

Who should we ask for advice?

When we are among like-minded people and talk about the need for nature conservation, we understand each other. We tell each other examples and reasons that confirm us in our efforts to protect nature. We are sad to see irreversible disappearance of all amazing habitats, whole animal and plant species before our eyes or before the eyes of our friends in Africa or South America. We tell each other what irreplaceable damage this creates for humans - for people in Africa and hence for people here.

That is when we are among ourselves - but it is different with many other people - they are cross with "environmental terrorists", "militant conservationists who want to return us to the Middle Ages". Many argue that all those talks about nature conservation is just a new religion, that most environmental efforts are fraud, etc. Last time I had such a conversation in our public sauna - most of the

guys present - engineers were clear about it: biodiesel is a scam, making one liter of biodiesel consumes one liter of diesel, so biodiesel is just disguised diesel. The start-stop system, mandatory in all new cars, is also a scam when the car shuts off every time on the stopwatch and every stop, the starter, alternator and other components wear off faster. In that case, such a car will save a little gasoline, but it will wear out faster and people will have to buy a new car much earlier, so in the end it is not only nature-friendly but directly nature-unfriendly. Most of the time, I was just listening, and in many ways I could not but agree.

At that moment I was all the more grateful for A Rocha - we do not rely on our reason and our short-sighted estimates to protect nature, but we ask the Creator of our world, we seek to know how He wants us to care for it. When we first ask the Lord in nature conservation, we see not only the harm done to man but to the whole creation. We do not see ourselves as masters and owners of the world, but only as its stewards. We do not perceive the world as our thing, which we are to somehow fix ourselves, but as the entrusted gift, whose "manual" the "manufacturer" put before us in His Word. When we read and obey God's Word, we do not come up with biodiesel, "disguised diesel" and other short-sighted solutions, but with real answers. And that's where A Rocha's unique place is.

I do not want to state the obvious and repeat what everyone knows - media supersaturation dulls us, a lot of news paralyzes us, we hear about disasters and we don't have the power to respond appropriately. We often do not know - where to do first? What to do and what not? It is difficult. What an amazing advantage that we can make decisions and seek answers with God. Let's find them!

A Rocha is an international conservation organization showing God's love for all creation and our human responsibility.



Petr Pokorný



Insect hotels

Insects may seem to have many hiding places, holes, cavities and crevices all over the place where they can hide, lay eggs and develop.

Unfortunately, it is not true. Between large fields and forests with only young same-age trees, there is only limited space for life and there is an emergency in our monotonous landscape for a suitable refuge. That is why we have built two "insect hotels" in our natural garden, alongside some beetle pits, dry walls, a "dry sunny sandpit". We also planted a wide variety of flowering plants that insects often come to. I want to encourage all of you to give a chance to a varied life in your garden.



Most solitary bees and wasps dig their nests in sunny places but there are still many species that use different crevices, cavities, straws and stalks and therefore man-made shelters make up for the lack of suitable habitats. One of the "insect hotels" allows us to observe adult insects and their larvae directly at their home in the tube. The structure provides built-in observation drawers, which are now full of larvae that are going to survive the winter in there.

Solitary bees and wasps, like butterflies, have a complex development, the so-called perfect transformation. A new generation of males and females mate in the spring and young fertilized females will find suitable shelter for their offspring. They collect pollen, nectar or both and make supplies for their larvae. The bee then puts one egg on such a pollen. In our drawer in the spring you can see

eight rooms with kind of dumplings and eggs in one tube. Adults usually no longer care for their young. During the summer, eggs larvae emerge, which mainly eat, grow and develop and then survive the winter in their chamber, while parents die. And in the spring, the pupa and then a new generation hatches.

Of course, there are exceptions. For example, adults hatch at the end of the summer, and only fertilized females hibernate. Long-aged bee carp bees living for up to three years meet their offspring. Solitary wasps or arachnids hunt virtually all insect groups, their larvae and spiders to feed their larvae. Some species take care of their larvae until they pupate.

If they like staying with us, they will reward us. Wasps feed on aphids, caterpillars and other voracious insects. Solitary bees and bumble bees pollinate the flowers even in colder weather, when the honey bee does not fly. The more insects there are, the better it is for endangered and disappearing birds today.

How to build an insect hotel and how to fill it? Let us be inspired by a beautiful book by entomologist Petr Bogusch "Houses for bees and useful insects". I wish you the joy of exploring the little-known world.

