

THE BEGINNING OF THE END OF ST HELENA'S DIGITAL ISOLATION.....



ST HELENA GOVERNMENT SIGNS CONTRACT WITH GOOGLE TO LAND SUBSEA CABLE

Inside: Airfreight Charges waived on inter-Island Fresh Produce/New Years Honours/Welcome to PC Beasley



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Hello Readers,

According to the 2020 Chinese horoscope, the Lunar New Year starts on Saturday 25th January and ends on 11th February 2021. 2020 being the Metal Rat Year is predicted to be a strong, prosperous, and lucky year for almost all Chinese zodiac signs despite it being a Leap Year. Yes, this year could be an amazing one!

The press release regarding the Wideawake Runway Reconstruction Project is fantastic news to kick off the New Year! After some 27 months of waiting it looks like things are finally going to start! It is also so reassuring to receive confirmation that the airbridge **will** resume on completion of the runway works. Ascension can finally start to look forward to seeing more tourism and end this feeling of isolation that we have been feeling for over two years!

It is nice to see some new faces around town following the arrival of the A400 on Monday, and it will be great to see everyone returning to the Island over the next two weekends. I am sure that they all had a great holiday wherever their travels took them, but I am equally sure that you will all agree Christmas on Ascension is always pretty special and last year was no exception. It is the main time of the year that the whole community comes together with one objective—to have a great time! The floats were amazing and all of the clubs put in an unbelievable amount of hard work to ensure that everyone from kids to adults had a great time and that we did!! Thanks to everyone for making it another brilliant Christmas on Ascension!

Until next time, have a great week!

Kitty

How to wash a cat

1. Put both lids of the toilet up and add 1/8 cup of pet shampoo to the water in the bowl...
2. Pick up the cat and soothe him while you carry him towards the bathroom.
3. In one smooth movement put the cat in the toilet and close the lid. You may need to stand on the lid.
4. At this point the cat will self agitate and make ample suds. Never mind the noises that come from the toilet, the cat is actually enjoying this!
5. Flush the toilet three or four times. This provides a 'Power-Wash' and 'Rinse'.
6. Have someone open the front door of your home. Be sure that there are no people between the bathroom and the front door.
7. Stand well back, behind the toilet as far as you can, and quickly lift the lid.
8. The cat will rocket out of the toilet, streak through the bathroom, and run outside where he will dry himself off.
9. Both the toilet and the cat will be sparkling clean.

Yours sincerely

The dog



St. Mary's Anglican Church

10 A.M. SERVICES FOR JANUARY 2020

12th January	St. Mary's Holiday Club Code Breaker Family Service
19th January	Eucharist Without A Priest In The One Kind
26th January	Eucharist Without A Priest In The One Kind

The Met Office Weather Report

Statistics for the week ending Monday 06 January 2020

	Max (Celsius)	Min (Celsius)	Rainfall (mm)
AIRHEAD	30.4	22.4	3.2
TRAVELLERS	N/A	21.8	8.9
RESIDENCY	N/A	19.2	17.1
GEORGETOWN	N/A	22.9	4.0
ST. HELENA	24.1	17.1	9.0
FALKLANDS	20.0	5.5	17.0
UK (Brize Norton)	10.4	3.3	6.8

Tide Times & Georgetown Pierhead/English Bay Swell Outlook

For more detailed information, including swimming and swell warnings, please contact the Met Office on Ext: 3317

Day	Swell	High Tide	Low Tide	Sun Rise Set
Wednesday 8 Jan	0.8 m	04:11 16:47	10:28 22:55	06:47 19:20
Thursday 9 Jan	0.7 m	04:55 17:27	11:07 23:38	06:47 19:21
Friday 10 Jan	0.8 m	05:38 18:06	11:46 :	06:48 19:21
Saturday 11 Jan	0.7 m	06:21 18:47	00:21 12:26	06:48 19:21
Sunday 12 Jan	Around 0.7 m	07:05 19:29	01:04 13:08	06:49 19:22
Monday 13 Jan	Around 1.0 m	07:50 20:13	01:50 13:51	06:49 19:22
Tuesday 14 Jan	Around 0.9 m	08:37 21:01	02:37 14:36	06:50 19:22

A look back at 2019, compiled by the old Nestonian

2019 was a warm year, with a mean yearly temperature ((max + min)/2) of 26.5C, compared to the 1984 - 2019 average of 25.9C.

