

Sea Life

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EDITION 4 - 2013

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Photographer: Mark Hatter

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The South East Monsoon 2013 has come and gone and what an eventful one it has been! We examine the benefits of this refreshing 'season' and some of the 'little miseries' it brings.

We have been busy tracking all the events which occurred during those 6 months – May to October – to ensure that we bring you exciting reports on all of them.

We continue to expand on the range of subjects we cover and this time we report on the ongoing project at Alphonse Island to find out about sea turtle behaviour and the conservation efforts on the island.

Fish spawning aggregations is a subject which we should get to know more about, as protection of the sites where these occur can bring meaningful outcomes to stock recovery and protection. A short article looks at the risks to these.

The fresh winds of the South East bring cooler weather and we all love it. There is no better time to take up sailing and in this issue we look at the history of the Sailing Training Scheme (STS) through the eyes of the person who will always be remembered for the start of sailing in Seychelles. Evangeline Goulding or Van as she is affectionately known by all her students, myself included, kindly agreed to pen an article for us on the timeline of the STS and we thank her for helping us remember the early difficulties and the fun times teaching us how to sail. Her successor, Alain Alcindor who is at the helm of STS, gives us an overview of the scheme today.

The South East is associated with Birds Eggs. It was closed season for Sooty Tern Eggs harvesting this year and we were all so disappointed. We attempt to explain why this was so and whether this tradition may one day be read about only in history books.

We cover the 4 fishing tournaments which have taken place since the last issue plus we gain more insight into fishing off Denis Island through our fishing expert Henry Riggs-Miller who also lured the legendary Capt. Brad Philipps there. Capt. Brad shares his impressions of big game fishing in Seychelles with us.

Further south, the new fishing season has started at Alphonse and Desroches, and we have received news of the early catches being reported. Exciting stuff which will surely set the adrenalin of keen anglers flowing.



Our feature fish is the Shark and in the first of a two-part article, we review the species and have a brief look at the history of shark fishery. We also share the recipe to make a nice shark 'satini'.

If you have missed out on certain noteworthy news items, our new section News Notes will fill the gaps in your knowledge, as shall other shorter articles, all expertly written by our regular contributors who we are thankful for their time and devotion.

We launched a competition a year ago to find a photo of a sailfish or marlin taken in action in a local competition and we have found the winner! The winning shot of a sailfish was taken by Caroline D'Offay and has been liked on Facebook by enthusiasts that we think she deserved the prize. Great shot. Read more in Readers' Competition inside.

Thank you to all our partners for your continued support.

The North West Monsoon is with us. Time to enjoy the SEAS around us, and all the marine activities that are on offer in calmer conditions. Time take off and go and breathe the SEA!

Happy Reading.

Arnold Chetty

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THE SOUTH EAST MONSOON - A SEALife Seychelles Survey



Each year around the end of the 1st week of May, the South East arrives with a great degree of certainty and timely precision. Its arrival is generally welcomed by the Seychelles population especially as it helps relieve the archipelago of the hot and humid conditions of the months of the North West Monsoon. For sailing and windsurfing enthusiasts, this signals a new season of fun and competition while for sports and professional fisherman, there are many reasons as to why this is not entirely a fun season.

The Seychellois family usually regards the South East monsoon as a time of hardship chiefly because:

1. Fish, the staple food of Seychellois, is scarce and prices go up, and
2. Water is rationed due to lack of rainfall associated with this time of year, the situation being exacerbated for the time being by the vastly inadequate water storage capacity despite the huge amount of development the archipelago has witnessed over the last 40 years.

Households who depend on income from fishers as the bread earners find their budget tight and travellers who use boats or ferries to go from one island to another dread the crossing. We examine the reasons for this.

Prevailing climatic conditions:

The Seychelles is well known for its pleasant climate. It is warm throughout the year and temperatures rarely drop below 23° C or go above 33° C. There are 2 distinct 'seasons' during the year.