Jana Ledecřová





A Rocha at the Olympics

Yes, Olympics, that's how we call any school competitions in our country even if no sports are involved. These "Olympics" A Rocha was invited to were a purely environmental business. It was already the 25th year of the regional round of the national secondary school competition on 23 -



24 October 2019. For this purpose, a beautiful space of the Orlice Ecocentre was chosen, which is located in the Podorlické Open-Air Museum in Krňovice. The overall topic of this year was Water, soil and air quality in human settlements. The competition is aimed at comparing knowledge and skills in the field of nature conservation and environmental care. Emphasis is placed on the practical use of knowledge and skills in solving specific problems and on the development of teamwork. The competition was divided into several parts. First, knowledge

was tested by identifying plant and animal species. Then there was a practical task of creating a ground probe. In the village, students tried to find out how people are heating their houses. Next, comparing historical maps and the present situation of the village, they had to identify changes in the landscape and to suggest measures for improvement. Finally, each three-member group presented a presentation summarizing their work in exploring the selected aquatic environment and suggesting improvements for nature and landscape. As A Rocha was invited to the jury, we were delighted to have the opportunity to experience the atmosphere of this competition. Furthermore, this environmental competition is going to take place in our Keith Morris Centre in 2020. *Filip Laštovic*



Peter and Miranda Harris, Chris and Susanne Naylor - four A Rocha pioneers

It was they who stood at the beginning of this movement. The first couple in Portugal and the Naylor's in Lebanon. Three of them passed away unexpectedly on October 28 in a terrible car accident in South Africa to a heavenly home. Only Peter survives his complicated injuries. The only driver escaped everything miraculously.

We are intrigued by inquisitive questions and weighty doubts. Has it all gone out of hand of whom is the heavenly mover and creator of the world and Lord of our personal history?



Susanne and Chris

Unanswered and actually meaningless WHY gnaws our souls and wounds our hearts again and again. The only thing left to do is to confess with the psalmist: "truly my soul finds rest in God;" Psalm 62: 1.

It was at A Rocha's international forums or on other occasions that we would meet these people full of joy and vibrant creativity. They came several times to our country too. It always was very encouraging and inspiring.

Being rich in their outer as well as inner beauty, Miranda and Susanna adorned their husbands, Peter and Chris, helping them realize their visions with great dedication.

Without them, the entire large A Rocha family would hardly

A Rocha

Christians in conservation



have been able to start and flourish. It was probably Miranda with whom we had the strongest experience. At conferences she would always find some time for us, as we were sometimes sitting in the corner, somewhat embarrassed and frightened over big visions, questionnaires or AR International metrics charts. With her pastoral approach, she always gave us new joy and courage to follow unpaved roads. The moments with Miranda at the conferences felt like caressing God's love. The Naylor's inspired us with their personal example, boldly heading especially on dangerous soil in Lebanon. Chris was also strong at preaching and interpreting the Scriptures in an accessible and authentic way. He could proclaim a deep and surprising divine love for every man in a balanced way. God's love which reaches not only to humans, but also to every living being in the form of creatures and whole natural habitats.



Miranda and Peter

Both families were and remain very strong in their Christian faith as well as human qualities, especially in their parenting relationships and in the joyful vocation of grandparents. In her Christmas letters, Miranda would always describe in her beautiful handwriting the trust in the living God accompanying her adult children, but also the beautiful playful "flock of grandchildren". It is so painful to imagine how great and premature this loss must be. I remember myself when my parents left at a similar age. How pleased I was at that time when (a famous psychologist - PP) Jaro Křivohlavý sent me a note with the Bible verse: "Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me." Psalm 27:10. We wish the survivors

and the whole A Rocha family, this divine embrace and assurance of God's love. Through prayer we are accompanying Peter in particular. Dear brother in Christ, may God carry and sustain you, we love you, you are in our hearts.

Pavel and Radka Světlíks and A Rocha CZ

What are we looking forward to in 2020?

January 17 - lecture by Magdalena Michlová - Nepal - Manaslu Circuit Trek

February 15 - traditional Sauerkraut, pickles and homemade bread competition (plus Petr Bischof's songs)

March 21 - Annual review of AR CZ's work at the annual meeting, again at Prague Tyrannus Hall

June 5 - June 7 A Rocha conference in the Šumava NP (Bohemian Forest).

It has been 20 years since the A Rocha Czech came into existence.

July 3 - 12 - volunteer week at our centre in Dobré. Come to enjoy the collaborative work that makes sense and can help you improve your English too.

For detailed info visit www.arocha.cz or **facebook @arocha.cz**

The AR team is looking forward to meet you!

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