We enjoyed our hottest ever day, with a maximum of 33.5C on 11th March 2019. April, November and December all saw their warmest recorded temperatures of 32.2C, 30.0C and 30.4C respectively. Every month saw monthly mean temperatures above average apart from August, September and October, which were either average or very slightly cooler than average. January, March, November and December all saw their highest recorded monthly mean temperature.

Rainfall was well below average with 118.6 mm measured at the Airhead, compared with the long term average of 176.6 mm. April (1.4 mm) and June (0.2 mm) were both the driest on record. March was the wettest month, with 30.7 mm measured.

Travellers Hill rainfall was closer to the long term average, with 448.4 mm measured compared to the 1984 - 2019 average of 470.9 mm. March was the wettest month with 109.1 mm measured and April was the driest with only 3.3 mm falling.

The Residency saw 667.2 mm of rain, compared with the 2004 - 2019 average of 725.0 mm. This was helped by a very wet December with 108.6 mm of rain, the wettest December on record. June was the driest month, with only 2.6 mm measured.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2019 FROM BISHOP DALE BOWERS, ST. HELENA

I greet you all in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

Now I want us to cast our minds back and imagine a small town in Israel called Bethlehem, that backwater state of the Roman Empire, being overrun with crowds of people, donkeys, mules, horses, carts and camels. The houses and Inns are full to capacity; those who are selling goods in the markets are making money. There is much trade because of the increase in the number of people coming home for the census. Residences are on the lookout for family members coming home. There is an air of joy, excitement and business. And unbeknownst to anyone else, there is Joseph with Mary, who is heavily pregnant riding on a donkey looking for somewhere to stay and they are being rejected by all the innkeepers because there was literally no room. The only place for them to stay was in a stable. Then there was the birth of their son Jesus. And apart from a few shepherds and three wise men, unbeknownst to all the other people was, who he was and what he was born for. He is the greatest gift of all, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came down to earth to save the human race from sin, death and the devil, to give them a new beginning a new life, life eternal. But the majority of the people were not even aware of it.

Now, I want you to move on approximately 2000 years to the present day. And there is another small town in an isolated part of the British nation, which is overrunning with crowds of people, cars, bikes, 4x4s and buses. Some of the houses that were once empty are now full. The hotel owners, shopkeepers, restaurant owners, bar owners, food vendors have all been stocking up and they are now reaping the benefits of their labour. There is money to be made and many are spending. Over the past few weeks the plane from Johannesburg, Cape Town and Ascension has brought many family and friends home and people are excited and overjoyed with their return. There is an air of joy, excitement and business and we are so happy to have our loved one's home with us. But apart from a few faithful followers of Christ, unbeknownst to many will be the services of worship taking place to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ and our freedom from sin and death. Christmas for so many has become a holiday and we have disconnected from what Jesus has accomplished for us. That event that changed history and the human race for ever, changing it forever because God has implanted into the human heart the gift of Love through his Son Jesus Christ, using this frail human nature of ours to start a new beginning that transforms our lives and the communities we live in leading to eternal life with Him in heaven. Yet, for so many of us we are unaware of this wonderful gift from God. And it is possible that we are unaware because we have become disconnected or have chosen to become disconnected from God.

Listening to people on Ascension about the delay in the works of the airport there, which is having a major impact on everything on Ascension; reading the Unified Saints report in the newspaper last week; and reflecting on some of the situations that have been reported this year, there is a mood of discontentment among members of our communities. Not everyone is happy and many are facing some challenges. It is this little baby boy Jesus Christ that brings hope in these situations. If He can enable hardened soldiers in the First World War to lay down their weapons and become friends for one day on Christmas day because they believed that He is the prince of peace and brings goodwill to all men, he can also change us.

But we must first become connected to Jesus and enable his light of peace and goodwill to all men to shine through us. When we become connected, we see things differently. We see the needs of the other person. We see the poor person, we see the loneliness and we do something about it, we see the selfishness that is encroaching our own hearts and minds, we see the injustice that prevents people from getting that which is rightfully theirs when it comes to receiving compensation from our government and we don't try and deprive the innocent by arguing a decreased compensation. We no longer just go on the radio and talk about losing our young people, but we do something about it by valuing them as equal workers in our island thus putting this light of Christ into practice. That is the power that this little baby boy Jesus gives when we are connected to him. So, my message to you all this Christmas is to let Christmas be more than just a family reunion and having a jolly good time, let us connect with Jesus, let his love fill our hearts and let him shine in our lives as we love each other as he loves us. Then Christmas will be Christmas filled with God's purpose for each and every one of us. Let us connect with Jesus and receive his blessing this Christmas, the blessings that leads to eternal life with God.

