

A scenic view of a traditional wooden dhow boat on a sandy beach. The boat is brown with a white sail and is positioned on the sand. In the background, there are blue mountains and a clear blue sky. The water is a deep blue color. The foreground is a green grassy area.

Language and Nature

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Bangor University

Sadler Seminar Series

October 2nd 2017

Outline

- Language and Nature: the project
- Programme and speakers
- Why Language and Nature matter
- Species diversity & endemism in Southern Arabia: Alec Moore, Paul Bagguley

Language and Nature: The project

- Multidisciplinary: Languages, Geography, Sociology, Communications
- Cross-institutional: Leeds, Sheffield, York, Manchester, Newcastle, Cambridge, SOAS
- Geographical regions: Arctic Circle, Arabia, Australia, Europe, Latin America
- Fits with all the University themes: Cities, Climate, Culture, Energy, Food, Health, Water

The broader picture

- Parallels AHRC Network project on Symbiotic relationship between language and nature in southern and eastern Arabia (partners from UK, US, Canada, Russia, Oman, Qatar)
- EoI submitted for Leverhulme Centre: Endangered languages, cultures and ecosystems

Programme and speakers

Semester one: Key issues and scene setting

Language and nature: Threats and challenges to biocultural diversity: 2nd October, 2-3pm

Language and nature: Perceptions & expressions of environmental change: Speakers: Charles Pigott, Cambridge; Rebecca Jarman, Leeds – 23rd November, 2-4pm

Language and nature: Natural resource management: Speakers: Jon Lovett, Leeds; Julia Touza-Montero, York: 8th December, 2-4pm

Semester two: Temporality, space, colour and quantification

Language, nature, time & temporality: expression of time and points of time; changing notions of temporality, different notions of temporality: Speakers: Eva Schultze-Berndt, Manchester; Rosaleen Howard, Newcastle; Neil Bermel, Sheffield – late January, date TBC

Language, nature, space & place: changing patterns of people movement, expression of space, expression of place, expression of distance, expression of direction: Speakers: Marco Santello, Leeds; Jack Wilson, Salford – March, date TBC

Language, nature, form & sensory experience: Speakers: Tom Jackson, Leeds; Janet Watson, Leeds – April, date TBC

Language, nature, quantification & value: expression of numerals, quantification, natural capital: Speakers: Eva Schultze-Berndt, Manchester; Jon Lovett, Leeds; Neil Bermel, Sheffield – May, date TBC

Concluding workshop

Leeds Endangered Languages workshop, Language and Nature: July, date TBC

Why Language and Nature matter

- Naming is seeing
- Language and nature enjoy a symbiotic relationship
- Regions of the world with greatest biodiversity tend to exhibit greatest linguistic diversity
- Dramatic climatic changes isolate/displace people, forcing language loss, breaking the link to cultural heritage, and drastically affecting people's wellbeing
- High levels of linguistic, cultural & biodiversity coincide with regions with high levels of social & political inequality, also impacting on wellbeing
- Environmental loss in one region can affect the environment, cultures & languages in another region