From May to September, the South East Monsoon (south east trade winds) set in - these trade winds bring cooler and drier climatic conditions and stronger winds of 10 to 25 knots, as well as rougher sea conditions.

This is in sharp contrast to the prevailing conditions of the North-West Monsoon with its warmer temperatures and higher humidity levels. The days are slightly shorter and rainfall is few and far in between.

The conditions in Seychelles are often referred

"For sailing and windsurfing enthusiasts, this is the most interesting time of year."

to as the perpetual summer. This is not far from the truth. But as locals say, you have to live here to understand that we do have our seasonal changes and the problems associated with them.

This year was no exception and in fact it seems that we have had the perfect South East Monsoon. If you are a Facebook fan, you will have heard of the many characteristics of the South East Monsoon cited, notably lack of rain, rough seas, very cool nights - especially on higher altitudes - and lack of fish [rough seas as a result of strong winds].

As we write, the lack of rainfall persists and fish is still scarce and the usual seasonal whining about the prices of fish continues.



Tough life for Fishers

But you have to be a fisherman to understand the hardship of working in terribly rough seas. Fishers stay closer to shore as it is simply far too rough to venture further out to known productive spots. Even if larger boats do make it there, their catch is much less than usual, presumably, because the fish themselves are affected by strong currents and have to take shelter.

The fish that you can find on the markets at this time of year provides the best evidence of this. Higher quality demersal fish are replaced by trap fish and lower quality pelagic fish. But we are fortunate that our famous 'karang' can be found nearer the shores and they do make up, when available, for the lack of other fish species. As with market forces, their prices go up as well. Fishers explain that this is not deliberate but that they spend more time, energy, resources (bait and fuel) to bring in fewer fishes. For those of us who have been brave enough to venture fishing at this time of the year, we share those views and the well-known adage that 'it is a tough life being a fisherman'.

Water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink

The lack of rainfall at this time of the year and the rationing of water supply that ensues bring back, year after year, the furious debate about the lack of adequate water storage, the lack of maintenance of ageing and deteriorating distribution channels. Increasingly it would appear that no one is spared the rationing that is put in place. The population is clearly frustrated at the slow pace at which development of substantial additional water storage facilities is progressing and the amount of water 'lost' in distribution. A great number of studies and surveys have been carried out over the last 2 decades but the actual effort to 'massively' increase storage capacities has yet to materialise. In the meantime industrial and tourism development as well as housing needs for this precious commodity continue to outpace water supply.

Farmers also complain that crop production cannot be fully maximised as quite often there is no water in some farming areas, even if the South East is for those who grow their crop in open fields, a good time of year. And vegetables do need an abundant supply of water.

Fun for all?

For sailing and windsurfing enthusiasts, this is the most interesting time of year. The strong and steady winds create the perfect conditions for them to practice their sports. Competitions of all types are held during this time of year and Seychelles is often the choice venue for regional championships.

The winds and the rough seas seem to provide the perfect conditions for windsurfers to race from Mahé to Praslin in the shortest possible time, while yachties challenge each other to sail around Mahé Island, fastest.

Not all is fun. Anglers who participate in the 2 major fishing competitions (see Tournament Reports in this issue) at this time of year do not look forward to these with the same level of keenness but all do so for the love of the sport.



Racing to La Digue
Photo Courtesy of Dominique D'Offay



The bait is the attractive prizes on offer or perhaps landing a record breaking sailfish which are in greater abundance at this time of year. Unless you have great sea-legs, it is not a time of year for you to try your hand at sports fishing.

But for the majority of Seychellois, because of the cooler nights that the South East Monsoon ushers in, this season is very refreshing and the quality of sleep is a lot better.

Conclusion

Any Seychellois will tell you that the South East Monsoon does have its advantages and some insist that for them this is the best time of year.

We can do with less fish in our diet at this time of year, we can cope with the stronger winds and we all welcome the cooler nights.

We enjoy seeing our youngsters develop the love of sailing and windsurfing and we can put up with the rough crossing between the islands.