God Bless You All This Christmas And A Happy New Year for 2020

Bishop Dale Bowers

Bishopholme

St. Helena



Wideawake Runway Reconstruction Project Update

A combined USAF/MOD team reviewed three tender returns for the Ascension Island Runway project at the tender board on 3-4 December 2019 and concluded that a preferred bidder has been identified and contract negotiations are estimated to require a month or so to conclude. Following this period of due diligence, we expect contract award to be made in early 2020.

It is anticipated the reconstruction of the runway will be phased, with phases one and two resulting in a reduction of the length of runway available for landing and take-off.

The outline delivery plan proposes that work on phases one and two of the runway will start between 9 and 12 months after contract award and last a further 15 months. Given the technical complexity of infrastructure works on Ascension the tender board has factored in possible unforeseen delays and therefore expects the project to be completed in 2022.

It is anticipated that after the reopening of the full runway the South Atlantic Airbridge will resume.

It may be necessary for some limitations on air access to be put in place whilst the length of available runway is reduced. In particular, there may be a reduction in seat availability on the Airlink service. However, we would like to assure islanders that we anticipate regular access will continue for the island's residents and visitors during this period and we expect the majority of flights to operate as normal.

The detailed plan will be subject to confirmation by the winning contractor 45 days after contract award at which stage we may be able to provide more information to the public. Further information will be shared as and when it becomes available.

Office of the Administrator
(on behalf of the USAF, UK MOD, and the AIG)
7 January 2020



The Post Office will continue to close daily for lunch from
12.30 - 1.30PM until further notice.

Mail to St Helena via SA Airlink

Date Closing	Date of Despatch
Wednesday 8 th January 2020 – 12 noon	12 th January 2020
Wednesday 15 th January 2020 – 12 Noon	19 th January 2020

Grateful if all enquiries can be directed to Telephone Numbers **66260** and **66583**

Thank you.

Still for sale is a small amount of 2020 Calendars @ £1 & £2.

Just opened is a small selection of

♥ *Valentines Cards* ♥

NEW!

**Mint Sets
or
Sheetlets
£3**



New Police Officer on Ascension

I'm PC Ross Beasley. I arrived on Ascension with my partner Lucy Rodwell just before Christmas and wanted to take the opportunity to introduce myself to everybody who reads The Islander.

I worked for South Yorkshire Police in the United Kingdom for the best part of a decade, predominantly as a 999 response officer in the city of Sheffield, but also covering numerous policing activities across the whole county. I have also previously worked in financial crime investigations, specialising in money laundering and counter-terrorist financing at a national level, as well as serving in the Royal Air Force.

Lucy and I are big fans of country music, walking, swimming and other sports. Lucy was 2016 national champion in 50m Butterfly sprints in the UK and in 2017 swam the English Channel as part of a relay team, completing it in just over 12 hours. Last year I started long distance running and playing rounders in a Rounders England League with my team finishing third. I'd love to get a couple of teams going here! Lucy and I have a pet dog called Otis who will be coming out to join us on the island later in January. He's a Lancashire Heeler, which is a small black and tan terrier type dog.



I came to Ascension seeking a role that was focused on community policing. My personal view is that this type of policing is how crimes and incidents are both prevented and deterred, a more long-term approach to reducing crime and improving standards that focuses more on respect, education and working together than it does power, authority and enforcement.

It allows communities to get to know their police force and the police to get to know the people who they serve. It is how communities can know - rather than hope - that they can trust the police when something does go wrong.

My ambitions while I'm here are to get to know all of the people on the Island. To find out your honest opinion of the police and where there are concerns about approaching the police, or trusting us to help you, I want to work with you to alleviate those concerns. My goal is for every member of our community on Ascension to be able to feel that they can approach my colleagues and I, confident that we will help you whenever you might need it. I am also keen to understand any issues or concerns you might have, however big or small, in addition to suggestions or ideas about how life here on the island can be improved. I want to work with you to make life here as excellent and enjoyable as it can be.

To help achieve this, starting in the next month or two I intend to host public meetings every couple of weeks. This will give every individual on the island the opportunity to come together to talk about problems, ideas, concerns or suggestions. I will take actions away from the meetings to work on to make our community even better.

