



2016 Annual Report





BNT Officers

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Lawrence Ginton | President, Elected Member |
| Janet Johnson | Deputy President, Elected Member |
| Alistair Chisnall | Honorary Secretary, Elected Member |
| Simon Townend | Honorary Treasurer, Elected Member |

BNT Council 2016

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Geoffrey Andrews | Elected Member |
| Felicity Arengo, PhD | Appointed Member, American Museum of Natural History |
| Glenn Bannister | Elected Member |
| Karen Bjorndal, PhD | Appointed Member, University of Florida |
| Anthony Bostwick | Appointed Member, Governor-General's Representative |
| Stephen Box, PhD | Appointed Member, Smithsonian Institution |
| Michael T. Braynen | Appointed Member, Ministry of Agriculture & Marine Resources |
| Brian Carlstrom | Appointed Member, US National Park Service |
| Andy Fowler | Elected Member |
| Colin Higgs | Elected Member |
| Matthew Jeffery | Appointed Member, National Audubon Society |
| Kristofer Lehmkuhl | Elected Member |
| Neil McKinney | Elected Member |
| David A. Oehler | Appointed Member, Wildlife Conservation Society |
| Pamela Reid, PhD | Appointed Member, University of Miami |
| Christopher Russell | Appointed Member, Ministry of the Environment and Housing |
| Karin Sanchez | Elected Member |
| Rodney Smith, PhD | Appointed Member, University of The Bahamas |
| Prescott Smith | Appointed Member, Ministry of Education |
| Barbara Thompson | Elected Member |
| Ellison Thompson | Appointed Member, Ministry of Tourism |
| Patrick Thomson | Elected Member |

Scientific Advisors

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Dan Brumbaugh, PhD | American Museum of Natural History |
| Alan Bolten, PhD | University of Florida, Archie Carr Center for Sea Turtle Research |

President's Message

The Bahamas National Trust (BNT) is presently the only non-governmental organization in The Bahamas with a statutory mandate to manage our national park system.

This mandate includes the responsibility of identifying areas important for protection and making recommendations to government for their addition to the protected area system. Marine protected areas are critical to guarantee healthy reefs and habitat important for our conch, crawfish and fish populations.

In 2008 The Bahamas signed on to the Caribbean Challenge which required the protection of 20% of our near-shore and marine environment by 2020. Over the last several years the BNT, The Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation (BREEF) and The Nature Conservancy have worked to promote marine protected areas, and to build capacity for the management of these areas.

In 2016, with the support of Oceans 5 (through their Advancing Marine Protected Areas in The Bahamas project) the BNT, The Nature Conservancy and BREEF began jointly identifying the final 10% of the Bahamian commitment to the Caribbean Challenge. Our respective parks and science teams have initiated community meetings in Cat Island, Long Island and Eleuthera to build support for marine areas these communities feel need to be protected.

The BNT, the National Audubon Society and the Ministry of Tourism, with funding provided by the IDB, developed a joint Bird-based Tourism Initiative to help Bahamians take advantage of this growing, multi-billion-dollar global market.

The initiative has trained bird tour guides from Andros and Inagua over the past two years, with the goal of creating sustainable jobs while helping to protect Bahamian biodiversity and natural habitats.

To date, 58 Bahamians have completed the first phase of the training with nine completing the advanced phase, which qualifies them to lead birding tours to any island in The Bahamas. This project supports the BNT vision of national parks helping to provide sustainable livelihoods for Bahamians.

Our education department continues to provide quality experiences for Bahamian youth through the Discovery Club and the Parks Experience Programme, with over 12,000 young people participating. Our Faith-Based Outreach has impacted another 2000 people, and continues to support and promote our national park system.

Many more improvements are planned over the next several years to develop infrastructure, support ecotourism entrepreneurs and expand nature-oriented activities for visitors and residents. Nature trails and visitor centres are planned for the Abaco and Lucayan National Parks.

In 2016 the BNT's administrative offices relocated from Village Road to the Bay Street Business Centre on East Bay Street. This will enable us to improve the visitor experience at The Retreat, which was the first national park on New Providence. We also hope to improve the visitor experience at other national parks on New Providence.

As we continue our work towards the establishment of a comprehensive system of national parks and expanded stewardship of our natural resources, we want to encourage loyal members and supporters to invite families, friends and colleagues to join and support the BNT.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your president for the past year, and I wish to thank my executive committee, council members and the entire management and staff of the BNT for their support and commitment to the organization.

Yours sincerely,



Lawrence H. Glinton
President

Introduction

2016 was a memorable year for the BNT. The third Bahamas Natural History Conference in March attracted the largest audience to date. A highlight of the event was a special evening with BNT founding member Dr. Carleton Ray.

The Bahamas recorded a new species of snake (*Chilabothrus argentum*) - the first new species of boa to be discovered since the 1940s. It is one of the rarest boa species globally.

Our education programmes continue to support and promote national parks, while work continues to identify the final 10% of the nation's Caribbean Challenge Commitment, as well as the development of improved management capacity for all of our protected areas.

In September we moved our administrative offices from Village Road to the Bay Street Business Centre on East Bay Street to enable improvements to the visitor experience at The Retreat.

In October, Hurricane Matthew caused widespread damage on many islands, with Andros, Grand Bahama and New Providence being the hardest hit. Our national parks sustained moderate damage to infrastructure and vegetation.

This report includes highlights of our work for the year 2016.

