



VAMIZI NEWS

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The University at Pemba regularly sends students and staff out to Vamizi to work with the WWF on a variety of innovative research projects.

In October, Ms. Olinda Mulesiua began a survey into the Samango monkey. With significant technical advice from Mr. Stanley Phiri and the help of the WWF Conservation Monitors, she walked transects throughout Vamizi Island counting monkeys they encountered. The data, when analysed, will show numbers, distribution and composition of each troop.

We also had Ms. Bibiana Nassongole studying the species richness and relative abundance of reef fish inside and outside the island's Marine Sanctuary, using video census techniques. Overfishing severely depletes coral reefs and a healthy ecosystem such as Vamizi's can be used to export larvae and move adult fish to unprotected areas to replenish stocks. On the right are pictures of a healthy and biodiverse section of reef (top) that can be seen at Vamizi, and a depleted reef (bottom). ■





DHOWS TAKE THE LOAD

Five years ago the island stopped using the old government barge as the cargo transporter and since then we have been turning to Dhows as our cargo solution. This age-old method has proved to be invaluable as we move anything from lodge supplies, building materials and machinery, to tractors. Over \$15,000 a month goes into the surrounding dhow owner community in the form of hire charges. Loads can cost from \$150 for four tonnes, up to \$1200 for fifteen tonnes. ■

STABILISING THE SAND DUNES

Climate change is a reality and along with it exists the threat of rising sea levels. The WWF are taking action now to protect and maintain a healthy primary dune system. A well vegetated primary dune serves a number of important functions. Firstly, a dense covering of vegetation that includes ground-creeping species such as Ipomoea, helps 'bind' the sand. Secondly, grasses and low shrubs provide a habitat for a range of animal species. The result is a stable dune that acts as a physical barrier to the rising sea, especially on a spring tide. WWF is actively planting a combination of plant species on any denuded primary dunes as well as removing some Casuarina trees whose acidic pine needles inhibit the growth of other vegetation. ■



BAD: Low density vegetation requiring WWF intervention. ■



GOOD: A stable and well vegetated primary dune in front of a lodge villa. This is a mixture of ground-creeping species and grasses. ■

24 HR SECURITY

No need for alarm bells: security on Vamizi is more about ensuring conservation rules are abided by, rather than dealing with any form of criminal activity. The Vamizi security team has a new contact station (pictured right) and the team has various fields of responsibility including conservation, access and ensuring island life is uninterrupted and peaceful. ■



ENDANGERED SPECIES



Napoleon Wrasse (Cheilinus Undulatus)

Diving in the waters around Vamizi, you are likely to encounter any number of endangered species; Bumphead Parrotfish, Napoleon Wrasses, Potato Groupers and several types of shark. In order to gather

basic data on these sightings, the WWF team has designed a data entry sheet to be completed on return to the dive centre. From this data, which will record tides, weather conditions and seasons, amongst other things, the team will be able to build a picture of when and where certain species are present, and in the long term these trends can be used to determine the conditions in which these species thrive. The data has only been collected for the past four months, so it is very early days, but results have shown that the Napoleon Wrasse is the most frequently encountered endangered species. The Bumphead Parrotfish have been seen less frequently,

but in larger groups. One of the world's top 10 dive sites, Neptune's Arm, contains the highest number of endangered species, followed by Papagaio and Canal Walk. Neptune's Arm is also the only place that grey sharks have been sighted, and these are mostly female. A Manta Ray has been spotted in the shallow waters of the north shore and most excitingly, in October a Dugong was recorded. We had thought Dugong were extinct locally but this individual may have come across from the Comoros where a very small population still exists. Not surprisingly the Green Turtle, the flagship species of Vamizi, are the most common sighting. ■

