

## Two remarkable people

### Keeping an eye on the health of our seas

You might be forgiven for thinking that Lewis Pugh is somewhat out of his mind, particularly since he once swam in water so cold at the North Pole that the cells in his fingers burst. The extreme swimmer then went on to almost drown while swimming in a glacial lake on Mount Everest because of the thin air, and more recently has become the first person to swim long distances across seven seas including the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Black Sea. His motive is crystal clear: to draw the attention of politicians and leaders to the degradation of the environment, particularly our oceans, before it is too late. Lewis would like to see the number of marine protected areas in the world increase from 3 per cent to 10 per cent in an attempt to reverse the damage caused by human activity such as overfishing, polluting and littering. During his expeditions, Lewis has witnessed this environmental destruction first-hand. He's swum over coral reefs bleached by the increase in water temperature, and observed underwater deserts beneath the shallow waters of the Red Sea, devoid of life and strewn with plastic. Pugh believes that nature can recover if it is given space to do so, but the clock is ticking. If we don't start looking after our seas, we may soon have an unsolvable problem on our hands.



### Hula-hooping for human rights

Wasfia Nazreen first came across a hula hoop as a young girl, when she saw a foreign child who was visiting her native Bangladesh playing with one. Wasfia reluctantly stood by and watched, as in her country it was believed that girls should not play with hula hoops or ride bikes. Now Wasfia is one of the few people in the world to have climbed the Seven Summits, including Everest and Kilimanjaro, and the first to have hula-hooped on each peak. Her reason for doing so: to empower women and girls in a country which discourages them from doing sport. Wasfia has dedicated her life to supporting human rights and has witnessed numerous international humanitarian projects in her homeland to educate and train women and girls, but once too often they have been left with nothing when such projects have stopped running. Wasfia saw that Bangladesh needed to stand up for itself and so she brought together two of her passions, mountaineering and human rights, in order to try and change attitudes towards women in her country. She originally took up climbing while working on humanitarian campaigns in Tibet and Nepal, as in a coastal, primarily flat country like Bangladesh most people have never set eyes on a mountain. Her campaign seems to be doing the trick as fellow countrymen and women are sitting up and taking notice along with the rest of the world.