I am also keen to start some community action days. Armed with suggestions made in meetings about things that could be done to improve an area of the island, officers and the public can come together and work on it as one. This could be things like a litter pick and tidy up of the beach barbecue areas, work to renovate some of the historical artefacts or memorials on the island, etc. I want us to work on what matters to you.

I will advertise details of the meeting dates and locations in due course, but in the meantime I want to thank you for reading my introduction and for welcoming me to the island over the last few weeks. I look forward to meeting those of you I haven't yet met and working with you all in the months and years to come.

Ross



PUBLIC SOLICITORS OFFICE

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Ladder Hill
St Helena,

South Atlantic Ocean STHL 1ZZ

Tel: 00 290 23008

E-mail: publicsolicitor@helanta.co.sh

Visit by the Public Solicitor

The Public Solicitor, Duncan Cooke will be on Ascension Island from 13-17 January 2020.

If you would like an appointment with to see either of them, please contact the office by telephone 00 290 23008 or by email to publicsolicitor@helanta.co.sh

The telephone number of the office on Ascension (in the Court House) is 66839



ST HELENA GOVERNMENT SIGNS CONTRACT WITH GOOGLE TO LAND SUBSEA CABLE

St Helena Government (SHG) is pleased to announce the signing of a contract with Google, to connect St Helena to Phase 1 of the Equiano Subsea Cable Project. This is one step closer to providing the first fibre optic connectivity from St Helena to the outside world through both Europe and South Africa. Today's announcement follows the signing of the Letter of Intent in July this year to secure a Branch in Phase 1 of the Equiano Project.

Connecting to Equiano meets SHG's timing and budgetary requirements for the European Development Fund and supports the Digital ICT Strategy for St Helena.

Chairman of the Economic Development Committee, Councillor Lawson Henry, said:

"This is a huge positive step for St Helena, and one of a number of progressive steps that shall be announced over the next two years relating to development of digital opportunities on St Helena. I'd like to thank the team within St Helena Government Corporate Services, Pelagian and Keystone Law, and of course Google, for meeting this milestone."

SHG's Financial Secretary, Dax Richards, added:

"This is great news for the Island. Significant additional economic development on St Helena is conditional on improved connectivity and accessibility, and therefore the delivery of the Fibre Project is crucial to economic growth. We are pleased to reach an agreement with Google and look forward to working with them on this Project."

"The delivery of the Fibre Project is a key action in the Sustainable Economic Development Plan – in order to develop the satellite ground stations, financial services, work from home, academia research and conferences, film location and tourism sectors."

Global Network Infrastructure Strategy, Submarine, Google, Jayne Stowell, concluded:

"We are excited to collaborate with SHG to announce the Equiano branch into St Helena. We are deeply committed to boosting the world's connectivity as well as ensuring countries and communities benefit from the Equiano cable."

The branch between the main trunk of the Equiano cable and the Island will be 1140km long. The target is to deliver the cable and associated high speed internet to St Helena by early 2022; providing the cable laying, landing station and associated planning permissions and works to start the service proceed on time.

This cable will be capable of providing the Island with scalable connectivity, ranging from a few hundred gigabits up to multiple terabits, as demand varies. On that basis it allows for the most cost effective growth of bandwidth needs for the Island.

#DigitalStrategy #FibreOpticCable #SEDP

<https://twitter.com/StHelenaGovt>

<https://www.facebook.com/StHelenaGovt/>

SHG

24 December 2019



**St Helena
Government**

NEW YEAR HONOURS 2020

His Excellency Governor Dr Philip Rushbrook is pleased to announce the following New Year Honours 2020:

British Empire Medal (BEM)

Cecil (Lars) Repetto and Edward (Eddie) Rogers were both nominated for Services to the Community in Tristan da Cunha and have been awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM):

Lars Repetto

Lars Repetto was born on 7 December 1937. In 1963 he became part of the Tristan resettlement survey party that was established following the volcanic eruption on Tristan when the community was evacuated to the UK in 1961. The successful survey paved the way for the islanders to return home in November of the same year.

Lars worked at the fish factory as the accountant for the majority of his working life and also took on the unpaid role of island councillor from 1973-1976 and 1979-1982.

Lars has also served the community of Tristan da Cunha for 47 years as a voluntary lay minister in St Mary's Anglican Church.