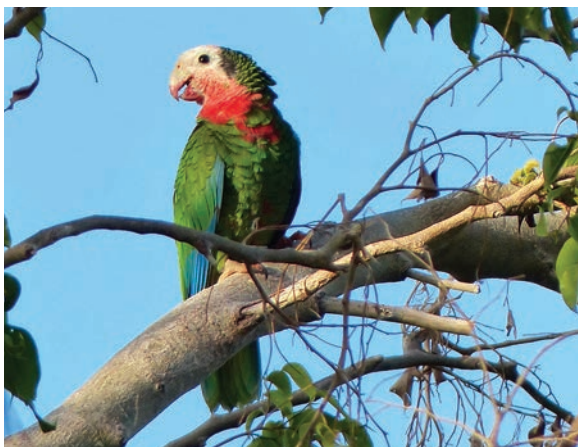


NATIONAL PARKS

National parks are the core of the BNT's mandate and the Parks Division pursued projects ranging from habitat management and species monitoring to infrastructural development.

On Abaco, surveys conducted by Dr. Frank Rivera-Milan recorded about 8,000 Bahama parrots – a doubling of the population. This result indicates that the sustained programme of feral cat removal in parrot nesting areas in the south has been effective.

On Andros, the road from Queen's Highway to Blue Holes National Park was paved with the aid of the Ministry of Works. The new roadway includes a parking area and turnaround for tour buses. The park has nature trails for hiking, new interpretive signage and rest room facilities for an improved visitor experience.



The Bahama Parrot population in Abaco has doubled since sustained removal of feral cats from nesting areas began.



On Eleuthera, the Leon Levy Native Plant Preserve was awarded a Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence and ranked at the top of 46 attractions on the island. Specimen collections for the Preserve continue, with expeditions led by Dr. Ethan Freid targeting endemic plants on several islands.

The goal is to complete an ex-situ collection of all 89 endemic plant species in the Bahamian archipelago. This is part of the BNT's commitment to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. The Preserve currently has 30 endemic species, with an additional eight to be added upon germination of collected seeds.

College of The Bahamas students took part in the Preserve's third summer internship programme. Three students (Rose Charles, Antoinette Hudson and Brendan Toote) participated in seven weeks of intensive natural history training. The goal is to develop field biologists who can survey and interpret the Bahamian environment.

On Grand Bahama the BNT signed a three-year agreement with Freeport Harbour Company and Grand Bahama Airport Company to fund management programmes for the island's national parks, to



The Leon Levy Preserve's third summer internship programme. From left: Dr Ethan Freid, Rose Charles, Eric Carey, Antoinette Hudson, Brendan Toote, and Falon Cartwright.



New signage at the Blue Holes National Park, Andros.

support education programmes, and to help establish a new marine protected area in the west.

The Grand Bahama Regional Branch continues to function at a high level. Its major focus during the year was the redevelopment and expansion of parking facilities at the Lucayan National Park, to better accommodate high visitor traffic.

Upgrading of the trail network and interpretive signage are underway at the Rand Nature Centre in Freeport. Removal of invasive species around the Watchable Wildlife Pond and the trails at the Arboretum continued and improved electrical infrastructure was provided for the new waterfall feature.

Thanks to a legacy gift the communications system at the Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park has been upgraded and the BNT is working on improving infrastructure and operating facilities.

On New Providence, staff and interns harvested invasive *Casuarina* trees to re-mulch the trails at the Retreat and the Primeval Forest National Park.

Assistant Director of Agriculture Basil Miller demonstrated the use of herbicides to control invasive plants. The boardwalks at Harrold and Wilson Ponds National Park have been severely compromised by the aggressive spread of invasive Cattails. Plans for boardwalk repairs and/or replacement are underway.

There was renewed emphasis on improving the visitor experience at The Retreat on New Providence, now that the BNT's administrative offices have moved to East Bay Street.

Meetings were held with Ministry of Tourism executives and excursion directors from the major cruise lines to discuss potential tour opportunities. Preliminary estimates suggest a minimum investment of \$100,000. A more interactive and robust visitor experience would require an investment of around \$1 million.

Mark Daniels rejoined the BNT in September after completing a graduate degree. As Retreat Curator he is responsible for oversight of all the New Providence national parks.

On Inagua, wardens Henry Nixon and Randolph Burrows documented a successful flamingo breeding season. Regular patrols continued, with special night surveillance to discourage disturbance of nesting birds.

Sea turtle research at Union Creek Reserve continued in June under the direction of Drs. Karen Bjorndal and Alan Bolten from the Archie Carr Center.

On San Salvador, the BNT reviewed draft management plans for the island's parks with the San Salvador Living Jewels (SSLJ) organisation. There was also a review of the memorandum of understanding between the two groups to provide for a more effective partnership.

Park wardens from around the country participated in a marine enforcement workshop in Nassau during May. It was facilitated by Jayson Horadum from MPA Enforcement International, with funding from the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute. BNT staff from Abaco, Andros, Eleuthera, Grand



A successful breeding season for the flamingos of Inagua.



Bahama and Inagua also took part in leadership training workshops at The Bahamas Chamber of Commerce in August.

Parks Director Lakeshia Anderson attended the IUCN World Conservation Conference Congress in Hawaii during September. She learned first-hand about an ambitious new partnership among global conservation organizations to identify, map, monitor and conserve key biodiversity areas that provide vital habitat for threatened species.

