



ISSUE Q4 - DECEMBER

# NEWSLETTER 2022

Environment Society of Oman  
[www.eso.org.om](http://www.eso.org.om)

Cover Photo:  
Drone image of an Arabian Sea humpback whale, Dr Frederick Christiansen



## ACHIEVEMENTS & EVENTS

A summary of our Q4 highlights across research, conservation, education and community engagement.



## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Namat Schools Competition  
2021 - 2022



## MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Highlights from our membership programme and details of how to get involved!

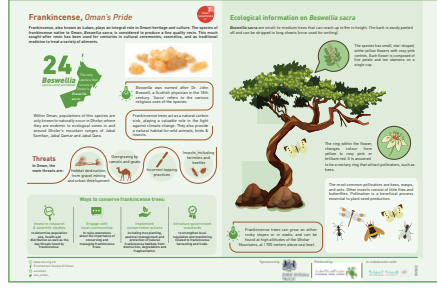


## ACHIEVEMENTS & EVENTS



### Namat Schools Final

We were delighted to announce our winners for the 2022 Namat Schools Competition during an award ceremony held in October. 81 schools from across Oman participated in this year's competition, entering projects related to the themes of managing waste, water and energy. In May, a panel of judges selected 11 schools to move forward to the final round, with final assessments held during school visits undertaken throughout September. We have been so impressed by the scope and achievements of our finalists this year and were thrilled to award the winning schools their prizes. We would like to thank **Veolia Oman** and **Emily's Garden** for their continued sponsorship of this important education initiative.



### Oman Tree Day

On the occasion of Oman Tree Day, we were pleased to launch an infographic celebrating the native species of frankincense found in Oman, *Boswellia sacra*. Produced in collaboration with the **Environment Authority** and with funding from the **British Embassy Muscat**, the infographic highlights important ecological information about *Boswellia sacra*, as well as the key threats and necessary conservation actions needed for its protection. The infographic can be viewed in full [Resources - ESO Fundraiser](#).



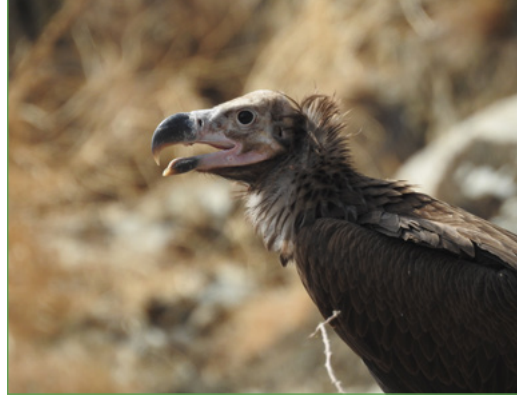
### Marine Mammal Survey

For more than 20 years, we have been collaborating on the completion of marine mammal surveys to assess the movement, health and behaviour of different species of whales and dolphins found in Oman's waters, with efforts focused most closely on the endangered Arabian Sea humpback whale (ASHW). During November, the team covered a distance of 1450km, with a total of 25 sightings, accounting for 2 species and 3 Arabian Sea humpback whales. This survey also included 5 Omani trainees working under the **HSBC Oman** funded capacity building programme. We would like to thank the **International Whaling Commission**, **HSBC Oman**, **Future Seas Global SPC**, **Megaterra Marine Conservation**, **Aahus Institute of Advanced Studies**, **Marina Bandar Al Rowda** and the **Environment Authority** for supporting the 2022 Marine Mammal Field Surveys.



### ASHW Conservation Management Plan Workshop

In November, ESO, in collaboration with the **Environment Authority** hosted international experts together with local stakeholders to discuss management planning of Arabian Sea humpback whales (ASHW) in Oman and the wider region in a workshop titled "Complementing Development with Conservation". 62 participants, representing 30 organisations came together to learn about the important ASHW research ESO and other stakeholders have been undertaking and to explore the role that Oman can play in the conservation of this endangered species. This workshop is a building block towards a wider regional workshop involving as many ASHW range states as possible. We would like to thank our sponsors, **HSBC Oman** as well as the many other organisations who supported this event.



