

CHUMBE ISLAND CORAL PARK NEWSLETTER, JANUARY 2009



Chumbe Island Main Building

Happy New Year to you from our Island Paradise in the Indian Ocean! It has been a very exciting year for me as the "new" Project Manager and as always we have been busy with many conservation and education projects. 2008 has also been the 10th Anniversary Season for the eco-tourism activities on Chumbe Island and the June-issue of our newsletter was specifically designated to our anniversary. More news on what has happened within the past six months below...

Enjoy your reading!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Frida Lanshammar".

Frida Lanshammar, Project Manager

Team developments

It has been a busy period in for the Chumbe team, with many new arrivals and departures. Ali Amour, our accountant since February, has left and in his place came a newly graduated accountant from Pemba – Shuwekha Omar. She has been training hard and we are very pleased to have her on our team. Sadick Magwiza (Chumbe lodge manager from 2001-2005) could not resist the temptation to return to Chumbe after 2 1/2 years working in different lodges on the mainland. He is now our General Admin Assistant, replacing David Murphy who left to pursue further education in Dar es Salaam in September. The education department has finally found a new full time coordinator, Neema Mungure. She started in September and has already arranged more than 20 school trips to the island.

On the island we have a new assistant head chef, Leonard Kataimala, who is an excellent cook and brightens the Chumbe restaurant with his delicious recipes as well as his smile. Jaku Abdalla, on of the guiding rangers, left this November to continue his studies in India. He is replaced by Juma Nassir who has been a spare ranger for almost one year. Adela Timiza, who has been working within the housekeeping department since the very beginning has just left Zanzibar to move with her family to Mozambique, and our new house keeper and staff cook, Khadija Iddi Khamis, is busy learning everything she must know to perform her new job.

A few days after Christmas, the Chumbe Office received very sad news. Sophia Emmanuel, one of our housekeeping ladies since many years had passed away after a few weeks suffering from a serious infection. Many from the Chumbe Team attended her funeral and all staff donated money to her family to ease their sufferings in a very hard time. Sophia is terribly missed on the island and we will keep her in our memories for many years to come. Her remaining family will always be part of the Chumbe family and we will do our best to look after them also in the future. No permanent replacement has been found yet.

As always we arranged a special staff awards day in the beginning of January to encourage the hard working team both in the office and on the island. For 2008 the "Exceptional Employee of the Year" awards went to Magda, Mwanahawa, Yussuf Hamadi and Mohamed. Godfrey Mloka was awarded as the Exceptional Manager of 2008 for his great



Yussuf Hamadi, Magda and Mohamed with their staff award certificates.

work of keeping the Chumbe Island team together as a family.

Staff training

CHICOP tries its best to keep training and education all staff members within their special areas of interest. During the past 6 months we have arranged work experience placements for John King (Head Chef), Mwanahawa (Cook) and Mgomwi (Cook) at other hotels and restaurants in Zanzibar. Two of the rangers (Jaku and Rashid) used the month of Ramadan to attend a special training course in fire fighting, rescuing and survival techniques arranged by the Maritime Institute in Dar es Salaam.

Two volunteers, Nicole and Lotte, have come to the office and to the island to give swimming lessons to the female staff and this had been much appreciated! They have also been helping out with the education trips for schoolchildren to the island.



Hamisuu and Magda enjoying swimming lessons after work at Mbwani Ruins.

During 6 weeks in August and September we also had the pleasure of having a volunteer from Slovenia with us to teach the staff more English. She writes the following about her time with Chumbe;

“This summer I got the amazing opportunity to spend a couple of weeks on the magical Chumbe. I came on the island as a volunteer in order to teach English. What an experience! The island itself is pure paradise, offering everything you could possibly want, and on top of that it has the most incredible staff. My students – the staff on the island and at the office in Zanzibar – were simply the best. They were not only eager to improve their English, but also wanted to learn about the world, share ideas and grow as people. Their enthusiasm was infectious...and I learned a lot as well. The classes were simply delightful - we had them every day for two weeks, first with the students on the island, later at the office. Then followed the examination and graduation day. I was very happy to give them their certificates



Sasha with some of her students on the island

for their hard work and was glad to see that their English improved and that they gained more confidence. I hope that they continue learning. For me, this voyage was certainly one of a kind. To do something for people who really appreciate it, on a destination of my dreams - not many people get to experience that. Again, thank you to all the Chumbe chicks and lads – I will never forget you! I will try to hurry back..."

Saša Suhadolnik

International conferences

Both the Conservation Co-ordinator and the Project Manger have been busy attending a number of international conferences to present papers related to Chumbe. One paper and one poster were presented at the 11th International Coral Reef Symposium in Florida in July. The eco-friendly technology was presented by Frida at the "World Water Week in Stockholm" in Sweden in August, and Anders show-cased Chumbe as an example of sustainable tourism at the "Eco-Tourism and Sustainable Tourism Conference" in Canada in October. The eco-tourism concept and the experiences from Chumbe Island have also been presented at two conferences arranged in Tanzania - the "International Conference on Tourism and Poverty Alleviation" in Zanzibar in October and at the "Travellers' Philanthropy Conference" in Arusha in December. It is very encouraging that Chumbe often is invited to present our case at events like these to share our experiences with the rest of the world.

Assistant Managers' day out

Chumbe's assistant managers had a day out to experience some of the other activities that are offered to people who visit Zanzibar – the **Safari Blue** experience. They were able to explore the splendour of Kwale island where they spent the day dolphin watching, ngalawa sailing and to wind up the beautiful day they went snorkelling by the shores of Kwale's amazing sandbar.