But what we disdain is the water rationing. Once our water storage and supply are fixed, there is no doubt that the South East months can become the most enjoyable months in our archipelago. At this time in our history, these months bring a lot of misery to us all.



Trap fish in great demand from May to October
Photo Courtesy of Arnold Chetty



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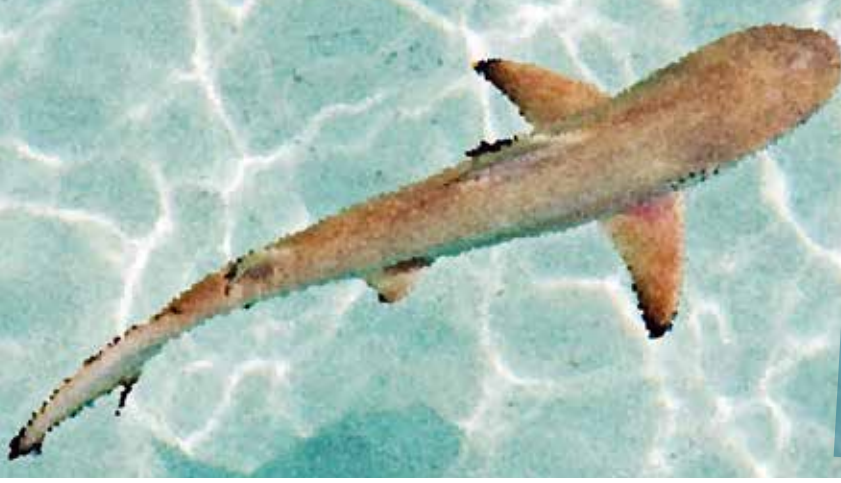
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MANAGEMENT OF THE SHARK FISHERY IN SEYCHELLES

By J. Nageon de Lestang

Recent shark attacks have once again kicked off discussions about this marine resource and locals have divided opinions on its usefulness. Some argue that sharks are an endangered species which must be protected at all costs while others feel that for the sake of our tourism industry, they must culled as much as possible so that they do not present a threat to swimmers, divers and anyone who dare set foot in our seas. In the first of a two-part article, Seychellois fisheries biologist Joel Nageon de Lestang discusses the resource and its value to our economy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sharks comprise some 1000 species worldwide. Estimates on the global annual harvest of shark vary considerably but according to the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) figures, the global catch is around 1.6 million tonnes and the only real consensus is that data on the fishery are chronically lacking. The FAO statistics states that the total shark landings is estimated at around 503,000 tonnes with the total shark

discarded at sea (including illegal, unreported and undeclared catches) totaling 1.13 million tonnes. Catches have grown considerably from 271,800 tonnes in 1950, fuelled by the expansion of long-line fisheries, the escalating commodity value of shark fin and through overall increases in global fish production.

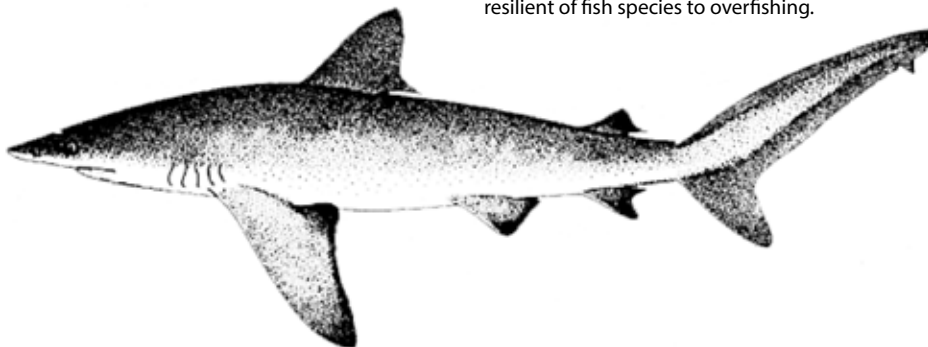
Shark population are characterized by their slow growth, late maturation, low fecundity and long reproductive cycles and are amongst the least resilient of fish species to overfishing.

