

# Chumbe Island News

## July – January 2007

Warm greetings to you all from the Chumbe team 2006. As the year is coming to an end we would like to take this opportunity to share some of our conservation and education projects from the past six months.

This has been a busy period with lots of activity and many happy and contented guests. The team has welcomed new staff and completed many interesting projects. Chumbe Island moves from strength to strength and that is all thanks to the wonderful staff and all our visitors.

Enjoy the news and welcome back to Chumbe.....



**Reef**

© Frida Lanshammar

...introducing **Frida** our new conservation co-ordinator



**Frida** © Mikala Peters

I came to Chumbe for the first time more or less exactly three years ago – as a master student from Uppsala University in Sweden. After spending three months on the reefs around Chumbe and some of the other islands in the area I was amazed by their beauty and determined to return again one day. I did come down to Zanzibar and Chumbe again, as supervisor for a course in Integrated Coastal Zone Management in December last year, and it was just as wonderful as I remembered it My background is marine science as well as environmental engineering. To work with the Chumbe team feels like a great honour and I really look forward to the tasks ahead of me.

....and **Mansour** our new environmental education co-ordinator and Frida's assistant

I am Mansour Mshauri, holding a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Management from the Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania. Since the middle of October I joined Chumbe Island, my work is to coordinate the education programme and to assist Frida with the conservation programme. I am so proud to work in such a successful eco-project as Chumbe. The staff here are so kind, friendly, enthusiastic and committed to their jobs. Karibuni Chumbe!



© Peter Hanneberg

**Mansour**

..... and a fond farewell to **Mikala** who is leaving us to return to Australia

“Chumbe Island is a dream workplace for every marine biologist. And I have been so lucky to have lived this dream for the past year and a half! Every day on the island, I had the opportunity to be inspired by Chumbe’s pristine coral reef and unique forest reserve; observing fascinating species such as octopus, turtles, barracuda, dolphins, coconut crabs, roseate terns, fish eagles... the list is endless! But Chumbe was not only about the fish and the birds... most importantly, it was a place where I made friendships with wonderful people, who welcomed me so warmly into this beautiful part of the world! I want to thank the Chumbe team so very much for filling my life in Zanzibar with joy and happiness! I will always remember you all and will definitely come back one day... tutaonana tena!”



**Mikala**

© Frida Lanshammar

### **Education news.....**

The Chumbe Education Programme has indeed been busy over the past six months. A total of 5 groups from 3 schools involving 66 children have visited Chumbe during this time, and some other types of trips have also been arranged. Our volunteer Education Advisor Kendra Collier describes the trip that was arranged during the last ZIFF (Zanzibar International Film Festival) event in July.

*“Chumbe Island was the venue for one of the activities for the ZIFF Children’s Panorama 2006. The activity involved 13 students from different schools and two*



**ZIFF**

© Kendra Collier

*volunteers from ZANGOC (Zanzibar non government organisation cluster) Youth Centre. We were also lucky to have the ZIFF Program Administrator, BiHinda Ajmy, accompany us. The theme for the day was Environmental Protection and was led by Khamis Khalfan, CHICOP Education Ranger.*

*Most of the students that attended this event had been selected after participating in an environmental competition held at ZANGOC Youth Centre. They had been asked to make instruments from rubbish, thus*

*demonstrating one way of re-cycling. The winning entries were given the opportunity to visit Chumbe Island to see first hand active environmental protection.*

In the middle of September the Education Ranger Khamis Khalfan went together with Kendra and Makame Fadili (Boat Ranger) to the Misali Island Conservation Area, Pemba, for two days to train their rangers in safety procedure techniques for snorkelling excursions and school trips. Khamis describes their visit as follows:

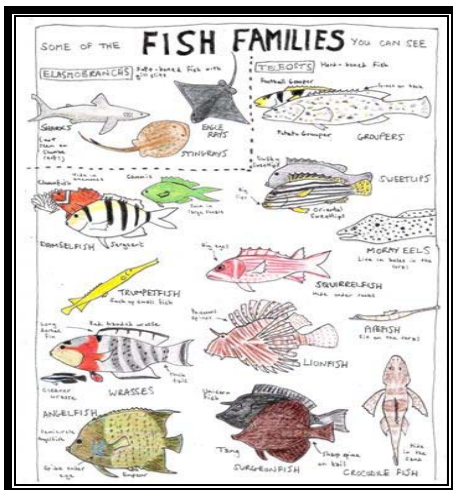


**Misali**

© Kendra Collier

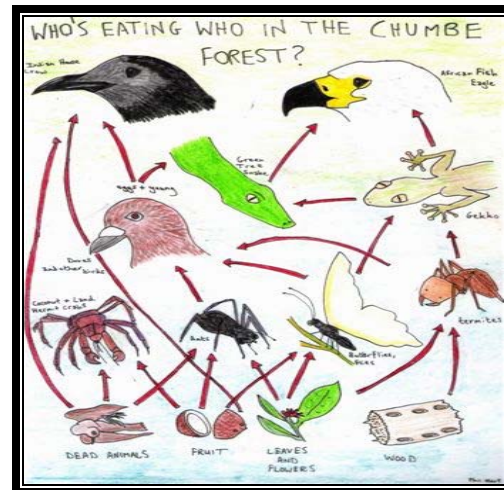
*“A total of 25 students (boys and girls) of different education levels from Mtambile Sec.School had been invited to visit Misali to receive environmental education and the Chumbe team joined the day to share their experiences from working with the education programme on Chumbe for many years. They gave advice concerning the student education programme as well as safety procedures while snorkelling, guidance skills while in the water and other discussion recommendation and problem solving strategies.*

*After the visit to Misali the Chumbe team came up with some suggestions for how the education programme in Misali could be improved and this included that a classroom should be built and that more training should be given to the rangers”*



**Education board (1)**

© Phil Hurt



**Education board (2)**

© Phil Hurt

In July and August the Chumbe office and island had the pleasure of hosting two English volunteers, Zara Polden and Phil Hurt, to teach English language to the staff as well as up-dating our educational notice boards on the island. Phil spent many hours concentrating on his wonderful drawings for the Chumbe Island Notice boards containing information about fish, forest food web, general coral ecology etc. They can all be seen in the education centre on the island.

In the afternoon of November 23<sup>rd</sup> five of the Chumbe rangers and Frida, the new conservation coordinator attended a life rescue training course with a special focus on rescue training in water. The course was set up on the initiative from the IST Elementary School in Dar es Salam with the special purpose of training rangers from both Chumbe Island and Misali Island as well as staff from IST – all working with children and education programmes related to different water activities.



© Frida Lanshammar

### **Omari and Rashid, rescue training**

The schedule for the course was very tough, with one full day on the classroom and half a day in the swimming pool. The skills learned included both primary and secondary care and all participants trained how to give CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), rescue breathing, how to handle serious bleeding and shock as well as basic first aid such as bandaging and splinting.

It was an interesting experience and all participants learnt a lot from these hours in the pool. By the end of the day all participants got their diplomas and the Chumbe team returned back on the ferry to Zanzibar as fully trained “Emergency First Aid Responders”.

### **Conservation news.....**

The conservation department has also been busy over the past six months. We are really proud and happy to be able to share the wonderful news with you all that we for the first time in 12 years have had Roseate Terns (*Sterna dougallii*) breeding on Chumbe. The Roseate Tern is an endangered seabird and is listed in the Least Concern category on the IUCN Red List with a global population estimated to be 78,000-82,000 individuals. The colony observed on Chumbe consisted of at least 300 adults, and it occupied the two islets south of Chumbe for a period of 3 months. Egg-laying started in July, and by mid August Omari Nyange (CHICOP Head Ranger) counted 100 chicks on the two islets. On August 13<sup>th</sup> a team of 5 people from the Department of Forestry climbed the islets to observe, measure and ring-tag the chicks. In the beginning of September there were strong winds, and most of the adult terns left the islets together with the fledglings. By mid September all Roseate Terns had left Chumbe Island and its islets. The breeding pattern for this rare species is not fully understood and it has often been observed to be very irregular. We can only hope that the birds will choose to come back to Chumbe again sometimes in the future!

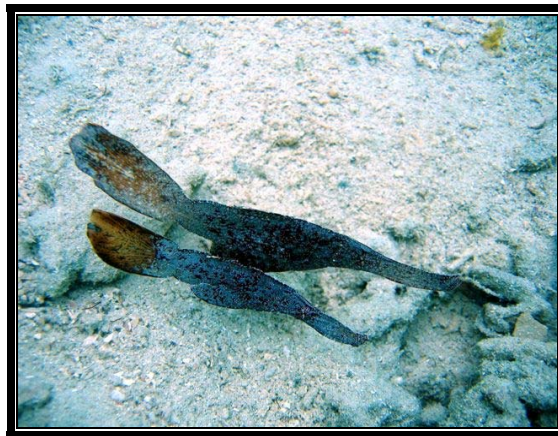


**Roseate Terns**

© Mikala Peters

In the middle of September, our head ranger Omari Nyange, was invited to Mafia Island MPA to attend an MPA learning workshop. The following is taken from his report from the event.