Chumbe's assistant managers on Kwale

Internships on Chumbe

CHICOP was honoured to host two interns/researchers from Tumaini University Iringa College for three months. John Msaki and Bahati Komba came to Chumbe and Zanzibar for an internship and to conduct research on the education program. The two researchers were resourceful to

Chumbe, and their input was much appreciated. We are still waiting for the outcome of their research.

International Awards

Chumbe has during the past 6 months been selected a finalist in two prestigious international awards for Eco-Tourism destinations. The Director attended an award ceremony in Washington DC in October for the "Geo-Tourism Challenge 2008" as one of 15 global finalist selected by National Geographic and the Ashoka's Changemakers. Only a month later Chumbe was selected as one of the finalists in the "EcoTrophea Award 2008" by the DRV (Deutsche



Reise Verbund). The motivation for selecting Chumbe was; "for the development of an eco-resort that aims at protecting a local coral reef and creates awareness among both visitors and islanders, about conservation of nature and the environment". More information about the Geotourism Challenge and the Ecotrophea award can be found on; www.drv.de/index.php?id=745 and on <http://www.changemakers.net:80/competition/geotourism>.



The Director, Sibylle Riedmiller receiving the Geo-Tourism Challenge in Washington DC

Entertainment on the island

Starting in October, we have on several occasions invited two traditional musicians from Stonetown to entertain on the Island. Guests have enjoyed the local sounds while watching the sunset and sipping the famous Chumbe cocktails. This will become a regular event, with Christmas and New Year's this year marking the beginning of a new Chumbe tradition. On the activity front, visitors are also encouraged to go sailing with our experienced rangers on the Chumbe Ngalawa (a traditional tri-maran sailing boat), to watch the sunset or simply enjoy the seafaring skills of our rangers.

Education

Thanks to the new education programme coordinator, Neema, there has been an increase in the number of



Khamis Khalfan giving a "taka taka" talk to the students.

school trips in the last six months. Since July there have been a total of 28 educational trips to the island. More than 320 students and around 40 teachers have received training in marine ecology and environmental knowledge and in addition to the normal school trips – the education department has also invited groups of local fishermen to the island. These trips have been carried out together with the Dept. of Fisheries. The team have also been working on an information package for local fishermen, to explain in plain language about the importance of coral reefs and protected areas for managing fisheries sustainable. The information package is in the process of being translated into Ki-Swahili, and will be used for our upcoming consultations with local fishing committees.

The Chumbe Challenge Award is in to its second year with new schools participating and we are looking forward to see their portfolios at the end of the season.



Rangers and maintenance personnel placing the southern buoy.

Conservation

Two of the three demarcation buoys have been re-positioned in their proper place. The third buoy has been found unsuited for the rough conditions outside the reef, so we are in the process of building a bigger buoy, and a stronger mooring. The new buoy will be put in its proper position as soon as possible. This buoy is important in order to keep the ferry traffic between Zanzibar Town and Dar es Salaam away from the reef.

During a dive to ensure that the new buoy moorings were well in place, it was also discovered that some research equipment, put on the Chumbe reef by researchers from the Institute for Marine Sciences (IMS), had broken. This poses a danger to the corals, as broken equipment can physically damage corals when carried by waves. IMS researchers were informed and they repaired the equipment.

Our reef monitoring program started its 3rd season this year. Half the data for this season have been collected, including data from our new reference site on Tele reef. It is yet



Rosanna and Dom studying sea urchins on Chumbe

too early to draw conclusions from the data, except that everything seems to be stable – the way we want it. In addition, we continue to monitor one of our seagrass beds in the intertidal area, and report the survey data to the international SeagrassNET program, which has also now provided us with very nice new temperature and light loggers.

Our two urchin research projects are also progressing well. Urchin predation was studied in August by two Scottish volunteers, Rosanna and Dom, and their research has been continued and expanded in



Orange striped triggerfish *Balistapus undulatus* feasting on a diadema urchin

November by an American SIT student, Caroline. Results are now very strong, showing that urchins are predated upon more in the protected area than outside. The only urchin predator we have observed is the orange-striped triggerfish, which unfortunately is a target species for the local fishery. This is likely to mean that there is little or no predation on sea urchins on the other reefs around Zanzibar town, because there are no fish left of this particular species. A second SIT student also conducted research on Chumbe in November, by mapping the coral cover and coral genera in the same areas used by our monitoring programme. As that

is not currently included in the monitoring programme, this piece of research is a valuable contribution to the baseline information we have for the status of Chumbe's corals. In addition to urchin predation, we are testing the effects of manual urchin removal, both in the Chumbe MPA and in adjacent areas. This is a long-term study, and results will only be available in the middle of 2009.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, during which Allah is said to have revealed the first verses of the Qur'an to Muhammad. It is a month of fasting for Muslims, where nothing may pass their lips between sunrise and sunset. This causes problems for the Rangers as some water will always be imbibed when snorkelling with our guests. Hence a Chumbe tradition has started, of having two (non-Muslim) volunteer rangers work with us during the month of Ramadan - to continue the guided snorkelling tours. This Ramadan, Chumbe enlisted the help of Tadzio Bervoets from St. Maarten and Lindsay Sullivan from the UK. Both were excellent swimmers, very knowledgeable about the marine environments, and wonderful



Lindsey and Tadzio cleaning snorkels on Chumbe

additions to the Chumbe team. In addition to conducting the snorkelling tours, they helped the conservation department begin its research into the effects of removing some of the numerous sea urchins on the reef. CHICOP is very grateful for their services.

Here ends our news from the last six months of 2008. We want to thank you for your support of the project and to welcome you back again.

This letter comes with all our best wishes for 2009 and you will be updated in June with our latest news.

Best wishes

The Chumbe Team