Lars is highly regarded within the community and revels in talking about the Island's history. He is known as a friendly, thoughtful and knowledgeable man who is proud to be an islander.

Edward Rogers

Edward Patrick Rogers was born on 6 September 1945. Following the eruption of the volcano in 1961 when the community was evacuated to the UK, Eddie worked on ships of the Union-Castle line between Southampton and South Africa.

After his return to Tristan in 1963 Eddie worked in the fish factory as a welder to support the fishermen and the island's lobster market. He was also a fisherman himself and he remained a loyal employee of the factory until his retirement in 2011.

Eddie also served the community in the unpaid role of island councillor from 1989 to 1991.

Eddie served the community of Tristan da Cunha in his 47 years of voluntary work as a lay minister in St Mary's Anglican Church.

Eddie is well respected by the Island community for his long-standing service to the Island and its people.

Administrator of Tristan da Cunha, Sean Burns, said:

"Both men have served the Tristan community, through their lay ministry duties (and much more besides) for many years. Both the Anglican and Catholic churches on Tristan are embedded into Island life. The recruitment of full-time vicars and priests has been historically very difficult so the duties have invariably fallen to the lay ministers. The church plays an important part of island life providing much needed support to families in times of need."

Nominate someone for an honour

Honours are awarded to recognise outstanding achievements and service to the community. For example, long-term voluntary service, innovation and entrepreneurship, and improving life for people less able to help themselves.

Anyone can nominate someone for an honour. To find out how you can nominate please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/honours> or contact the Secretary to the Honours Committee, Linda Benjamin, via: linda.benjamin@sainthelena.gov.sh

#StHelena #TristanDaCunha #NewYearHonours2020 #Congratulations

<https://twitter.com/StHelenaGovt>

<https://www.facebook.com/StHelenaGovt/>

SHG

30 December 2019



**St Helena
Government**



**Ascension Island
Government**

AIR FREIGHT CHARGES WAIVERED FOR FRESH PRODUCE ON INTER-ISLAND FLIGHTS

The St Helena and Ascension Island Governments are pleased to announce that air freight charges for St Helena fresh produce will be waived for business-to-business sales for a six-month trial period beginning in February 2020.

This initiative is being undertaken to strengthen trade between the two Islands, provide a more frequent supply of fresh produce to Ascension alongside local production and imports by sea, and contribute to St Helena's Sustainable Economic Development Plan goal to increase exports.

Waivered air freight charges will apply to all fruit, vegetables and eggs originating from St Helena destined for Ascension but will not apply to produce originating from elsewhere.

All organisations on Ascension Island that currently sponsor the monthly inter-island charter Airlink flight have generously agreed to this waiver. Following the trial period the waiver will be reviewed to ascertain its success and whether the offering should be continued.

Air freight from St Helena to Ascension may be arranged by contacting the Travel/ Shipping Office on St Helena on (00 290) 22523, or by email: freightagent@solomons.co.sh, by no later than midday on the Thursday before the flight is scheduled to depart.

Should businesses on St Helena wish to supply retailers on Ascension they must contact retailers directly. For more information, please contact SHG's Agronomist, Edward Whitton, on (00 290) 24724, or via email: edward.whitton@sainthelena.gov.sh.

***#StHelena #AscensionIsland #AirFreightChargesWaivered #IncreaseExports
#SEDP***

<https://twitter.com/StHelenaGovt>
<https://www.facebook.com/StHelenaGovt/>

SHG/AIG

6 January 2020

SA AIRLINK FLIGHT – SATURDAY, 11TH JANUARY AND SUNDAY, 12TH JANUARY

The SA Airlink flight is expected to arrive at Ascension Island at approximately **1620 hrs** on Saturday, 11 January and is due to depart at 1115 hrs on Sunday, 12 January 2020.

Check in times for those passengers departing on Sunday, 12 January is at 0900 hrs. This time must be strictly adhered to. Outgoing passengers, once checked-in, will be required to remain in the departure area until called forward to board the aircraft.

All excess baggage and airfreight for this flight should be booked with the travel office by no later than **1200 hrs on Thursday, 9 January**. **No excess baggage or airfreight will be accepted during check in.** Anyone wishing to weigh their baggage can pop by the shipping office no later than 1200 hrs on **Friday, 10 January**.