Shark populations in Seychelles waters at the turn of the 20th century remained high and the occurrence of large specimens inshore was common through the 19th and first half of the 20th

In 1926, an eminent fisheries scientist, Mr. James Hornell, strongly recommended the development of the shark fishery be facilitated; "...seeing how sharks swarm in the sea surrounding the island[s]".

In 1945, fisheries scientist J. Wheeler stated "that sharks abound on the banks", and in his 1948/49 fisheries survey he concluded that the standing biomass of shark on the Seychelles banks exceeded that of demersal fish. Fortune Bank in particular was found to have very dense shark populations yielding a catch ratio of shark : fish of 16:1

Source: Seychelles National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks. Seychelles Fishing Authority, Victoria, Seychelles, 2007. 59 p.



Estimate of the standing biomass of shark and fish on the Seychelles banks

Table 1

	Standing Biomass (metric tonnes)		Shark : Fish biomass ratio
	Shark	Fish	
Mahe Plateau	56,100	46,500	1.2 : 1
Fortune Bank	10,622	655	16 : 1
Constant Bank	8,300	1,760	4.7 : 1
Amirantes Plateau	15,168	17,024	1 : 1.1
Total	90,190	65,939	1.4 : 1

Source: Seychelles NPOA-Shark

No scientific surveys have been done on shark population in Seychelles waters. Though many studies have been conducted to estimate fishable biomass of the Seychelles banks (Tarbit 1980), none were done for the shark fishery. It is a generally accepted fact amongst both the scientific community and fishermen that shark stocks have been severely depleted on

most of the major fishing banks on the Mahé and Amirantes Plateaux. However, there is a contradiction in this viewpoint as sharks continue to be caught close inshore around the main granitic islands and in fact the two shark attacks that occurred on Praslin in August 2011, were within less than 20 meters from the beach.

2. THE RESOURCE

2.1 Species composition of the fishery

The most common sharks caught by artisanal fishermen are the Spot Tail Shark (*Carcharhinus sorrah*) and the Grey Reef Shark (*Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*). A complete list of the common sharks found in the Seychelles is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Sharks species commonly found in the Seychelles

Scientific Name	Common Name	Local Name (Kreol)
<i>Carcharhinus albimarginatus</i>	Silvertip Shark	Requin Peau Claire
<i>Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos</i>	Grey Reef Shark	Requin Bar
<i>Carcharhinus brachyurus</i>	Copper Shark	Requin Nenen pwent
<i>Carcharhinus brevipinna</i>	Spinner Shark	Requin Kannal
<i>Carcharhinus melanopterus</i>	Blacktip Reef Shark	Requin Bar
<i>Carcharhinus sorrah</i>	Spot Tail Shark	Requin Nenen Pwent
<i>Carcharhinus leucas</i>	Bull Shark	Requin Gros tete(kulpa)
<i>Carcharhinus longimanus</i>	Oceanic Whitetip Shark	Requin grandes ailes
<i>Isurus oxyrinchus</i>	Mako Shark	Requin Mako
<i>Galeocerdo cuvieri</i>	Tiger Shark	Requin Demoiselle
<i>Loxodon macrorhinus</i>	Sliteye Shark	Requin Pisard
<i>Triaenodon obesus</i>	Whitetip Reef Shark	Requin aileron Blanc
<i>Sphyrna zygaena</i>	Smooth Hammerhead	Requin marteau
<i>Ginglymostoma brevicaudatum</i>	Shorttail Nurse Shark	Requin Lendormi
<i>Rhynchobatus djiddensis</i>	Violin Shark	Requin Violon
<i>Rhinobatos blochi</i>	Sand Shark	
<i>Rhincodon typus</i>	Whale Shark	Requin Chagrin



2.2 Brief history of the shark fishery

The shark fishing industry in the Seychelles dates from the early 1920s and mainly produced dried salted shark meat that was sold to the island people of East Africa and the Far East. The quality of the product at that time was often poor. In the 1950s demand arose for higher quality dried and salted shark meat, and both producers and importers made a conscientious effort to improve their methods of processing and packaging shark meat. A number of operators in the Seychelles also reacted to this new demand with attractive prices and were successful in developing a superior product. Several inter-island cargo schooners were converted to shark fishing vessels and were chartered by prospective investors.