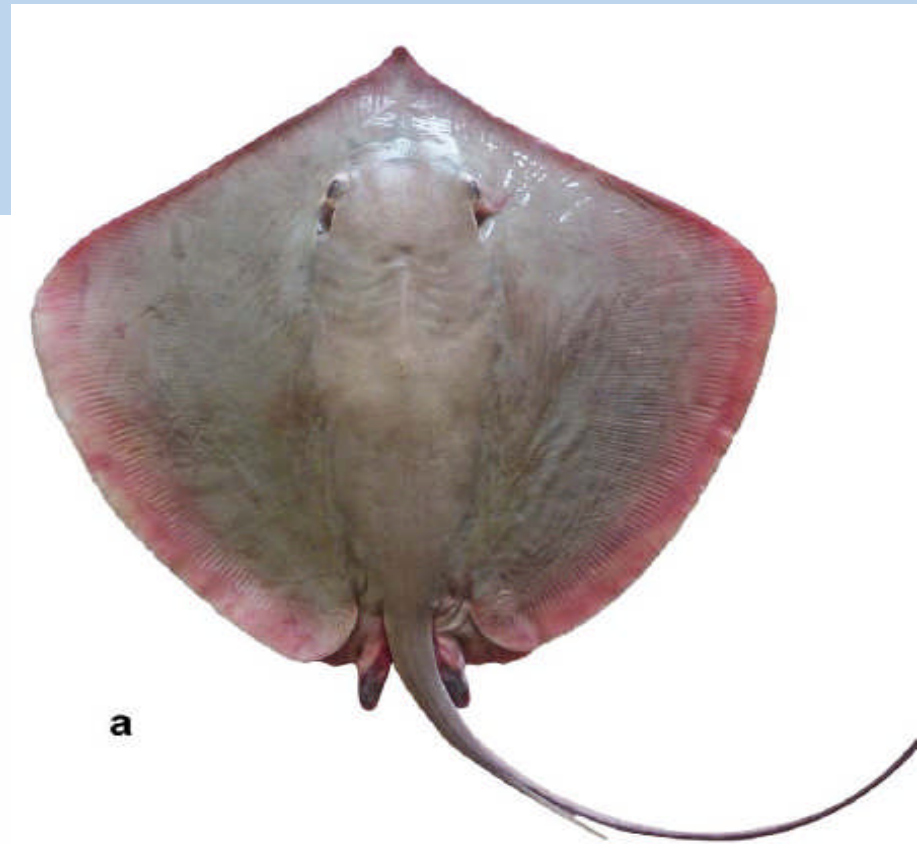
Facts and figures

- c. 30% loss of both species & languages across the globe since 1970
- 1961 – 2003 mean global sea-level rise c. 1.8 mm/annum; between 1993 – 2003 that was 3.1 mm/annum
- UK Climate Impacts Programme predicts under medium-emission scenario sea-level rise at London of 21-68 mm by 2095
- '[Man] is a wrecker, and what he wrecks now is not just ships. It is all that he once most treasured in the world.' (John Fowles, *Coastline: Britain's Threatened Heritage*)

Species diversity and endemism: A small case study

Dr Alec Moore
IUCN Shark Specialist Group
Bangor University

Diversity clusters: *Maculobatis randalli* Arabian Gulf; Rediscovery of *Carcharhinus leiodon* NW Gulf (around Kuwait) & southern Oman/eastern Yemen



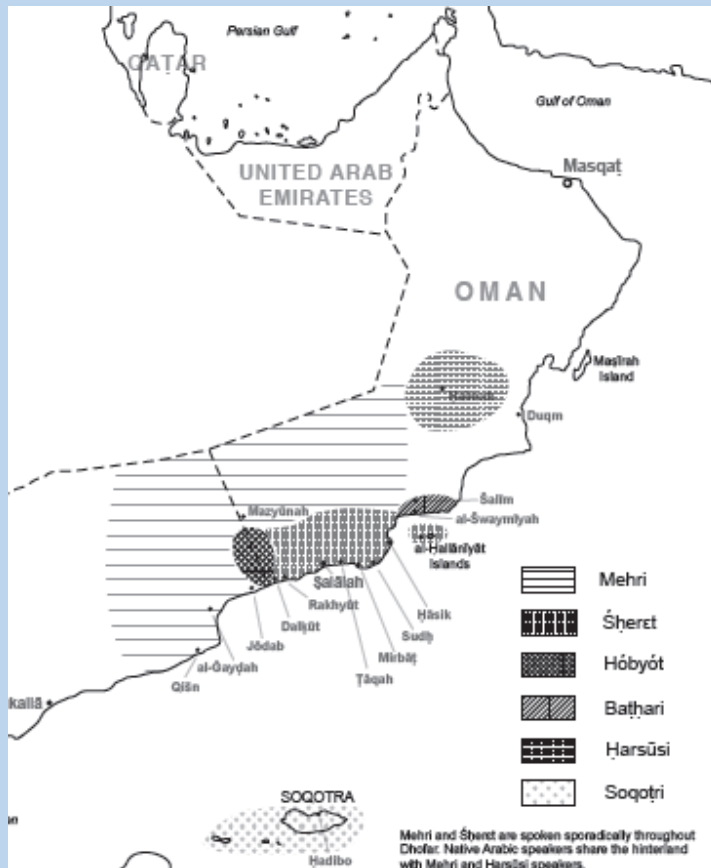
Some Endemic birds of South West Arabia:

clockwise from top - Arabian Golden-winged Grosbeak, Philby's Partridge; Arabian Golden Sparrow

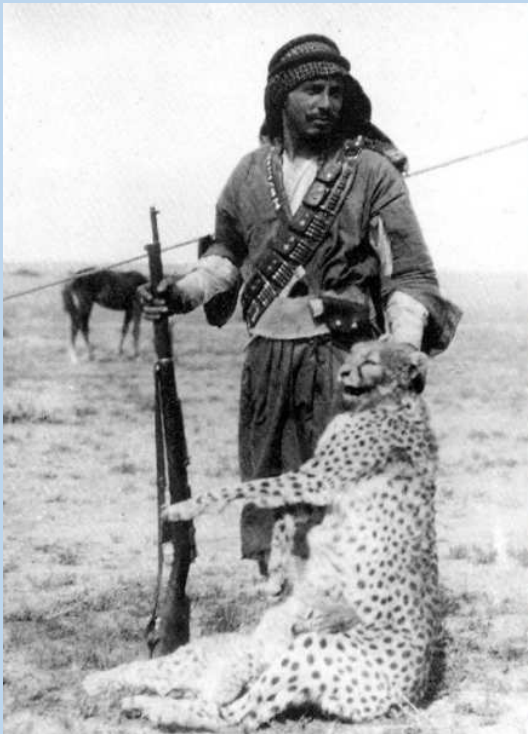


- Linguistic

- Faunal



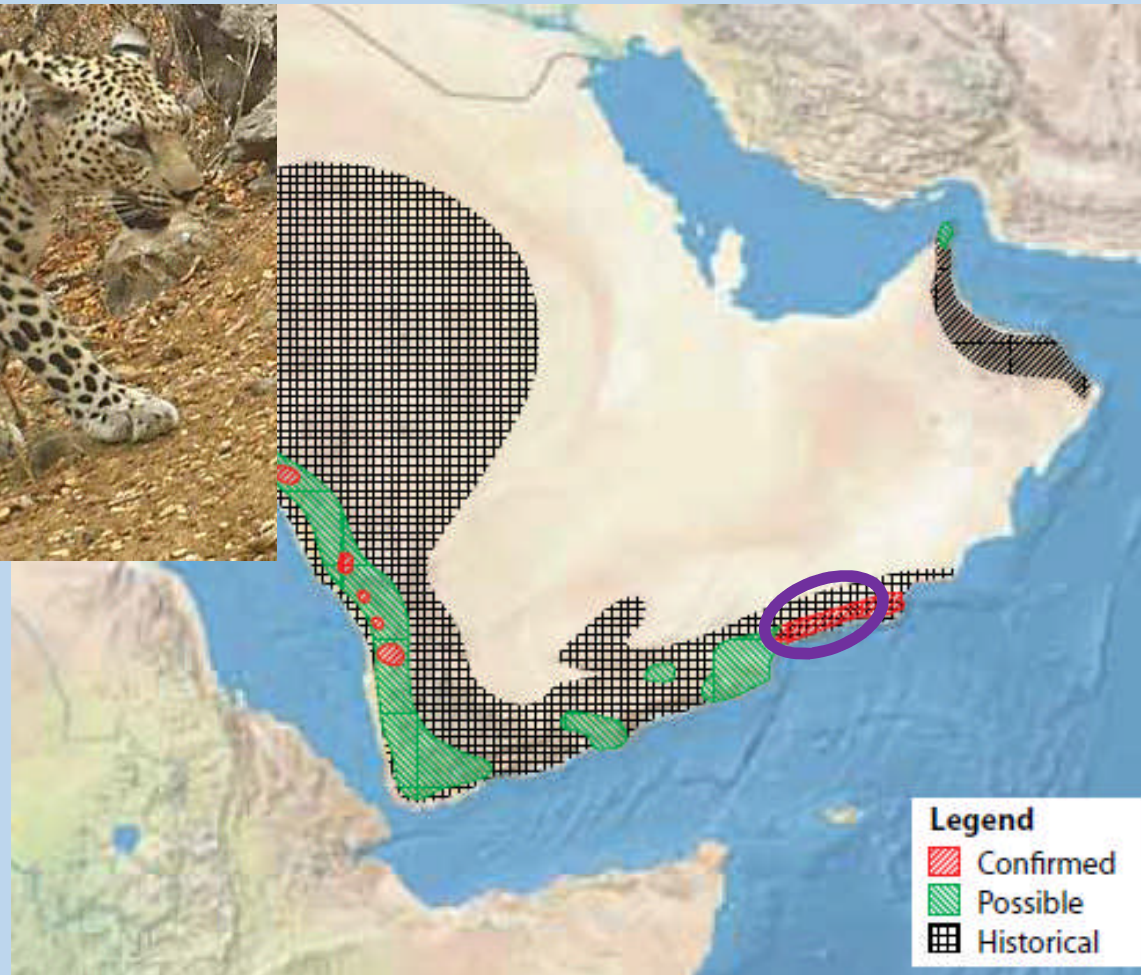
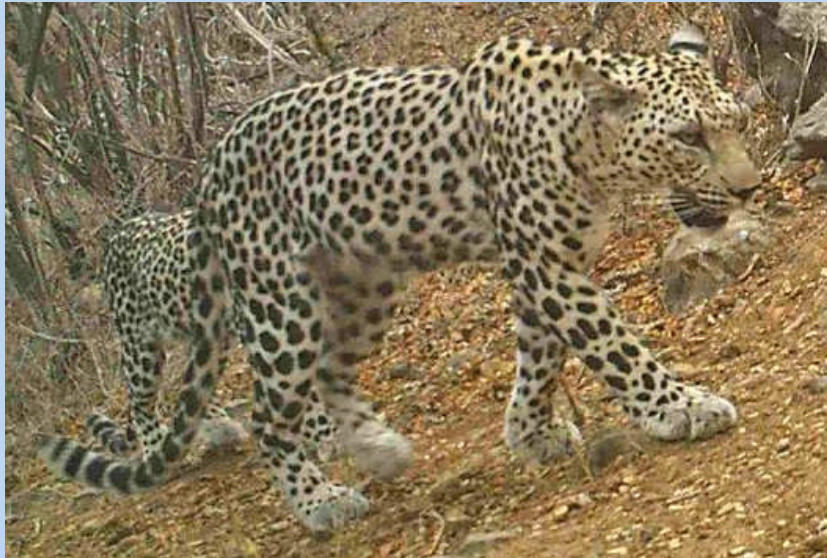
- Loss of biodiversity
- Does this correlate with loss of linguistic diversity?



Opportunities for mutual conservation?

Conservation of diversity

Arabian leopard **Critically Endangered**



Shehri (Jibbali)

'Severely Endangered'



Smoothtooth blacktip shark **Endangered**

Mehri **'Definitely Endangered'**

J014: *yīširek yā mbirōt* 'they used to make wind shelters'



Youtube video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBKQs2J6_eE&sns=em