The BNT has been a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature since 1963.

In October Hurricane Matthew inflicted widespread damage across the archipelago. On New Providence, nature trails at The Retreat and the Primeval Forest National Park were blocked by downed trees and there was some roof damage at The Retreat. Volunteers from the Youth Environment Corps, a government apprenticeship programme, helped with clean-up efforts.

The pavilions and boardwalks at Harrold and Wilson Ponds National Park and Bonefish Pond National Park were damaged. A structural engineer from the Ministry of Works was called in to determine the extent of repairs.

The Lucayan National Park suffered severe beach erosion and damage to the boardwalk, but the



buildings, bridge and cave infrastructure remained intact. The Rand Nature Centre had to contend with downed trees and fences.

In November, BNT staff led by science advisor Dr. Craig Dahlgren conducted a post-hurricane reef assessment at three sites on the south coast of New Providence. The team found toppled coral heads, bleached coral and coral covered in silt. Surveys of reefs on other islands impacted by the storm are planned.

9



Hurricane Matthew damaged infrastructure and downed trees in several national parks.



Participants in the Demarcation Buoy Workshop.

Demarcation Buoy Workshop

The US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funded training for BNT staff and partner organisations at The Retreat. The workshop was facilitated by Llewellyn Meggs and Jaedon Lawe of Yardie Environmental Conservation Company in Jamaica.

Training included how to make spar buoys and anchors, as well as how to splice and deploy buoys. Two were deployed at the Southwest Marine Managed Area off New Providence. As a result of the training, BNT wardens will produce and deploy demarcation buoys for all marine parks.

Oceans 5 Project

The Bahamas currently protects 10% of its coastal and marine territory. A national stakeholder process is underway to determine new areas to be protected as part of the Caribbean Challenge commitment. The goal is



a network that covers at least 20% of both near-shore and ocean habitats.

Effective marine protection requires more than just setting aside acreage. Proper management of protected areas is key to fulfilling national conservation targets and mitigating climate change impacts.

Oceans 5 provides philanthropic funding to make tangible improvements in global ocean health. The goal of the Bahamian project is to develop by-laws and management plans for national parks and sustainable finance mechanisms for protected areas.

As part of this project, the BNT held stakeholder meetings on Cat Island, Long Island and Eleuthera (which have no existing marine protected areas). And BNT legal advisors, Pericles Maillis and Alistair Chisnall, are developing by-laws with the aid of the Eugene Dupuch Law School.

The Nature Conservancy is providing support for publication of a comprehensive management plan for the Abaco marine parks, as well as for the engagement of a consultant to develop a co-management framework for all national parks.

Global Environment Fund Project

The BNT received a \$30,000 grant from the United Nations Environment Programme to conduct ecological surveys at watershed restoration demonstration sites on East Grand Bahama, and to hold stakeholder meetings on the island.

The project's main goal is the implementation of an integrated approach to water, land and ecosystems services management, supported by policy, institutional and legislative reforms. The project also seeks to drive the use of technologies to improve access to safe and reliable water supplies and better sanitation in order to contribute to ecosystem functioning.



SCIENCE & POLICY

The Science and Policy Division provides justification for national park expansion and management; undertakes species and habitat conservation activities; supports education and advocacy activities; and builds external partnerships.

National park Expansion and Management

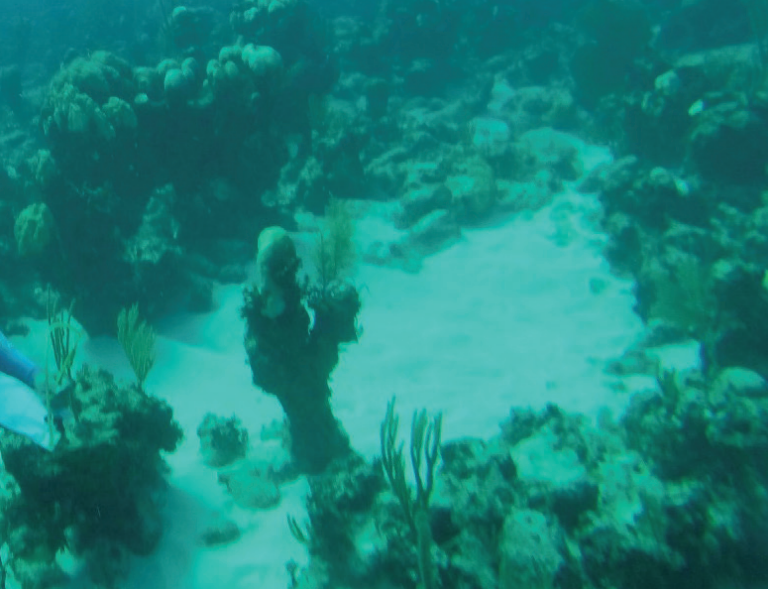
North Berry Islands Protected Area

Under a project funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Foundation, an area of the northern Berry Islands, from Kemp's Cay to Pigeon Cay, has been identified as an important habitat for the Piping Plover and is being nominated as a protected area.

To help build the scientific justification for protection, ecological assessments were conducted in October and November by BNT experts Dr. Ethan Freid, Scott Johnson, Agnessa Lundy and Lindy Knowles.