As many cargo vessels use the Seychelles as a port of call when travelling across the Indian Ocean to Africa or Asia, the exporters had no difficulty in marketing their improved product (Travis 1990). Increased demand led to a larger number of vessels entering the fishery and Travis (1990) notes that by the end of the 1950s shark stocks on the Seychelles plateau and nearby banks were showing strong indications of depletion due to over-exploitation. Travis reported that after a couple of years of shark fishing they had cleared the most accessible areas of large sharks and the only alternative were to fish the more distant banks such as the Saya de Malha, Nazareth or even Chagos. By late 1950s the dried shark meat export industry had virtually ceased, due to a drop

in prices as well as catch rates.

During the first few months of 1992 there was a dramatic rise in the price of sharks fin on the Far East market (Hong Kong in particular) with prices quoted in excess of \$50/kg for dried fins. Due to the low value of shark meat, at present shark landings as a rule do not form a significant part of the total fish landings though certain species are consumed locally. Sharks however are generally caught for their fins. Table 2 gives the estimated figures for sharks and rays landings from 1985 to 1996. In addition to the fins and to some meat being kept, the larger shark teeth and jaws are sometimes prepared for sale to tourists as are shark backbones that are made into ornamental walking sticks. From the 1960s the shark fishing industry has remained primarily a bycatch industry because, in part, to the low commercial value and the fact that Seychellois fishermen were not keen in mixing sharks with other fish species in the fish hold for reasons of contamination. The recent decision (August 2013) by the Hong Kong Government to ban the serving of shark fin soup at official dinners has been widely applauded by both Chinese based and international conservation groups. This means that the demand (and consequently the price) for shark fins on the world market will drop considerably bringing a reduction of fishing pressure on shark stocks world-wide.

2.3 The harvesting process

Traditionally, Seychellois fishermen fished for sharks with handlines or set gillnets. Set gillnets were placed mostly inshore where shark and rays are a directed fishery. The standard shark net was generally around 50m long (but they can go up to 80m) and 7m deep (30 meshes). The net is made of polypropylene twine of No. 36 thickness with standard mesh size of 6in (stretched). Shark nets are usually placed overnight on flat sandy bottoms either just outside the reefs or in the passes (an illegal practice). The nets are either weighted with rocks at interval of every 5m or with leaded rope with heavy weights at both ends.

However, the industrial and semi-industrial fishery that targets tuna and tuna-like species continued to catch sharks as a bycatch with only the fins collected; the carcasses are discarded. The largest fishery by far is the purse seine fishery with landings of nearly 300 000t of tuna. Analysis of the bycatch from 1982 to 1992 by an observer from l'Office de la recherche scientifique et technique outre-mer (ORSTOM) - now replaced by L'Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD) - on French purse seiners found that sharks comprised 3–4% of the total catch (Coulmance 1995). The shark species most commonly caught as bycatch is the oceanic Whitetip shark (*Carcharhinus longimanus*).

A local semi-industrial longline fishery was



initiated in the mid-nineties to target swordfish and tuna; this resulted in increased shark bycatch. In the late 1990 it was noted that some of the longline vessels were increasingly targeting and finning shark in order to export this high-value commodity. The targeting of sharks increased dramatically when the Seychelles Government banned the export of swordfish (2003 – 2005) to the EU until issues regarding the cadmium content of the fish exceeding EU recommended levels were resolved in 2005.

Foreign tuna longliners also capture sharks as bycatch and often land these species in Seychelles. The main species landed are the Mako Shark (*Isurus spp.*). Other species are discarded at sea. Unfortunately no records of bycatch and discards are kept by the longliners.