### Vulture Conservation Field Updates

Our conservation efforts to support Lappet-faced vultures in Oman are ongoing. Our team are back in the field conducting breeding surveys, expanding our efforts to monitor the occurrence, breeding and potential threats faced by this endangered species. The winter survey will take place for 3 weeks in December 2022 and January 2023 and aims to find new active nests in the governorates of Al Batinah, Al Dhahirah, Al Buraimi and Al Sharqiyah (North and South). A breeding survey of Egyptian vultures will take place on Masirah in February and April 2023. We would like to thank the **Environment Authority** for their ongoing support for this important work.



### Oman Desert Marathon Charity Race

The **Oman Desert Marathon** team, together with over 30 ESO volunteers came together to organize a 5km desert night race to raise funds to support ESO. Generous donations from **Assaf Chicken**, **Desert Diamond Rose Coffee Solutions**, **Al Forn Café**, **Oasis Water**, **Muscat Pharmacy** and **Tunes** allowed 100% of the proceeds from the event to be donated to support the work of ESO. A special thank you to the 82 participants who have been undertaking and to explore the role that Oman can play in the conservation of this endangered species. This workshop is a building block towards a wider regional workshop involving as many ASHW range states as possible. We would like to thank our sponsors, **HSBC Oman** as well as the many other organisations who supported this event.

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### Namat Schools Competition

Oman's youth are our most important environmental campaigners for a sustainable future. ESO delivers a range of educational initiatives that target schools, colleges and universities, aiming to raise environmental awareness and promote the adoption of more sustainable behaviors. ESO's education initiatives began with simple school visits and has advanced into the development of more targeted events and campaigns, including our Namat Schools Competition, the focus for this quarter's project spotlight!

ESO's Namat Schools Competition (Namat) is an environmental competition designed to promote the adoption of environmentally sustainable projects in schools. Government schools across the Sultanate are encouraged to form teams consisting of students, staff and a member of the parent's council to implement activities and events to tackle an issue under one of the three themes, (i) waste management, (ii) water management and (iii) energy management. Now in its 3rd year, this project awards cash prizes to the top 3 teams

under each theme to support the sustainability of each project.

With sponsorship from **Veolia Oman** and **Emily's Garden Foundation**, the 2021/22 Namat Competition saw 274 schools from 11 governorates across Oman engaged. 110 schools submitted proposals, with 81 schools selected to move forward to implement their projects. Final reports were received in May, with a judging panel made up of representatives from **ESO**, **Veolia Oman**, and the **Oman National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science** tasked with evaluating the submissions. 11 schools from 7 governorates were selected to move into the final round of the competition.

In September, our judging committee visited each of the 11 schools to undertake the final assessments. Under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Abdullah bin Khamis Ambusaidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education an award ceremony was held on 19th October 2022. 8 winning schools were announced representing 6 different governorates in Oman, all of whom received cash

prizes; OMR 1000 for first place, OMR 500 for second place and OMR 300 for third place.

The winning teams had successfully implemented projects that ranged from efforts to implement solar energy initiatives in their schools, campaigns to limit food waste combined with initiatives to repurpose unavoidable food waste to produce compost and collecting gray water or AC water to irrigate new plantations at school, with one school successfully producing cucumbers and lettuce for the local community! We have been so impressed by the scope and achievements of our winning teams as well as the support their initiatives have received from their local communities.

ESO aspires to continue to engage and inspire the youth to be representative citizens and activators of change within their communities. With the support of **Veolia Oman**, Namat 2022/23 was launched in November and is already looking to be one of the most popular editions!

NAMAT Winning Schools	
Waste Management	
	Lamees bint Amro Al Ansariyah School North Al Sharqiyah Governorate
	Al Sininah School Al Buraimi Governorate
	Al Amal School Muscat Governorate
Water Management	
	Al Qalaa School Dakhiliyah Governorate
	Al Fadil bin Al Abas School South Al Batinah Governorate
Energy Management	
	Safiya Om Al Moamneen School Dakhiliyah Governorate
	Omaia bint Qais School North Al Batinah Governorate
	Qarn Al Alam School Dakhiliyah Governorate



## MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITIES

We are proud to offer both corporate and individual membership programmes, offering anyone passionate about environmental conservation the chance to support the work of Oman's only environmental NGO. Following 2 years of online activities, we have enjoyed building back our membership calendar in 2022 and would like to express our gratitude to all our members for their ongoing support.