Climate Change Action Plan

Shelley Cant-Woodside coordinated a Climate Change Action Plan funded by the MacArthur Foundation as part of a BirdLife International project that incorporates 12 regional countries. Meetings were held with scientists, government officials and



environmentalists during March. The project seeks to expand protection for Important Bird Areas and develop Climate Smart management plans for protected areas, Policies on sand and rock mining as well as the control of invasive species are also being developed.

Species Conservation

Andros Shorebird Project

Funded by the US Fish and Wildlife Foundation, this project will help protect endangered migratory shorebirds, particularly the Piping Plover. Terrestrial Science Officer Scott Johnson began work on identifying and nominating two Important Bird Areas on Andros (between Young Sound and Big Wood Cay, and Stafford Creek to Kamalamee Cay) as part of this project.

During November BNT experts conducted Piping Plover re-sighting surveys around Cargill Creek, Mt. Pleasant, Young Sound, the Joulter Cays, Big Wood Cay, Somerset Beach and Blanket Sound.

The Science Division is working with the National Audubon Society to develop a Shorebird Conservation Plan for Andros.

Bahama Oriole Project

This project is a collaboration between the BNT and the Omland Lab at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, funded by the American Bird

Conservancy and the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund.

Research began in 2015 during both the non-breeding and breeding seasons of the Bahama Oriole. A proposal was developed to conduct a population estimate; identify the breeding and non-breeding season habitat requirements of the species; and draft a species conservation plan.

Nassau Grouper Spawning

During December Lindy Knowles joined representatives of the Shedd Aquarium, the University of Miami, North Carolina State University and local conservation partners to research Nassau grouper spawning aggregations around Long Island.

In addition to population assessments, researchers collected genetic material from 23 fish, and tagged 19. A number of fish traps were observed at each spawning site.

New Snake Species

In 2015 a new snake species was discovered in Conception Island National Park in the southwest Bahamas by Dr. Graham Reynolds of the University of North Carolina.

Dr. Reynolds presented his findings at the Natural History Conference in March. Discovery of the Silver Boa brings the total known species of West Indian boas to 12, with four species and several subspecies endemic to various islands in The Bahamas. All are non-venomous and most are highly endangered.

Conchservation

The Conchservation Campaign launched with a bang in 2016. Three relay teams were fielded in the Bahamas Marathon during January to raise awareness of the campaign, whose objective is to support a sustainable conch fishery.

Campaign materials were developed with funding from the Perry Institute for Marine Science. These included a Conchious Movement decal and flyer; a conch facts bookmark; a campaign postcard, flyer and posters; social media infographics; and a petition.

An original “Conch Gone” rake n’ scrape



The BNT Conchservation team in the Bahamas Marathon.

mash-up music video was produced by a team of young Bahamian artists. The music was composed collaboratively by Dyson Knight, Wendi, Anwar MacDonald, Ton Ash and Mdeez. Featured performers were Dyson Knight, Sammi Starr, Rik Carey, Chase Fernander, Sketch Carey, Wendi, Lady E, Bodine, Fanshawn, Ton Ash and Mdeez. The writers and artists all donated their talent and time to the project. The video was produced by Lavado Stubbs of Conch Boy Films and was scheduled for release in early 2017.

Community outreach was conducted at a number of venues and events. In October a meeting was held with Director of Local Government Charles King to discuss goals of the campaign and to forward the petition to island administrators.

A special Conchservation booth was set up at the BNT's Wine and Art Festival and campaigners participated in the 'Best of the Best' Regatta at Fort Montagu in December. Conchservation coordinator Agnessa Lundy visited Spanish Wells, Cat Island and Inagua in December. And special presentations were made during the last quarter of the year at Dolphin Cay, Atlantis, the Marine Unit of the Customs Department and the Royal Bahamas Defense Force.

Shelley Cant-Woodside, Eric Carey, Lynn Gape and Agnessa Lundy met with the new Acting Director of Fisheries Edison Deleveaux and Fisheries Officer Lester Gittens in December to discuss the Conch-servation petition. Campaigners continued to

collect data on the relationship of conch lip thickness and the length-width ratio of the operculum (foot) as part of an on-going study led by Community Conch researchers.

Eco Tour Guide Training

The BNT executed an IDB/Audubon-sponsored project to train bird tour guides from Andros and Inagua. An Advanced Eco Tour Guide curriculum was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and bird tours were promoted to visitors on the BahamasGo website. Advertising materials were also produced. The bird guide programme will be incorporated in the Ministry of Tourism's training activities.

Bahamas Natural History Conference

The third biennial conference was held in March at the College of The Bahamas, attended by more than 500 - the largest audience to date. Top sponsors were the College, the Atlantis Resort, the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust and Majestic Tours.

Atlantis hosted the opening ceremony on Paradise Island, with Prime Minister Perry Christie as the keynote speaker. Education Minister Jerome Fitzgerald was also a featured speaker.



Dr Carleton Ray, a founding member of the BNT.



Prime Minister Perry Christie with Portia Sweeting, BNT Director of Education, and BNT Navigators.

Seventy-three scientists presented papers on Bahamian natural history subjects, addressing the theme of “Reversing the Decline.” Special guest speakers included Melissa Groo, wildlife photographer and writer, and Dr. Peter Maura, head of the Smithsonian’s Migratory Bird Center in Washington DC.

A highlight of the conference was “An evening with Dr. Carleton Ray” at the John Watlings Distillery. Dr. Ray, who remains active as a research professor at the University of Virginia, is a founding member of the BNT and was part of the 1957 expedition which led to the creation of the Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park. The week ended with a special tour of the Exuma park.