Passengers in transit to Johannesburg and who are staying on St Helena for a holiday on their **return leg to Ascension Island**, may, with the assistance of St Helena Airport Security clear **one small 8kg cabin bag at St Helena Airport**, to be collected on their return to St Helena and **the bag and those same contents to be taken out of St Helena on their return flight to Ascension Island**.

This procedure is being trialled as a gesture of goodwill on behalf of St Helena Airport and St Helena Customs, to try and assist transit passengers en-route from Ascension Island to South Africa and who are in possession of a **return ticket** and **intending to holiday in St Helena on their return to Ascension**. Passengers are advised that if St Helena Customs find items **other than used clothes, footwear and personal effects in these cabin bags then the courtesy will be withdrawn**.

Passengers transiting directly to Johannesburg but returning to St Helena for a holiday who wish to take advance of this opportunity, must contact the Travel Office on 66244/66500 **by no later than 12 noon on Thursday, 9 January** to enable St Helena Customs and St Helena Airport to be notified. **St Helena Customs will not accept any bags that arrives in St Helena without prior notice.**

All updates will be placed on our flight line – 66300 (allow 7 rings)

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCES:

For passengers travelling to/from St Helena *only*:

Passengers are permitted a maximum of **30 kgs hold baggage for PCA passengers (entitled)** plus **one item of cabin baggage** (at a maximum weight of 8kgs) and a small laptop bag or purse **or, 20 kgs hold baggage for non PCA passengers (non-entitled),**

plus **one item of cabin baggage** (at a maximum weight of 8kgs) and a small laptop bag or purse. **Please note that these baggage allowances are for the flight between Ascension & St Helena only.**

Excess baggage or airfreight for the flights from St Helena Island to Ascension Island or from St Helena to Johannesburg should be booked with the Travel Office on St Helena as follows: shipping-travelmanager@solomons.co.sh; or calling 00 290 22523 by no later than 1200 hrs on the Friday before the flight.

Passengers are reminded that liquids exceeding 100 mls are NOT permitted in their hand baggage. Any liquids exceeding 100 mls found in hand baggage will be confiscated and destroyed. Any liquids 100 mls and over should be placed in hold baggage.

Appropriate footwear must be worn for travelling. Trainers, closed in shoes, sandals (fastened at the ankle or heel) and heels not exceeding 1 inch are all considered appropriate footwear. Flip-flop type shoes are not permitted.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Please note that the Ascension Island Government reserves the right to change dates of travel without notice even after payment has been received.

The Ascension Island Government will not be held responsible for any delays or cancellations to flights, nor will it be held responsible should such delays or cancellations mean that you miss a connecting flight. The Ascension Island Government bear no responsibility for any belongings or valuables that are lost or stolen during travel.

An **unabridged birth certificate** for all children under the age of 18 years **must** be produced to the South African immigration authorities on arrival there. **You will be refused entry into the country without this document. If two parents are listed on the child's birth certificate but is only travelling with one parent, you will require an affidavit from the parent not travelling with the child. You will be refused entry without this document. You are strongly advised to check immigration procedures for entering South Africa before you travel.**

TRANSITING ST HELENA:

It is recommended that passengers transiting through St Helena on their way to/from Ascension Island have with them approximately £200, this is in case of a flight delay on St Helena and a subsequent enforced overnight stay. Credit card facilities are extremely limited, as are banking facilities – there are no cash machines (ATMs) on the island.



The Giant Pseudoscorpion

The Giant Pseudoscorpion *Garypus titanius*, endemic to Ascension, has recently entered the IUCN Red List after being assessed to be 'Critically Endangered'.

G. titanius is only known to be found amongst the dense seabird nesting colonies of Boatswain Bird Island. There is speculation that *G. titanius* may once have been more widespread, inhabiting the impressive seabird colonies that covered the main island of Ascension at the time of human discovery. A combination of predation by introduced species and the collapse of most of the mainland seabird nesting colonies due to feral cats may explain the potential disappearance from these areas.

What does being added to the IUCN Red List mean?

"IUCN Red List" stands for the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species. The IUCN Red List is an indicator of the health of the world's biodiversity, a powerful tool used to provide information about individual species that will help inform conservation decisions.

The IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria are intended to be an easily and widely understood system for classifying species at high risk of global extinction. It divides species into nine categories: Not Evaluated, Data Deficient, Least Concern, Near Threatened, Vulnerable, Endangered, Critically Endangered, Extinct in the Wild, and extinct.