2.4 Development and current status of means of prosecuting the fishery

Approximately 380 boats were involved in the artisanal fishery in 1996 (SFA Artisanal Bulletin 1997). This figure includes 181 open fibreglass boats powered by outboards, open wooden whalers, decked wooden schooners and semi-industrial longliners. The fishery shows considerable seasonality in landings. In 1996 shark landings peaked in January and February with a secondary peak in August – September. Landings minima were reported in March and November-December. In 1990, the small boat fishery, operating mostly inshore, accounted for 35% of the shark catch and the remaining 65% was caught by whalers and schooners. An estimated 5000t of fish are landed annually by the artisanal fishing fleet (SFA Artisanal Bulletin). Sharks and rays accounted for 1.9% of the total small boat landings by weight. Partly in response to initiatives by conservation groups, legislation has been passed banning the fishing of sharks with nets as of August 1998.

2.5 Legislation

The legislation that pertains directly to sharks, shark-related fisheries and their management is summarised below.

a) **The Fisheries Act (1987)**, sets out the framework for fishery management measures for local and foreign vessels. The primary regulations

pertaining to the shark fishery fall under this Act.

• Zones where fishing by foreign vessels is prohibited (Reg. 5a, Schedule 1): covers all islands and related banks prohibiting fishing activity within 3km of the 200m isobath. This in effect reserves the fishing of banks and inshore areas to local operators.

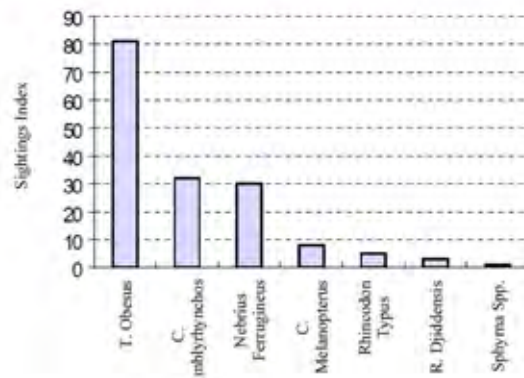
• Prohibition of net fishing of sharks: forbids the fishing of shark using nets from August 1998. This regulation was brought in due to concerns about by-catch of turtles, marine mammals and non-target whale shark in gillnets. Subsequent to this, SFA developed and distributed the local “drag” (anchored longlines) system of fishing to former net fishermen. The switch to this equipment is believed to have increased shark catch [48].

• Fisheries (Shark Finning) Regulations 2006: forbids the practice of finning by foreign vessels licensed to operate in Seychelles EEZ by requiring vessels to land fin to the quantity of no more than 5% of the mass of dressed shark carcass. The feasibility/effectiveness of the enforcement of this regulation has yet to be assessed.

b) **The Wild Animals and Birds Protection Act (1961)**, establishes the legal framework for the protection of species of wild animals and birds:

• Wild Animals (Whale Shark) Protection Regulations, 2003: declares the whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) protected throughout Seychelles at all times. The whale shark was not previously fished in Seychelles waters, the legislation was rather introduced in order to facilitate the pursuit of an international

Fig 4: Shark species most frequently seen by divers [39]



conservation agreement for the species.

Source: Seychelles NPOA-Shark

2.6 Marketing

Shark meat and products are marketed both domestically and internationally from the Seychelles. Meat and fins are the most frequently traded products, although markets also exist for jaws, teeth and backbones. The shark meat is of low value although it is used in some traditional recipes and for fish cakes (Shah 1994). Low values for shark meat are principally due to the improper handling of the catch. Sharks contain urea in their blood to maintain osmotic balance. If the urea is removed immediately after catching by bleeding the shark it prevents the formation of ammonia and eliminates the strong ammoniac odour and taste. Failure to do this results in consumer resistance to most shark meat that have not been properly handled as is the case of the schooner fishery.