Coral Workshop at CEI

Representatives from 15 conservation groups, including the BNT and the Perry Institute of Marine Science, took part in a one-week workshop at the Cape Eleuthera Institute in August. Workshop partner Secore International has developed methods for sexual coral restoration and is working towards large-scale applications.

The workshop combined lectures with field training, and participants were able to observe the spawning of endangered Elkhorn corals on South Eleuthera’s reefs. Coral spawn was collected and fertilized in the lab, and the resulting larvae cultured at the Institute.



EDUCATION

The BNT Education Department has designed outreach programmes that focus on the economic, recreational and educational benefits of national parks.

During the year the Education Department facilitated park visits by more than 17,000 people, including some 200 employees of the Department of Environmental Health.

2016 Education and Outreach

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Adults | 2,937 |
| Students | 14,326 |
| Total | 17,263 |
| Monthly average (adults) | 245 |
| Monthly average (children) | 1,194 |
| Overall monthly average | 1,439 |
| Public Schools Reached | 26 |
| Private Schools Reached | 29 |
| Tertiary Groups Reached | 4 |
| Teacher Training Workshops | 2 |
| Church Groups | 7 |
| Summer Camps | 6 |
| Civic/Community Groups | 7 |
| Public Events | 10 |
| Total Groups | 90 |
| Total Education/Outreach Activities | 161 |



Creation Cares is the BNT's faith-based outreach programme for churches and spiritual groups. It seeks to raise awareness of our national parks among this important segment of the community.

Education initiatives will continue to target adults and families through an updated Park Experience Programme, which is supported by generous donors.

Summer Safari

Young people on New Providence, Abaco, Grand Bahama and Eleuthera enjoyed week-long environmental adventures at BNT summer camps on their islands.

Summer Safari participants on Abaco and New Providence spent the last week of June learning about endangered species and their habitats. Grand Bahama participants kayaked in the mangroves on the north shore, snorkelled at Deadman's Reef and visited Josey's Cave at Holmes Rock. On Eleuthera, students enjoyed camping at the Leon Levy Native Plant



Participants and instructors at BNT's Abaco Summer Safari Camp

Preserve and learned to identify Bahamian amphibians and reptiles. The Eleuthera camp is coordinated in partnership with the Haynes Library of Governor's Harbour.

Eco Camp

Forty young people from nine islands participated in the seventh annual Eco Camp Experience. The six-day camp lets students participate in classroom and field experiences that encompass every Bahamian ecosystem.

Students visited Blue Holes National Park, snorkelled in the Andros North Marine Park, explored Pigeon Cay and visited rocky sea shores to collect organisms for lab sessions.

An environmental awareness survey was conducted in Fresh Creek to ascertain the level of support for Andros' national parks. And Indira Brown of the Department of Marine Resources conducted a special day for the campers, collecting plankton and sand samples for further study in the lab. Campers also visited the historic settlement of Red Bays was also on the agenda, where they interacted with craft workers and visited a crab hatchery.

Discovery Club

With 60 Discovery Clubs on Abaco, Andros, Cat Island, Eleuthera, Grand Bahama, Great Exuma, Inagua, Long Island and New Providence, over 1000 young people were able to experience the Bahamian environment through hands-on activities in 2016.

Club members are required to participate in one Citizen Science Project under the National Park



Members of Discovery Club hone their drawing skills while learning about the Bahamian environment.



Pictured above are the Grand Bahama Navigators and their instructors who took part in the SCUBA certification.

Benefit Project umbrella. This allows all Discovery Club levels to make an impact at a national park of their choice.

Activities were planned around four themes this year: Forests, Conchservaion, Wetlands, and Bonefish. Club members investigated and researched a theme and then hosted a public event at a national park to create awareness and, in some instances, provide tangible benefits for the park.

Navigators

Nineteen groups of 200 young people from seven islands participated in Navigator programmes this year.

Twenty Navigators in the marine programme on Grand Bahama, New Providence and Andros obtained SCUBA certifications. And the first module of the terrestrial programme was launched in the fall. It focuses on parks, botany, ornithology and environmental science/technology.

Activities included mangrove studies and restoration work at Bonefish Pond National Park, Moriah Harbour Cay National Park on Exuma, and Conception Island National Park. Others activities included collecting data on conch fishing for the Conchservaion Campaign, and community engagement at public meetings.

Navigators in Grand Bahama – who are also Royal Bahamas Defence Force Rangers – helped with post-hurricane clean-up efforts at national parks; and Long Island Navigators planted mangroves on the school's beach.



Discovery Club Symposium

Over 80 Discovery Club leaders from Andros, the Berry Islands, Cat Island, Eleuthera, Exuma, Grand Bahama, Inagua, Long Island and New Providence gathered at Breezes Hotel in July to share experiences, review badge materials and plan upcoming activities.

They participated in workshops on photography, social media and branding. They also snorkelled and kayaked at Bonefish Pond national park and travelled to SandyPort Beach for a special sandy shore learning activity. Presentations on two BNT programmes - Creation Cares and Birdsleuth - were also included in the week's activities.

The symposium was made possible by the generous support of Breezes, an anonymous donor, and by supporters of the Discovery Club Raffle - especially Commonwealth Bank.