The *G. titanius* is under further threat from invasive predatory invertebrates, such as the American Cockroach *Periplaneta Americana*. Presumably introduced to Boatswain Bird Island by humans, the AIG Conservation and Fisheries Directorate have developed strict biosecurity procedures to be followed by anyone granted permission to visit Boatswain Bird Island.

This 'giant' mini-beast is the world's largest pseudoscorpion, reaching 15mm, nearly double the length of most other species of pseudoscorpion. Also known as false scorpions, pseudoscorpions look very similar to their scorpion relatives but lack the stinger tail. Instead, pseudoscorpions have large pincer-like pedipalps (claw like appendages) that contain a venom gland used to subdue their invertebrate prey.



Unlike pseudoscorpions elsewhere, which tend to be tiny, cryptic species, *G. titanius* hunts for its invertebrate prey in the open on the surface of the guano. It is mainly active at night, preferring to shelter from extreme temperatures in crevices and under rocks during the day. Their diet has not been studied in detail, but is likely to include many of the insects that dominate the invertebrate community of Boatswain Bird Island's seabird colonies.

One study has recorded captive individuals readily consuming houseflies suggesting that it is capable of tackling quite large prey.

There are five endemic species of pseudoscorpions found on Ascension with two of these only found on Boatswain Bird Island. Ascension is unique in that the pseudoscorpion group makes up the highest number of endemic species, more than any other invertebrate order.

It seems likely that the ancestors of *G. titanius* reached Ascension by hitchhiking on the plumage of seabirds or on the legs of insects. Such behaviour is common in pseudoscorpions, which frequently disperse by clinging to more mobile organisms. With feral cats now eradicated and large seabird colonies re-established on the mainland, it is hoped the *G. titanius* may be able to expand its range by hitching a ride on the birds from Boatswain Bird Island to the mainland.



With the possibility of *G. titanius* naturally making its way back to the mainland and biosecurity measures reducing the risk of more predatory species being introduced, it is hoped population numbers may increase resulting in *G. titanius* no longer being considered to be Critically Endangered.



Ascension Island Conservation Centre. Georgetown. Tel: 66359. Email: conservationenquiries@ascension.gov.ac



Long Beach Road Closure

The public are requested to note that due to the start of turtle nesting season the road along the back of Long Beach will be closed to vehicles between the hours of 21:00 and 07.30. These restrictions will be in place between 01 January 2020 and the end of turtle nesting season in June. Permission has been granted by the Administrator for this closure under Section 37 of the Road Traffic Ordinance 1984.

The road closure is being put in place to prevent unnecessary disturbance to nesting turtles. Bright white lights (torches or car headlights) can scare turtles causing them to return to sea without nesting. Nesting turtles and hatchlings are also frequently found crossing Long Beach road and are at risk of being run over.

In addition to this road closure the public are reminded of the Regulations regarding Beach Nature Reserves as outlined in the National Protected Areas Ordinance 2003:



Don't occupy or light up beach huts after 9pm.



Keep dogs on leads between sunset and sunrise.



No jet skiing or water skiing during the turtle season.



Don't pitch tents on beaches during nesting season.



Don't drive or park motor vehicles on the beach.



Turtles are also protected under the Wildlife Protection Ordinance 2013.

It is an offence to cause deliberate harm to adults, hatchlings and eggs.

If you have any questions please get in touch with the Conservation and Fisheries Directorate by telephone on 66359 or by email on conservationenquiries@ascension.gov.ac.

23 December 2019

SAVE A LIFE

BECOME A BLOOD DONOR



We are updating our live donor panel for 2020 and need volunteers to be part of this crucial resource on the island. Please note this is not for regular donations, you will only be contacted for assistance in case of an emergency.

Inclusion criteria:

18 years or older

Healthy

No risky sexual activities

Weight minimum 50kg

January 2020 Blood Drive

All volunteers wanting to be part of this crucial service please collect an information packet at the Hospital. These packets will be available at the nurses' duty room anytime. Just leave your contact details so that we can inform you of the date for the screening. The packet will include all info relating to becoming a blood donor. We will be doing the blood screening in January but we are still waiting for confirmation of a flight Date.



From The Archives

Our series of extracts from Mrs Gill's book *Six Months on Ascension* continues with a further description of the problems of supply by sea from Georgetown to Mars Bay, no tarmac roads then. The book is an account of her time with her husband's 1877 expedition to observe the Transit of Mars, from where Mars Bay gets its name.

