusing on the oral poetry of Western Soqotra. Tanuf is from a well-known family of traditional poets and healers, and his impressive skills of recall as well as his lack of formal education mean that much of what he has learned as child and adult remains fresh in his memory. He is very keen that as much of this body of traditional knowledge be recorded before it disappears as, in the absence of a way of writing his language, he fears it must. We worked together to record and work on a body of different kinds of poetry on a variety of subjects during his month's stay with us here in Scotland in October / November 2002. Before flying back to the Yemen, we gave a joint seminar on the oral poetry of Soqotra at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, which was well attended. Traditionally, Soqotran poetry is sung, not recited, different types of poem being sung to different tunes and rhythms, and Tanuf very bravely sang for the participants some samples of the poetry.

Contact: [miranda@mirandamorris.com](mailto:miranda@mirandamorris.com)

## Marine plant communities of upwelling areas within the Arabian Sea

*A taxonomic, ecological and biogeographic case study on the marine flora of the Socotra Archipelago (Yemen) and Masirah Island (Oman)*

The thesis explores the floristics and the ecology of macroalgal assemblages around Socotra (Yemen) and Masirah (Oman). Starting with an overview on the marine ecosystems of the area (general introduction), the first section focuses on taxonomic studies of gelatinous red algae from the Arabian Sea. Chapters 2-5 include the description of new species, list new species records and report on the revalorisation of the subsumed genus *Izziella*. Special attention was given to microscopic observations on the fertilisation and post-fertilisation events in these algae, adding important data to the traditional morphologic and anatomic characteristics. The compilation of such a complete set of specific features is an attempt to reduce the inclusion of cryptic species (common among macroalgae) in future studies, as it is foreseen to use certain of these well-defined gelatinous red algae (key species) for phylogeographic comparisons of the Arabian Seas with the Indo-Pacific. In the ecological chapters (6-7) different macroalgal communities and biotopes are identified for both island groups, which is reflected in their differences in vegetation characteristics (species richness, diversity indices and indicator species), biogeographic affinities within the Indian Ocean and their relation to the prevailing environmental parameters. A synopsis of the taxonomic and ecological findings, and perspectives to future phycological research in the region are presented in the final chapter.

Contact: [Tom.Schils@rug.ac.be](mailto:Tom.Schils@rug.ac.be)

## Publications

Flora und Vegetationsökologie der Insel Socotra. Bruno A. Mies. 2001. Essener Ökologische Schriften, Band 15. Westarp Wissenschaften.

### In Preparation:

- Morris, M. *A Gazetteer of the Socotra Archipelago.*  
Morris, M and T. Miller. *An Ethnoflora of the Socotra Archipelago.*  
Wranik, Wolfgang. *Fauna of the Socotra Archipelago; a field guide.*

See the FoS website for a more complete listing of recent and planned publications, including articles on some of the Research reported in this Newsletter.

## A GOOD YEAR FOR RAIN ON SOQOTRA!

The winter rains of 2002/2003 have been excellent all over Soqotra, and of the kind most liked by the islanders: repeated falls of gentle rain over the winter months. Streams are flowing, the pastures are green, the date-palms in flower, and the livestock in prime condition with plenty of milk both for their young and for their owners.

## Websites

For more information on Soqotra, visit the FoS website:

[www.FriendsofSoqotra.org](http://www.FriendsofSoqotra.org)

The following websites also provide information on the island:

<http://rbgesun1.rbge.org.uk/Arabia/Socotra/home/page01.html> Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. Plants, panoramas and ethnobotany.

[www.speleo.be/socotra](http://www.speleo.be/socotra) Soqotra Karst Project (caving and speleology)

[www.socotraisland.org](http://www.socotraisland.org) Socotra Conservation and Development Programme and Socotra Conservation Fund

[www.uni-rostock.de/fakult/manafak/biologie/wranik/socotra](http://www.uni-rostock.de/fakult/manafak/biologie/wranik/socotra). University of Rostock (Animals)

[www.socotra.com](http://www.socotra.com). A personal view by John Farrar.

If you know of other sites, please let us know and we can publish them in the next issue of *Dioscorida*.

## The Developing Strategy of Socotra Archipelago and Other Yemeni Islands

### Second International Symposium.

14 - 16 December 2003. Aden, Republic of Yemen. For more information please contact: Prof. Dr. Saleh A. Ba-surrah, University of Aden - Khormaksar P. O. Box 6312, Aden, Republic of Yemen. Fax: 00967 - 2 - 234426. Email: [adenuniversity@y.net.ye](mailto:adenuniversity@y.net.ye). Abstracts of papers to be submitted by 30 May 2003.

## Socotra Conservation Fund

The SCF is a new, not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, incorporated in England in October 2002 with its main operational branches in Sana'a and in Hadibu. Its main object is to support conservation and sustainable development of the Soqotra Archipelago. It welcomes individual membership applications and applications from interested organisations according to its Memorandum and Articles of Association. For more information visit their website at:

[www.socotraisland.org/fund](http://www.socotraisland.org/fund)



*Phaulotypus insularis*, family Thericleidae

W. Wranik

## Arabic Abstracts

In future issues of *Dioscorida* we hope to include Arabic abstracts of all major articles.

## Contributions to *Dioscorida*

If you would like to include an article, research note or notice for future issues of the Newsletter or information for the website, please send to:

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## Acknowledgements

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