Community Engagement

A family fun-day was held at Bonefish Pond National Park in April to target nearby communities. The event was supported by conservation partners, corporations and government agencies. Food, games, snorkelling and kayaking were among the attractions. Over 600 people attended, including Environment Minister Kenred Dorsett.

Professional Development

- Clare Sands participated in the 2016 BREEF Teachers Conference on San Salvador, which focused on marine conservation instructional programmes.
- Steffon Evans participated in the Our Ocean Youth Ambassadors, a special international visitor leadership programme funded by the US State Department in support of marine conservation.
- Portia Sweeting, Clare Sands and Steffon Evans participated in the Ultimate Leader 3-day Workshop presented by the Chamber of Commerce in Nassau.
- Portia Sweeting, Clare Sands and Steffon Evans participated in the Highly-Effective Team Training programme hosted and funded by The Nature Conservancy.



Pictured from left: Steffon Evans and Clare Adderley-Sands who participated in Professional Development Opportunities in 2016



DEVELOPMENT

24 The Development Division focused on the re-branding and marketing efforts of the BNT, along with the coordination of the Advancement Committee and the management of grants and projects.

Public feedback indicated a need to pay more attention to refining and marketing the BNT brand, which tells our story and symbolises our identity.

In collaboration with Nassau-based communications agency Media Enterprises, a brand manual was formulated specifying descriptors, fonts, graphic elements and colour schemes that reflect the mission and character of the BNT. Going forward, these brand guidelines will be applied to all public presentations.

The branding exercise included redesigns of stationery, collaterals, electronic presentations and email signatures to match the new brand standards. The overall goal is to ensure that the BNT's mandate of "Managing national Parks...Preserving our Future" is felt and seen in every internal and external interaction with stakeholders.

A new website was launched under the guidance and design of Bahamian Travis Miller. The new site provides visitors with a more interactive experience



and includes videos, rotating images and interactive maps. Users can pay a virtual visit to our national parks to learn about their unique features. The website also features information on the BNT's organisational structure.

An awareness perception campaign was launched in conjunction with another Nassau-based communications agency, Adworks.

The first phase was an online survey directed at New Providence residents. A second phase surveyed residents in person on five different islands (Grand Bahama, Abaco, Andros, Eleuthera and Exuma). The goal was to determine attitudes towards the BNT to help with marketing strategies.

Membership

A new membership plan was implemented to re-engage lapsed members, interact with current members and attract new members. The plan will aid in formulating a more targeted marketing strategy, and improve communication with all stakeholders.

Membership data was converted to new cloud-based software called eTapestry, which features an easy-to-use e-commerce platform that has enabled the BNT to move away from PayPal. This e-commerce platform has been integrated with the new website, and has already generated new members.



All Advancement Committee members, as well as directors, managers on the family islands, and Development Division staff have been trained in this software. Eventually, all relevant BNT staff will receive training in the use of eTapestry, ensuring that important information is recorded in an efficient and timely manner.

Phone-a-thons were held in July and August to target lapsed members. This effort was undertaken with the help of seven part-time employees, who contacted 2,774 people over the four-week period.

Annual Appeal

This year's Appeal focused on the importance of scientific research in our national parks. The BNT's science programme is crucial for the health of our national parks and the sustainability of our fisheries. It is also important to document the effects of climate change on ecosystems and species so that adaptive responses can be devised. The annual appeal raised over \$20,000 to support our Science Division.

Legacy Gift—Gregory Pentek

Gregory John Pentek passed away in February 2015 and left the bulk of his estate to the BNT in support of the Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park.

Mr. Pentek was a decorated U.S. Air Force veteran and had a successful career as a mechanical engineer focusing on hydro-mechanical design and aerospace engineering. He worked on the team that developed post-flight refurbishment of the space

shuttle. He and his late wife, Terri, often sailed their vessel, *Priority*, to the Exuma park where they volunteered and contributed financially to park operations.

Mr. Pentek's gift is being used to improve park infrastructure including upgrading the communications systems. An endowment fund for the park will also be created. The BNT is planning a special memorial in honour of Mr. Pentek.



Advancement Committee

This volunteer committee meets regularly to strengthen the BNT's fundraising efforts. Veteran fundraising consultant Robert Bull was recruited to help guide and train the committee.

The Big Blue Truck

Bahamas Waste is a regular supporter of BNT events through the donation of services. In June they continued this tradition by creating a mobile billboard on one of their trucks depicting the 32 national parks. The stunning graphics depict the Bahamian archipelago and identify parks on 11 islands. To create awareness, Bahamas Waste and the BNT organised a children's colouring competition that featured a cartoon rendering of the Big Blue Truck. Over 300 entries were received.

EVENTS

Annual events continue to be popular social activities while raising much-needed funds for programmes and infrastructure.



Annual Pig Roast

This beach party held every February at Adelaide is reminiscent of family gatherings in Cuba. Hosted at the Maillis Farm, this year's Pig Roast raised over \$40,000 to support the Discovery Club.



Garden Party

This Sunday afternoon social at the end of April is a new event, featuring traditional beverages, as well as bush teas. Activities include a fashion show and raffle. This year's event raised more than \$7,000.





Wine and Art Festival

Despite inclement weather this October's event was well-received and raised over \$20,000. Bristol Wines and Spirits offered tastings of their fall wine selection while over 45 artists showcased their work. The BNT partnered with the National Art Gallery to select a diverse range of art for the event.