Every Wednesday the "turtle boat" brought us water, canteen stores, &c.; but we soon found that its punctual arrival must not be depended on, owing to the rollers which so often disturbed our little bay. On the second Wednesday of our stay no boat could land, and my first inquiry was with regard to the state of the water casks. "Only water to last till Saturday," Hill told me; so I had to order all plate and glass washing, and all "swabbing out" to be done rigorously with salt water; the precious fresh fluid to be used only for drinking, and that sparingly.

I had no tea that afternoon, so I remember it as a Black Letter Day, for even Ascension tea is better than none. This supply of water had been condensed for us by the Cygnet, and was tolerably good for all purposes except tea-making; but experience had taught me, that no condensed water ever succeeds in bringing out the subtle "bouquet" of the cheering cup. Hence, at Mars Bay, life was robbed of one' of its choicest joys! Oh, for a Scotch mist! Oh, for a babbling brook or a "brimming river" to fill my tea-pot once again! Thus I apostrophized the Fates, as I waited for the turtle boat with her water-casks. But the rollers continued, and she came not.

Next day, Captain Phillimore paid us a visit by land, to ascertain how long our stores could hold out against the besieging rollers; and he brought more than kind inquiries, for he carried some fresh meat for us across the clinker in case of our utmost need. Capt. Hammick, who accompanied him, brought me two gills of milk in a sodawater bottle. What a *recherché* luncheon we had, and how we blessed our Samaritan guests! Another day, and again no boat, but we were well provisioned -

there was still water to last twenty-four hours, and Captain Phillimore had promised to send a mule with a small cask of water on Saturday, if the rollers continued.

The following day our little bay became less excited, and towards noon we heard the welcome cry, "A boat in sight!" Yes! there she was, tacking boldly against the wind, and by-and-by grappling in the surf for the buoy, which she caught with difficulty. Besides the water-casks, she brought us two officers of the Cygnet, who had come to say good bye, their ship being under orders to sail next day.

Guests at Mars Bay were much appreciated, and to-day we had quite a merry party; none the less so that it was unexpected and knives and forks were rather scarce. Neither did we take it amiss if our guests turned up their plates for critical examination before using them, and wiped out the glasses with their table-napkins. It was simply an act of necessity in this part of the world, and the habit grew so strong on us that we began to be afraid that, on our return to civilization, we might some day, in an absent mood, offend a dainty Scotch housewife by following the Mars Bay fashion at her table.

After a very pleasant day, we went to the beach before sunset to speed our parting guests. They experienced much delay and difficulty in starting, owing to the freaks of a treacherous wave, which, in the first place, lifted the dingey high and dry on the beach, and then, when the passengers got on board, refused to come back to float them off! This necessitated all jumping on shore again, and that was just the very moment the mischievous roller seized upon to bear off the dingey unfreighted. Then there was a rush, with the result of wet feet; and our adieux were mingled, if not with tears, at least with much salt water!

The museum is open every Saturday from 10:00 to 12:00. We have an extensive stock of books, t-shirts and many other mementoes of the island.



CINEMA

LOCATED IN THE NAAFI COMPLEX ON TRAVELLERS HILL

	Thu 02-Jan-20	Fri 03-Jan-20	Sat 04-Jan-20	Sun 05-Jan-20
1400 hrs			The Addams Family (Final Showing) PG	
1900 hrs	Last Christmas 12a	Elf (Final Showing) PG		Doctor Sleep 15
1400 hrs	09-Jan-20	10-Jan-20	11-Jan-20	12-Jan-20
1900 hrs	Terminator Dark Fate 15	Le Mans (Premier) 12a	Frozen 2 (Premier) U	Last Christmas (Final Showing) 12a
1400 hrs	16-Jan-20	17-Jan-20	18-Jan-20	19-Jan-20
1900 hrs	Frozen 2 U	Terminator Dark Fate (Final Showing) 15	Doctor Sleep 12a	Knives Out (Premier) 12a
1400 hrs	23-Jan-20	24-Jan-20	25-Jan-20	26-Jan-20
1900 hrs	Doctor Sleep (Final Showing) 15	Jumanji: The Next Level (Premier) 12a	Frozen 2 U	Le Mans 12a
1400 hrs	30-Jan-20	31-Jan-20	01-Feb-20	02-Feb-20
1900 hrs	Knives Out 12a	Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker (Premier) 12a	Frozen 2 U	Jumanji: The Next Level 12a



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