All the species of sharks listed in Section 2.1 of the report are eaten in the Seychelles except whale, nurse and sand sharks. The most preferred sharks caught in the artisanal fishery include the Hammerheads (*Sphyrna spp.*), the Spottail shark (*Carcharhinus sorrah*), the Sliteye shark (*Loxodon macrorhinus*) and the Violin shark (*Rhynchobatus djiddensis*). It has to be underscored however that in Seychelles shark meat is considered of low value and is mostly eaten in times of fish scarcity, i.e. in the south east monsoon (June - September). Shark meat is used mainly in some traditional recipes, primarily chutneys or “satini”. It is also used in the fast food industry, e.g. for “samoosas” or fish balls. In Seychelles, shark meat is seldom used as steaks or for fish and chips as is the case in Europe or Australia.

2.7 Revenue from the fishery

The fins are by far the most valuable product obtained from sharks. They are dried and exported mostly to Hong Kong. The total weight of dried shark fins exported during the 12 years is given in Table 6. The figures in Table 6 indicate that many sharks are only used for their fins and are never landed in Seychelles. This is in particular the case for the foreign dominated industrial purse seine and longline fishery. Hence the combined landings of artisanal and industrial fisheries landings in 1997 (SFA Annual Report) was 2197t (this includes landings from in the 1990's sharks and rays). The 1997 dried fins export data indicate that when converted to wet weight the quantity of sharks caught is about 700 times higher than what is recorded as landed!



Table 3

The quantity (tonnes) and value of dried sharks fin exported from the Seychelles, 1985-1997

Year	Value	% of fish product	Weight	Wet weight
	(US \$)	Export (tonnes)	(tonnes)	
1985	64 400	1	2.15	149.30
1986	127 000	5	4.23	293.75
1987	363 200	5	12.11	840.97
1988	469 400	3	15.65	1086.80
1989	638 000	5	21.27	1477.08
1990	513 400	4	17.11	1188.19
1991	418 400	2	13.95	968.75
1992	453 000	2	15.10	1048.61
1993	612 400	4	20.41	1417.36
1994	380 400	2	12.68	880.55
1995	580 000	3	11.00	763.89
1996	480 000	1	12.00	828.00
1997	127 400		3.10	2197.65

Note: Figures for wet weight equivalent calculated using a conversion factor of 1.44% of the wet (live) weight of a shark. Shark fins represents 4.5% of the net weight of shark and after trimming and drying about 1.44% of the whole weight. This figure is based on results of fishing trials carried out by SFA (Bean 1992) as well as personal communications to the author from shark fishermen. Shark meat is dried and salted but also landed frozen from foreign longliners.

Much of the shark meat produced in Seychelles is consumed locally, although the figures indicate that there was an increase in landings of sharks from foreign longliners from 1989 to 1994. In the last three years (1995–1997) however, there

has been practically no landings of sharks by longliners in Seychelles. This can be partly attributed to a decline in the number of longliners calling in Port Victoria (Seychelles), or possibly the vessels have found a better price

for these products at other regional ports.

In the next edition, we shall discuss the activities of stakeholders, the management process as well as sustainability of shark fishery.



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Mr. Danny Low Lam
Managing Director - Oceana Fisheries

OCEANA FISHERIES – NEW DIRECTION

by Kate Carolus

The sale of the home-grown company, the poster child of Seychellois entrepreneurship overseas and, domestically a trusted household name, under the FDI programme made headlines when it was announced in July 2013. Kate Carolus interviewed the company's new Managing Director, Mr. Danny Low Lam (Oceana) on behalf of SEALife to find out which direction the fish processing company is heading.

SEALife: "It's been four months since the acquisition of Oceana Fisheries was announced. What can you tell us about the new company?"

Oceana: "I am a local entrepreneur from a humble background. I have tried various activities before. My attraction to and urge towards the sea has always been strong; this is what attracted me to be involved in fisheries. My business partner, Mr. Alexander Karmanov, and I decided to invest in one of the top fishing plants in Seychelles. From now on our main business activity in Seychelles is fishing."



SEALife: "What prompted your business partner's interest in Seychelles and what about the company attracted their attention?"

