

Editorial

Welcome to the fourth issue of *Mediz* e-newsletter, produced by the Seychelles National Parks Authority (SNPA).

This issue consists of articles related to the various activities implemented by the Authority in the last few months and includes two articles from the Veuve Reserve.

An 'SNPA in Action' page has been added to this issue, which include photos from some activities that SNPA has taken part in, this year.

If you would like to contribute an article or suggest ways to improve the publication, please do so, as your support is welcome. Please contact Ms. Sylvanna Antha (s.antha@snpa.sc) for more details.

Happy Reading.

A successful flycatcher hatchling in the Veuve Reserve

The Veuve Reserve is delighted to announce the successful fledging of a Paradise flycatcher chick. The Seychelles Black Paradise Flycatcher (*Tersiphone corvina*) is a rare and endemic species to Seychelles. The nest was first spotted on the 24th May 2013 on a 'Porse' tree (*Cordia subcordata*). Daily nest monitoring was conducted to monitor the progress and activity of the birds in the nest. Both male and female were very active in the nest and the chick hatched on the 12th June.

The new chick was ringed on 28th June by SNPA staffs and it will be a while until we can ascertain whether it is male or female as the chick always has the mothers' colouring. This is a great success for Veuve Reserve and the conservation programme of this species.

The Seychelles Paradise Flycatcher are classified as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

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A turtle Festival for Seychelles

Seychelles first Turtle Festival was held on the Friday 9th and Saturday 10th of August 2013. The festival was brought about through an initiative of Global Vision International (GVI) and Marine Conservation Society of Seychelles, with the collaboration of key partners such as the Seychelles National Parks Authority, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of education – Eko School, Save our Seas Foundation, Four Seasons Resort and Wise Ocean, among others.

As part of the Festival, earlier in the year, an artwork, poetry and logo competition were launched in all schools, at both primary and secondary levels. Winners were awarded at the official opening of the festival, on the 9th August. Presentations were given as part of the opening ceremony and one of the guest speakers was SNPAs own Assistant Research Officer, Ms. Gilberte Gendron, who gave a short presentation on the laws protecting sea turtles.

The festival ended on Saturday with a film show which screened “The Incredible Journey”, an animated movie targeting school kids and their parents. In the afternoon various activities were organized on Beau Vallon beach, and these included face painting, quizzes, snorkeling and sale of food items, among others.

This activity was an initiative to raise awareness on the plight of sea turtles and how each individual can play their role to ensure protection of these endangered species.



Prize winners in a group photo with the Minister for Tourism; Mr. Alain St Ange



Neil Commettant reciting his poem at the opening ceremony



One of the winning artwork

Annual exhibition at Maritime Training centre

This September the Maritime Training centre (MTC) held its annual school exhibition at the school premises, at Providence. The exhibition once again coincided with the World Maritime week. It was opened on the 23rd September to the 27th September. Organisations working in marine conservation took part in this exhibition, as they have in previous years; and these included Island Conservation Society, Seychelles Coast Guard and Big Blue Dive Centre.



Secondary students visiting the exhibition



Ms. Tiva Uranie, SNPA Research Technician giving an explanation of tortoise monitoring to MTC student

Seychelles National Parks Authority took along some posters and brochures showcasing the different Marine National Parks and the work that is being carried out to conserve these habitats and their species. Vacant positions within the organisation, relevant to MTC students, were advertised. The exhibition attracted mostly secondary school students all over Mahe, mainly S3-S5 student who are in the process of making career choices. There was a lot of enthusiasm from students and a large number showed interested in following a career in the maritime sector.

‘Outsiders’ tree planting project in the Veuve Reserve

Tree planting is one of the activities that Outsiders Volleyball Sport Club players undertake in the Veuve Reserve every year, during their annual visit on La Digue Island. The aim of their activity is to demonstrate their contribution towards a deeper commitment to environment conservation, through planting of new trees.

This Tree Planting project was started back in 2009 and it is an annual event. It's now been 5 years, and these volleyball players have planted over 500 trees in the Veuve Reserve. So far the project has been very successful; the players have lots of fun carrying out the planting activities and are always looking forward to coming back the following year.

