

News and events

Peter Phelan Obituary

Peter Phelan made an impact on many people in his short life. He spent his last decade of in the United Arab Emirates. He joined the newly-fledged team at the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife when the company was still in its teething stages. Here he worked as a researcher, conducting field surveys and an intensive study on the behavior and movements of Gordon's wild cats. Later, he joined the Mammal Department, taking charge of rodents and other small mammals.

He will be missed for his spontaneity and enthusiasm when tackling a new project, and his refusal to succumb to the inevitable pessimistic comments of his colleagues. There was never a project too challenging for him to attempt, and the same applied to the mundane routine work, with which he always remained energetic.

Good times won't be forgotten by those who shared them with Peter, whether it was trying to make a fire out of damp wood in the Musandam Mountains with the assistance of a map book and cooking oil, or running around the desert at night catching jerboas or geckos. The hundreds of stories that all his friends have to tell will surely keep Peter's memory alive for a very long time.

Mostly, his friends and colleagues will miss him for his fundamental decency. There would never be an inappropriate time to call Peter for help, because he would always be willing and never complain. Many were the times that he would be woken in the early hours of the morning to tow somebody out of the desert, or to assist with a sick animal. Our social events and barbeques will never be the same without Peter, but at least he left behind a long list of fun times that we can repeat to each other, in happy reflection, in those times when the conversation goes quiet.



What's new in the literature

Ofner, W., Bailey, T., O'Donovan, D., Wernery, U., and Zachariah, R. (2007) Absence of antibodies against *Brucella* sp. in different species of semi-free ranging Bovidae in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. *Vet Med Austria*. 94: 180-183.

A full version is available for download as a PDF at the wmenews website.

Mohammed OB, Omer SA, Sandouka MA. The efficacy of ivermectin and levamisole against natural *Nematodirus spathiger* infection in the Arabian sand gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa marica*) and the Arabian mountain gazelle (*Gazella gazella*) in Saudi Arabia. *Vet Parasitol*. 2007 ;150(1-2):170-3.

Bazargani TT, Hallan JA, Nabian S, Rahbari S. Sarcoptic mange of gazelle (*Gazella subgutturosa*) and its medical importance in Iran. *Parasitol Res*. 2007 Nov;101(6):1517-20.

Snakes of Arabia: A Field Guide to the Snakes of the Arabian Peninsula and its Shores

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This extremely useful field guide is astonishingly the first of its kind for the region and fills a much needed gap in the market. It covers snakes inhabiting Saudi Arabia, Oman, U.A.E, Yemen, Qatar and Bahrain. The author, Damien Egan, is a well respected regional expert in this field and his abundant knowledge of Arabian snakes species is presented in a logical and easily referenced format. Each snake is described both photographically and through illustrations with supplementary information provided to enable identification based on multiple criteria. Details are given on typical body, head and eye shape, colour, habitat preferences and geographical distribution as well as some basic scale counting information. For each species, other possible species of confusion are listed. In addition to the user friendly identification guide, this book provides information on the environments in which snakes are found in Arabia, adaptations of snakes to the Arabian environment and how to deal with venomous snake bites. This book is very well presented and as a field guide will prove invaluable for both week end campers and animal professionals alike.

Chris Lloyd

