



VAMIZI NEWS

ISSUE NO.1 AUGUST 2012



Welcome to our first Vamizi Island Newsletter. We hope it will give you an interesting insight into the conservation work we do here on Vamizi as well as many of our community projects. We would also like to introduce our charitable trust – The Friends of Vamizi – which supports and funds much of this vital work. Please read on for more details.

The Friends of Vamizi Trust aims to work with Vamizi Lodge staff and guests to relieve poverty, provide education and create sustainable sources of income for the island's communities as working to protect the precious and delicate marine seascape and sea life of Northern Mozambique.

Vamizi Island Lodge, and Cabo Delgado Biodiversity and Tourism Ltd, the Mozambican company behind it, have long been dedicated to supporting both community and conservation on Vamizi. The Friends of Vamizi Trust has brought all this valuable work under one umbrella for the first time and will enable staff and guests of Vamizi Island to support these vital projects.

Working in the unique and unspoilt Quirimbas Archipelago, it is essential that we understand the social and ecological responsibilities we have. We must understand and support the needs of the community and conservation on the island as well as the commercial aspects of the Lodge and Private Villas in order to deliver lasting success for the island as a whole.

The Friends of Vamizi Trust is working in cooperation with the Mozambican Government to offer ideas and support to help implement the sustainable development of the island and the region, including access to medical service and education through a dedicated team of community workers on Vamizi, as well as on the mainland.

Our aims are: To develop alternative and sustainable sources of income. To support market access for local associations. To improve the infrastructure of the region, and To provide a variety of education programmes for Vamizi.

If you would like to be a friend of Vamizi send an email friendsofvamizi@vamizi.com or talk to our Community Project Manager on the island.

Our website is currently being developed but will shortly be live.

The Friends of Vamizi Trust:
UK Charity Commission Reg. 1147351. ■

MEASURING BEACH PROFILES

As part of our erosion control project we've been measuring beach profiles for the last few months, using 35 measuring points along 11km of beach between the dive centre and the picnic site in Muntu Nkulu.

Most of the sand on Vamizi's beaches is calcareous and produced on the surrounding reefs. Sand is fluid and understanding its movement allows us to monitor the health of the reef. The reef, the marine life that lives on it, and the beach are intrinsically linked - one Parrot Fish can produce up to 1,000 lbs of sand a year so imagine the impact on the beach if Parrot Fish numbers significantly drop from overfishing. ■



VAMIZI TURTLE NESTING SEASON

Before the construction of the Lodge, turtle meat and shell was traded by fishermen around Vamizi. Today, Vamizi is a major centre for turtle conservation with high numbers of nesting turtles, good hatchling success rates and beach fidelity (turtles returning to the same beach).

Every year around 200 nests are laid between Comisette and Muntu Nkulu beaches. The peak months are usually February and March when it is not unusual to get between 30 and 40 nests each month. This year our friends seem to be a little late but we expect to be getting a lot more nests in the next few weeks. ■

We hope that during your stay you can see a turtle laying eggs: just cross your fingers, our monitors will be watching out for them.

During March, more than 120 Hawksbill hatchlings were rescued and released into the sea after they emerged from their nests during the day. This is very unusual behaviour, as turtle hatchlings usually emerge at night or at dawn.

Daytime is a dangerous time for hatchlings as they are exposed to a hot sun and possible predators. The Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) is considered by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as a critically endangered species and it is uncommon to find them nesting on Vamizi – so we are thrilled that they are here! ■



ADOPT A SHARK!

WWF needs your help to support the study of the much endangered but harmless Grey reef sharks.

Please visit the Dive Centre or speak with a member of WWF staff to see how you can adopt a shark and so contribute to the essential research into these beautiful animals. ■



EXPLORING THE REEF

In the end of May ten very excited school children from the Vamizi Primary School arrived together with their teacher at the Lodge Dive Center. They had won the Nature Quiz in the school, where they were taught by Stanley Phiri (Community and Conservation Liaison Officer of the Vamizi island Lodge) about the local marine ecology.

The dive team issued snorkels, fins and masks and the children bounded onto the dive boat. As most of the children in

the community never learnt how to swim they were equipped with life vests and were each guided by volunteers. Teaching children how to swim is one of the projects the recently registered Friends of Vamizi Trust is focusing on.

The children enjoyed the abundance of fish and colourful coral in the community run sanctuary, which was implemented in 2008. The Vamizi WWF Project is guiding the CCP, a local institution managing the "No-take"-Zone to ensure sustainable use of marine resources.

The snorkelling was such a success that the children did not want to return to the boat. Later on each child presented to their class mates. The whole project is guided by

the concept that we only learn to protect what we can understand and know.

Thank you to the Lodge Managers, the Dive Team, the volunteers and the Vamizi School who made this possible. ■



WOMEN'S GROUP "NOVA FAMILIA" ON EDUCATION MISSION

Fifteen ladies from one of the three Women's Groups on Vamizi Island, the "Nova Familia" ('New Family' in Portuguese), recently went to the mainland town of Mocimboa da Praia to spread the word about the Vamizi Project, and Natural Resource Management practised on the island. The Lodge funded the local Capulanas (the sarong like traditional

cloth used for skirts and head scarfs) and branded 'Vamizi Island' T-Shirts.

In Mocimboa, they organized shows with dancing and theatre to help explain Vamizi Island, the activities of the CCP and the sustainable fishing techniques used; for example, avoiding small-purse fishing nets. The four day trip to schools, clinics and public places was filmed by a local camera team, which was funded by the Lodge. The film will be used as a fund-raising opportunity for the Friends of Vamizi Charitable Trust. ■

COCONUTS, PETISCOS, DANCING AND SINGING IN THE COMMUNITY



On July 16th three cars with guests departed the Lodge to go to the island village "Aldeia de Vamizi" to spend an afternoon together with the Community.

On arrival, crowds of children from the Primary School performed a variety of cultural dances providing an insight into their Mwani culture. Kimwani is the local language for a majority of the ethnic groups living on Vamizi and on the Cabo Delgado coastline.

Nigel Gray, a generous funder of the Vamizi School which was inaugurated opened in October 2011 and is now formally run by the Mozambican government, was delighted to have the



CONSERVATION MONITORS

The WWF conservation team has eight Conservation Monitors whose main task is to patrol the beaches in order to mark and protect turtle nests. Initially the title was Turtle Monitors but as the roles developed including the replanting of dunes, educating the Community about practical garbage disposal and many more additional responsibilities, their title was upgraded to Conservation Monitor.

Further to this, the Provincial Director of the Fisheries Research Institute travelled to Vamizi to train this team on how to analyse the local fisherman's catches which provides essential feedback for the CCP to monitor and control sizes and species being extracted. ■

opportunity to visit the school and see the benefits that his donation had achieved. Guests also experienced The Women's Association "Wanawaka wa Vamizi" ("The Women of Vamizi") cultural concert whilst enjoying fresh coconuts and sweet "petiscos" ("snacks") made from coconut and peanut flour.

These women also showed guests how they weave the local baskets and carpets that can be found in the lodge shop or purchased directly from the Cultural Centre. ■

PRISTINE BEACHES

Every two weeks the Vamizi Lodge staff members give up some of their time to keep our beaches clean. The tide brings in a surprising amount of flotsam and jetsam throughout the year, particularly to the south of the island, and including the occasional well-travelled flip-flop from the main land. It's an enjoyable and useful exercise in team building as well an important social responsibility. ■