Christmas Jollification

Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Jollification enjoyed record-breaking attendance in November with



over 80 food and craft vendors on hand. Sponsors included Commonwealth Bank, Summit Insurance, Bristol Wines and Spirits, Bahamian Brewery, Caribbean Bottling, Asa H. Pritchard, Bahamas Waste, Bahamia Rental. The event raised over \$70,000 for the Retreat.





Festival Noel

The signature fundraising event on Grand Bahama raised over \$10,000 in December to support national parks. Sponsors included Bristol Wines and Spirits, the Bahamian Brewery, Polymers International, Bahamas Wholesale Agencies, FOCOL, the Ministry of Tourism, HG Christie, Keys Bahamas Realty, Sunny Isles and Freeport Advertising. The event was organised by the BNT's Regional Committee for Grand Bahama.



FINANCE & OPERATIONS

This department focused on two major projects in 2016 – reviewing the costs of managing the national park system, and the relocation of the administrative offices from Village Road to East Bay Street.

Although the yearly budget for parks management has hovered at around \$3.5 million, our expert review (funded by a grant from the Inter American Development Bank) indicated that the actual cost was about \$10 million. The review will be used to document requests for more support from both private and government funders.

The relocation of the offices from Village Road to the Bay Street Business Centre was in keeping with plans to revamp The Retreat as a visitor attraction that can generate more revenue for the BNT.

FINANCIALS

Income

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Investment income from Heritage Fund | \$ 142,703 |
| Project support from other non-profit organizations | 847,409 |
| Government Grant | 1,400,000 |
| Proceeds from festivals and other events | 294,139 |
| Other Income | <u>1,179,238</u> |

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| TOTAL INCOME | <u>\$ 3,863,489</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------------|

Expenses

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Projects supported by other non-profit organizations | \$ 887,774 |
| Education, public meetings and conferences | 170,014 |
| Park Maintenance | 82,064 |
| Management and administration | 1,035,581 |
| Depreciation of buildings and equipment | 197,694 |
| Other expenses | <u>1,608,337</u> |

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| TOTAL EXPENSES | <u>\$ 3,891,464</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|

HONOUREES



Mrs. Shelby White receiving her honorary Membership from BNT President, Larry Ginton.

Shelby White

At the 2016 Annual General Meeting, Prime Minister Perry Christie praised long-time Eleuthera homeowner and frequent visitor, Shelby White, for her role in creating a world-class native plant conservation and education centre in Governor's Harbour.

At the meeting, she was awarded an honorary BNT lifetime membership for her contributions to conservation and service to the Eleuthera community.

A well-known philanthropist, Shelby White first came to Eleuthera in the early 1970's. Using her own resources, she spearheaded the creation of the island's first national park in 2011.

Named in honour of her late husband, the 25-acre Leon Levy Native Plant Preserve features over 171 species of Bahamian trees, shrubs and herbs, including special displays of medicinal and economic plants. The Preserve is managed by the BNT and is recognised as one of Eleuthera's top visitor attractions.

IN MEMORIAM

The BNT notes with sadness the passing of these veteran members:

- Colin Callendar: Long-time member of the Wildlife Committee and the Gamebird Committee
- Anthony White: Long-time friend and former council member who possessed a unique combination of birding experience and love for the Bahamian environment
- Gillian Scates: Long-time member and behind-the-scenes supporter of the annual Wine and Art and Jollification events
- Dr. Donald Gerace: Dedicated his life to the work of the Bahamian Field Station (now the Gerace Research Centre), and over the past 40 years ensured that Bahamian students had access to countless scholarship opportunities in the United States.

BNT STAFF

NEW PROVIDENCE

Eric Carey, Executive Director

Lynn Gape, Deputy Executive Director

Karen Panton, Director of Finance & Operations

Dorcas Miller, Human Resources & Operations
Manager

Lavanda Rahming, Accountant

Daphne Brooks, Bookkeeper

Alera Smith, Office Administrative Assistant

Gregory Rolle, Security Officer

Sylvan Monestine, Security Officer

Kim Iturriaga, Custodian

Portia Sweeting, Director of Education

Steffon Evans, Education Officer, Navigators
Coordinator

Garelle Hudson, Education Officer

Juanita Munroe, Education Officer

Clare Adderley-Sands, Education Officer,
Discovery Club Manager

Shelley Cant, Director of Science and Policy

Lindy Knowles, Senior Science Officer

Scott Johnson, Terrestrial Science Officer

Agnessa Lundy, Marine Science Officer

Giselle Dean, Assistant Science Officer

Astra Armbrister-Rolle, Director of Development

Dominique Martin, Grants & Projects Administrator
Raquel Rolle, Membership Officer
Urmie Braynen, Development Associate
Antone Barrow, Website and Graphics Officer

Mark Daniels, Retreat Curator
Cameron Saunders, Park Warden
Anwar Rolle, Park Warden
Kristoff Francis, Park Warden
Stephen Wright, Deputy Park Warden
Jack Atilus, Retreat Gardener

ABACO

David Knowles, Chief Warden
Kaderin Mills, Office Administrator
Marcus Davis, Abaco Park Warden

ANDROS

Leslie Brace, Andros Operations Officer
Steven Smith, Andros Park Warden
Eleuthera (Leon Levy Preserve)
Falon Cartwright, Manager
Ethan Freid, Botanist
Camilla Adair, Deputy Manager
Alvanna Johnson, Office Assistant
Arlington Johnson, Site Supervisor
Hermane Exament, Maintenance Supervisor
Jason Moxey, Preserve Attendant
Omar Micklewhite, Preserve Attendant
Brian Smith, Preserve Attendant