Our October lecture was held to coincide with Omani Women's Day. Delivered by **Rumalitha Al Busaidi**, an entrepreneur, scientist and ESO Board Member the lecture explored how gender equality is impacting climate change. The lecture, titled "Women: The Key to Our Climate Future" looked at why women are more likely to be impacted and displaced by climate catastrophes and why access to education, employment and family planning for all women and girls is the key to our climate future.



In celebration of Arab Environment Day, ESO partnered with **Muscat Hike Group** to organize a special hike to celebrate the wonderful environment we have on our doorsteps here in Oman. The hike was well attended with 46 participants who came together to get in touch with nature. We also ensured to remove any litter found along the hike track. We would like to thank **Muscat Hike Group** and all the participants who join us!



In November, our members came together to learn about the impact of climate change and the outcomes from COP27 from **Dr Yassine Charabi**, a professor of Atmospheric Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University. The lecture was titled "Carbon Neutrality in Oman by 2050: Is it Achievable?". We would like to thank **PDO EcoMan Centre** for hosting us for this event.



Our December lecture explored conservation research programmes that are training new generations of cetacean (whale and dolphins) scientists. Delivered by **Dr Gianna Minton**, who has supported cetacean research in Oman for over 20 years, the lecture titled "Building Capacity to study and protect endangered cetaceans: A personal journey from Oman to Malaysia, Gabon and back again" included an overview of the work undertaken in Oman.




### DECEMBER - 2022

To mark **International Volunteer Day** on 4th December, ESO bought together 75 volunteers to clear litter from beaches in Seeb. A total of 672kg of waste was collected in an hour. We would like to thank **FRIENDI** mobile for providing giveaways for the volunteers and **be'ah** for their logistical support.



Rock Gecko, Rabab Al Lawati



### Become a Member Today!

If you would like to become an ESO member or renew click:

[NEW MEMBER](#)[RENEWALS](#)

### \*STUDENT MEMBERSHIP 5<sup>RO</sup>

Your support matters.

Thank you for believing in our commitment to conserve and protect the incredible biodiversity of Oman.

FOR ENQUIRIES:  
Individual Membership:  
Corporate Sponsorship / Membership

### \*INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP 10<sup>RO</sup>

**Juhaina Al Ghafri - [juhaina.alghafri@eso.org.om](mailto:juhaina.alghafri@eso.org.om)**  
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### \*CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP 1K<sup>RO</sup>

\*Memberships are per year.



## Why support ESO!

Your support enables us to...

- Conduct **RESEARCH** on endangered species in Oman
- EDUCATE** communities on the importance of adopting more sustainable lifestyles
- ADVOCATE** for environmental sustainability
- BUILD CAPACITY** within the environmental sector in Oman, and
- PROTECT** Oman's natural heritage for future generations.

## How to support ESO in 2023


### 1. CLICK & FOLLOW US



### 2. CLICK TO JOIN OR RENEW ESO MEMBERSHIP

[MEMBERSHIP](#)

### 3. MAKE A DONATION


[Via our website www.eso.org.om](http://www.eso.org.om)



Via an SMS with Omantel send 'Donate' to 90108 to donate 1 OMR per month



Via any of these apps:





Bank transfer, Bank Muscat  
#0315-0039-6351-0036

Egyptian Vulture

## DONATION PROGRAMMES

We are very grateful to all our donation partners, who kindly add an optional donation to guests bills. We are actively working to encourage more hotels and tour operators to join the program.

## THANK YOU!

Thank you to **PDO's EcoMan Centre** for hosting our monthly membership lectures.

**Zuhair Al Farsi** and **Ibrahim Al Shamsi** from The Omani National Commission for Education, Culture and Science and ESO volunteers, **Hawa Al Shraiqi**, **Ibrahim Al Shidhani** and **Sulaiman Al Rahbi** for giving up their time to support our Namat Schools Competition.

**Sulaiman Al Rahbi** for volunteering his time to support our Arabian Sea humpback whale conservation workshop.