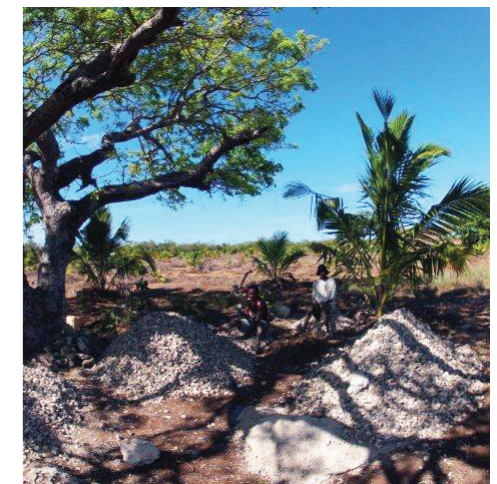
ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

There is already plenty to do on Vamizi, but we felt that a tennis court would be a great addition. The foundations were laid in December with stone from the island provided by forty small "stone factories".

The idea was to spread the earnings throughout the island and pay is good – stone crushers sometimes go on a spending spree after payday, so we paid different quarries on different days to

keep production flowing! Key to the project was the recent arrival of the tractor which came by boat, and the 160kg compactor which came by plane.

The team leader was a mason from Zimbabwe who has experience in the technicalities of building tennis courts. 80% of this cost (c. \$25,000) went into the community in just 2 months. ■





“WE ARE TAKING ON NEW RESPONSIBILITIES IN OUR LIFE”

The role of women in African society is traditionally limited to housework and childcare. Empowering women and enabling them to earn money ensures that community development is progressive. With this in mind, the Community Department on Vamizi has established 4 women’s groups on the island. We asked two members of “Nova familia”, one of the most successful groups, about the effect on their lives; they replied “..We feel transformed in our role as women in our society, it has opened our eyes. Normally we have to ask our husbands to buy us

things, now we can buy what we need for our families ourselves. It gives us a good feeling to know that we have money to take our children to hospital when the husband is away. This makes us very proud”. But would empowering women irritate the men? The women respond with a resounding “No!” They laugh and say, “We buy them presents now! Our society is a fishing society. So if there is bad weather and the men cannot fish, before we had to stay hungry. Now there is a second income and some sort of security.” The association earned \$7,500 in 2012. ■



WWF GROWS INDIGENOUS PLANTS FOR THE PRIVATE VILLAS

As islands go, Vamizi has very few non-indigenous or invasive plant species and we aim to keep it that way. In fact Vamizi has a unique flora including species uncommon in Mozambique. To maintain this philosophy and to keep the island as natural as possible, the welcome decision has been made to prohibit the introduction of non-indigenous plant species. WWF has started to develop a plant nursery to grow indigenous plants to supply the lodge and private villas. The WWF staff collect specimens, take cuttings and grow a wide range of Vamizi’s loveliest plants from seed in this nursery. ■



ASHA SUMAILI: PRESIDENT OF THE WOMEN’S ASSOCIATION “NOVA FAMILIA”

Asha, (pictured left in the blue dress) grew up in Palma, on the mainland, but came to Vamizi in 2000. She is married to the Ulanza village headman and they have four children. She says, “I came to Vamizi together with my husband who is a fisherman. Palma had a lot of fishermen in that year, so we needed to move and find other fishing grounds. Here we learned from the Maluane Project [now the Vamizi Conservation Project] how to fish in a sustainable way and how to improve our livelihoods.” The association “Nova familia” was founded in 2007 as an education and theatre group. “In 2010 we saw that other women’s groups were making money

from their activities, so we approached the Lodge and asked if there are other opportunities for us to earn money.” The group began by supplying vegetables, then in 2011 a Vamizi shareholder kindly donated four sewing machines and a local tailor taught the twelve women how to sew. As well as producing sewn products for the Lodge shop, the association has made many of the pillows covers now used in the Lodge. “From the money we earned we have bought a piece of land now, which we are restructuring as our cultural centre. It is a whole new experience for us, that we women can build our own house and have our own piece of land”. ■