EXUMA

Henry Haley, Park Warden
Chery Elliot, Office Manager
David Dorsett, Park Maintenance Officer
David Maillis, Deputy Park Warden

GRAND BAHAMA

Lakeshia Anderson, Director of Parks
Lisa Wildgoose, Office Manager, Rand Nature
Centre
David Cooper, Deputy Park Warden, Lucayan
National Park
David Clare, Deputy Park Warden, Rand Nature
Centre
Ellsworth Weir, Park Warden

INAGUA

Henry Nixon, Senior Park Warden
Randolph Burrows, Park Warden

SUPPORT

The BNT relies on many sources of funding to fulfil its mission. We are especially grateful the following corporations, foundations, and individuals that provided major support in 2016.



- 36
- Abaco Beach Resort
 - Abaco Groceries Limited
 - Adelheid (Heidi) Ernst
 - Alexander N Mckinney
 - Amanda M. Graham
 - Anish Kapoor
 - Aquacats Cruises
 - Ashli Anne Fox
 - Ardastra Gardens
 - Asa H Pritchard
 - Atlantis Resort
 - Bahama Rock
 - Bahamas Ferries
 - Bahamas Waste Ltd.
 - Bahamas Wholesale Agencies
 - Bahamia Rental
 - Bahamian Brewery & Beverage Co. Ltd.
 - Bell Island Ltd.
 - BEP Foundation
 - Bethell Estates Ltd
 - Bonefish and Tarpon Trust
 - Breezes
 - Bristol Wines & Spirits
 - British Colonial Hilton
 - Bruce and Gloria Raine
 - BTC
 - Carmen Butler
 - Cable Bahamas Cares Foundation
 - Cameron Symonette
 - Cape Eleuthera Island School

- Caribbean Bottling Co. (Bahamas) Ltd.
- Cecile E.C. Dean-Heastie
- Chamber of Commerce
- Charles Vollum
- CIBC FirstCaribbean International Bank
- CMA Insurance Brokers
- Colina Financial Advisors Ltd
- Commonwealth Bank
- Deno and Rochelle Moss
- Diana Symonette
- Disney
- Dolphin Encounters
- Don S. Wrinkle
- Donald W. Tomlinson
- FC Capital Investments Ltd.
- Fisheries Conservation Foundation
- Freeport Advertising
- Forfar Field Station
- Geoff and Lynne Andrews
- Glinton Sweeting O'Brien
- Graham Thompson & Co.
- Greg & Teresa Pentek
- Harbourside Marine
- Helena Hermes
- Helmut and Jean Ann Holm
- HG Christie Real Estate
- Higgs & Johnson
- Hugh and Sandra Buckner

Ignacio de la Rocha
Jeffrey & Diane Robertson
Jet Blue Airlines
John G.E. Rosevear
John and Tanya Crone
John Watlings Distillery
Jordan Lampkin
Jordan D McKinney
Joseph & Nicola Lerna
Julie Miller Rugg
K & S Auto Services
Kamalame Cay
Kelly's Home Centre
Kidney Centre Limited
Kingsway Academy
KPMG
KRS Shearer Car Rental
Leandro Vazquez
Leon Levy Foundation
Le Petite Gourmet
Linda Clews
Lindar Industries
Lorraine Smith
Lyford Cay Foundation
Lyford Cay Members Club
Mactaggart Third Fund
Majestic Tours
Margaret A. Butler
Mario Albek
Mario Bannister
Mario Portundo, Sr.
Marvin and Lee Cook
Michael and Virginia White
Michael Maura and Pat Birch
Micronet
Ministry of Tourism
Moore Bahamas Foundation
Morgan McKinney
Morton Bahamas Limited
Nancy B. Kelly
Nassau Airport Development
Company
National Audubon Society

Olivia Orr
One Eleuthera Foundation
One Source
Paul Higgs
Pericles and Christina Maillis
Peter Andrews
Peter and Irene Graham
Polymers International Ltd
Presley Pinder Car Rental
Providence Advisors
RBC Royal Bank
Rick and Susan Barnes
Royal Bahamas Defense Force
Sandyport Beaches Resort
Scotiabank (Bahamas) Ltd
Scotiabank (Bahamas) Ltd.
SEV Consulting
Securities Commission
Shedd Aquarium
Shelby White
Southworth Bahamas Ltd
Stanley Pinder Car Rental
Stuart's Cove Dive Bahamas
Summit Insurance Co., Ltd
Sun Oil Ltd
Super Value Food Stores Ltd.
Sydney McKinney
Teresa Butler
The Canada Foundation
The Dunmore Club
The Lary Foundation
The New York Community Trust
The Nature Conservancy
The Pew Charitable Trust
The Sandpiper Inn (Abaco,
Bahamas) Ltd.
Thomas and Judy Whitehead
Tropical Shipping USA, LLC
Turrell, Hall & Associates, Inc.
University of The Bahamas
US Fish and Wildlife
Association
Waypoint Consulting



The Bahamas National Trust
Tel: 242-393-1317
Fax: 242-393-4978
P.O. Box N-4105, Nassau, Bahamas
Email: bnt@bnt.bs | www.bnt.bs

Cover photo, horseflesh blossom, by Lynn Gape