*“All participants for the MPA workshop met at Mafia Island Marine Park (MIMP) head office. MIMP was established in 1995, with the aim of helping local fishers to improve their income. There are 270 coral species found in Mafia reefs, 400 fish species, 10 species of Mangroves, 6 species of seagrass, and 4 species of sea turtles. The MIMP organisation can not protect the Marine Park by itself, but must work closely together with the local communities. Villagers have been involved in patrolling the park and then send reports to MIMP and they get paid a small amount for doing so. Local people should also be involved as participants of workshops and other events regarding the marine park”.*



**Seagrass ghost pipefish** © Frida Lanshammar

During the last six months Chumbe staff has continued to spot individuals of the rare and endangered Ader’s Duikers that were translocated to Chumbe in 2000. There are however plenty of rare species to see also in the waters around the island. During August and September the crew spotted several humpback whales – some even as close as a few hundred meters away from the reef. During this period most of the guests coming to the reef to snorkel could hear the melodious songs of the great whales. In the end of November we got yet another proof that not only the forest of Chumbe has rare species - the new conservation coordinator spotted two Seagrass Ghost Pipefish (*Solenostomus cyanopterus*) on the sand patch on the inside of the reef, as they were doing their best to look like dead old leaves of the seagrass *Thalassodendron ciliatum*.

The seagrass meadows around Chumbe has truly experienced some exciting six months since the last newsletter. In September Chumbe was visited by a team from an international seagrass research group called the SeagrassNet. Three representatives for the organisation visited the island to set up a monitoring programme and to train the staff etc. Dr Fred Short describes the organisation and their visit on Chumbe as below:



[www.SeagrassNet.org](http://www.SeagrassNet.org)

## ***SeagrassNet: Assessing a Critical Coastal Resource Worldwide***

*SeagrassNet is an expanding monitoring program that investigates and documents the status of seagrass resources worldwide and the threats to this important and imperilled marine ecosystem. The program started in 2001 in the Western Pacific and now includes 50 sites in 20 countries; a global monitoring protocol and web-based data reporting system have been established. Our ultimate aim is to preserve the valuable seagrass ecosystem by increasing scientific knowledge and public awareness of this threatened coastal resource.*



© SeagrassNet

### **Chumbe SeagrassNet team members**

*SeagrassNet teams composed of scientists and managers from participating countries conduct quarterly sampling of selected plant and environmental parameters to determine seagrass habitat status and trends. A lack of information exists on the status and health of seagrasses worldwide, particularly in less economically developed regions. SeagrassNet's efforts to monitor known seagrass areas and to reconnoiter uncharted seagrasses are important first steps in understanding and sustaining the seagrass resource. From Brazil to the U.S. to Vietnam, Europe, Africa, and many Western Pacific island nations, SeagrassNet is collecting information with the goal of elevating awareness of seagrasses and providing a "global report card" on the health of seagrass coastal habitat.*

*Seagrasses are underwater flowering plants that often occur in vast meadows and provide nurseries, shelter, and food for a variety of commercially, recreationally, and ecologically important species (e.g., fish, sea turtle, dugong, manatee, seahorse, crustaceans). Additionally, seagrasses filter estuarine and coastal waters of nutrients, contaminants, and sediments and are closely linked to other community types: in the tropics to coral reef systems and mangrove forests, and in temperate waters to salt marshes, kelp forests, and oyster reefs. Existing at the interface of the land margin and the world's oceans, seagrasses are threatened by numerous anthropogenic impacts as well as global climate change.*

*SeagrassNet now has a site at the Chumbe Island Coral Park, Tanzania. In September, 2006, Dr. Fred Short, Dr. Rob Coles and Aaren Freeman led a workshop to train Coral Park staff in SeagrassNet monitoring techniques and the staff are now collecting data on the Chumbe SeagrassNet site and sending it via the web to the database. SeagrassNet is very pleased to have sites in Africa as part of the program.*



© Matt Calissi

### **Chumbe Seagrass team**

survey ever done on the Chumbe reefs. We are very grateful for their work and the GIS map that they have produced will surely be useful for us in the future. This is what the students have to say about their stay on the island.

*“As American students from Colorado College and University of Vermont, we came to Zanzibar through the School for International Training as part of a Coastal Ecology semester program. During a three week, independent study period, we looked at the seagrass beds around the entirety of Chumbe Island. This survey was a two step process that provides extensive, baseline data on Chumbe's seagrasses. We first looked at the distribution of the seagrass and used GPS coordinates to create a digital map of the meadows. It was quite time consuming and exhausting to swim around every bed to do so and would not have been possible without the help of the wonderful staff. Once the map was completed, we spent four hours of every day with our faces in the water, looking at the six species present and assessing the health of what was found to be pristine seagrass. The information obtained will give Chumbe Island a base by which to analyze change and to register the positive aspects to their conservation efforts.”*



**Seagrass**

© Frida Lanshammar

Finally and after all the activity of the last six months I would like to say thank you again to all the wonderful people who make the Chumbe Island project the success that it is.....

Best wishes for the New Year,

Helen Peeks

Project Manager