This years' tree planting took place on 13th July 2013, alongside the ‘La Mare Soupape’ Wetland, and a total of 89 trees were planted. Some of the trees planted were Takamaka , Badamier , Bonnen kare , Bwa torti , Bwa sousouri and some coconut trees. At the same time they learned about the importance of the forest environment for the ENDEMIC Seychelles Paradise Flycatcher.



Players undertaking tree planting tasks



Head Coach showing how fun tree planting is (left)



Player tending to planted tree (right)



Players planting trees along the trail



Group photos with Veuve Reserve staffs

Turtle festival Family Fun Day

As part of the first edition of the turtle festival, a family fun day was organised at Beau Vallon beach. The rendezvous was announced for noon, however, by ten in the morning the organisers and participating organisations were setting up their stalls, displays, artworks, educational materials, to name a few.

SNPA & GVI staff making turtle tracks for education activities



The National Parks Authority staffs joined up with Global Vision International to set up a stall which was offering painting activities, quiz and for the education enthusiasts; the reproduction of turtle tracks in various circumstances such as emergence stopped by obstacles, poaching, and even a turtle laying. In addition turtle monitoring equipments were on display which enabled the general public to learn how the emergence is recorded, how to identify the turtle species, how to tag a turtle and how to measure tracks and turtles.

Walking down the promenade, one could purchase turtle shaped cupcakes from Four Season hotel stand or Academy by the sea stall, then walk around to appreciate the informative displays and presentations about sea turtles prepared by various organisations such as Marine Conservation Society Seychelles, Darros Research Centre / Save our Seas foundation, Seychelles Island Foundation, Ministry of Environment and Energy and others. The afternoon ended with kids participating in a sand castle competition.

Experience of students on work attachment with SNPA

Sixteen-year-old Derrick Cupidon is in Secondary 5 at Belonie secondary school. Since Secondary 4 he has opted for the Technical Vocational Education Training (TIVET) program, whereby he had the chance to join the Maritime Training Center (MTC). He would like to work at sea, and this is one of the reasons why during his second year on the program he chose Seychelles National Parks Authority (SNPA) as the organisation where he would do his placement. Heron Morel is also sixteen-year-old and in Secondary 5 at Anse Royale secondary school. He is following the same program as Derrick. Heron is planning to further his studies at the MTC upon completion of his secondary



schooling, as he would like to become a professional diver.

Derrick Cupidon and Heron Morel

They both had the opportunity to join the Operation Section of the SNPA. They were attached to the section from January till September this year. They attended school on Mondays and Tuesdays to undertake academic classes such as English, French and Mathematics. The rest of the week they assumed duty at SNPA as the vocational part of their course, whereby they joined the staff to get hands on practice.

During the attachment Derrick and Heron were assigned different tasks so as to broaden their knowledge and skills. This included assisting rangers in the field to conduct patrol in the marine parks; retrieving fish trap within the parks boundary, navigation and also selling tickets to boat charters at both Cap Ternay and Ste Anne. On other occasion they lent a hand in maintenance work such as boat repair and painting. They learned a bit of mechanic on boat engines; as well as chainsaws from the forestry section. Derrick got to perfect his splicing skills learnt at MTC and they also were taught how to tie knots like bowline, while assisting in setting up mooring buoys.

Additional to their daily routine, Derrick and Heron got to participate in a trip to Recif Island with the University of Seychelles students. On a few occasions they also got to help out the Forestry section to paint the forestry office at Sans Soucis and kiosk on the trail, undertook maintenance of the boardwalk at Vacoas trail, Barbarons, and also participated in tree cutting.

They are currently working at the Seychelles Coast Guard till the end of the year. However, both students stated that their work at SNPA has been a very rewarding and enriching experience, one they will not forget, especially the raft race organised by GVI which Derricks team won. Derrick also added that he would like to work at SNPA after he has completed his studies at MTC.

SNPA in Action

1. The Raft race competition organised by Global Vision International and won by Seychelles National Parks Authority



2. Tortoise Monitoring Training – Curieuse Island



3. Clean up the World Campaign - Seychelles National Parks Authority partnered up with Ste Anne Resort to clean up turtle nesting beaches on Ste Anne



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