Oceana: "Seychelles is a stable country known in the region for being innovative and proactive where fisheries are concerned. It is also a strong promoter of the blue economy with vast business potential in fisheries resources, especially long line -60°C."

SEALife: "Mr Low Lam, What is long line -60°C and why is it so important?"

Oceana: "It is a fishing long line vessel equipped with -60°C freezing system that allows us to freeze fish on board. Fish can be frozen quickly, this is so-called 'blast freezing' or 'super frozen' (-60°C). This technology allows approaching the quality of fresh fish: high speed freezing prevents the formation of large ice crystals and lacerations. And during defrosting the fish does not provide juice, does not lose shape and nutritional value and even does not change color. It means that on the export market we can aim at an A-grade product."



SEALife: "What in your view are the benefits and value you bring to Seychelles and its population through this acquisition?"

Oceana: "We have made capital investment and we intend to bring capacity building and technical knowhow in the value addition of the tuna products through the -60°C project and the eventual modernisation of the company."

SEALife: "Oceana Fisheries ensured a steady and affordable supply of quality fish from our ocean to the local population especially during the South East monsoon when artisanal catch is poor. There is concern that the new owners will no longer supply the local market with quality products fished in our own waters. How do you respond to this concern?"

Oceana: "This is a false concept, we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the government on this subject and we shall respect every aspect of it."

SEALife: "What has been the focus of your activity since acquiring the company?"

Oceana: "We have been through the critical period of transition which I am pleased to say has been smooth and effective; we have had great support from our staff so far. The modernization of the company and adaptation are long processes, we have no doubt that we will succeed!"



New Direction:

SEALife: "What next for Oceana Fisheries?"

Oceana: "Our mission is to put Seychelles on the world market and make the fish and fishery products from Seychelles well-known worldwide. We are in the process of re-organising the company accordingly. We shall always take what we consider the best decision to make Oceana Fisheries a real success."

SEALife: "What is the primary objective of the company? Please tell us about your goals and how you plan to achieve them?"

Oceana: "Our objective is to promote and sell the products from Seychelles as one of the best worldwide. We will do so by re-structuring Oceana and adapting its operations to the new market dynamics. We will modernize the factory; bring in new equipment, knowhow and modern technologies in all aspects of production and preservation."

SEALife: "Tell us about your employment and human resource development policy and what

you consider to be the most important attributes of your work force?"

Oceana: "Oceana is already benefiting from a very effective, well-skilled and highly qualified labour force; we shall re-enforce this where necessary. This will be undertaken gradually in relation to the development of the company and our new market demands. We shall provide technical training in the administration of the -60°C long line operations."

SEALife: "What changes do you plan in your work force?"

Oceana: "For the time being there are no significant changes foreseen, but it is very likely that in the future with the development of the company we will need more staff and a more qualified cadre to improve the overall competence."

SEALife: "How do you see the current business model changing?"

Oceana: "We shall change the concept and approach in response to the market needs, noting that the market needs have changed considerably over the past few years and are forever changing."



SEALife: "Who are your customers, which markets do you intend to develop?"

Oceana: "We will maintain all existing operations and their corresponding customers; we shall continue to serve the local markets while at the same time prospect for new markets which we shall talk about later."

SEALife: "How do you plan to grow the company's revenue and profit margins?"

Oceana: "We will strive to improve the practices to target new and more attractive markets – niche markets. Add new products to existing product range, ensure that they are of competitive commercial quality and exploit new species and new opportunities."

SEALife: "Do you have any plans to develop any infrastructure or deploy any new assets?"

Oceana: "We have plans to extend and upgrade some of the existing infrastructure like the fish shop and the smoke house, build new ice plants and -60°C cold stores with the view to double production and create new affordable value added products both on the local markets



and for exports. In addition to the land based infrastructure, presently we are building two new -60°C long liners."



SEALife: "Will you be re-positioning the company? What will this entail?"

Oceana: "We will do our best to promote the company further; we expect that with all the changes we have discussed before, we will certainly improve the present status and rating of the company."



SEALife: "There has been talk of re-branding the company. Please tell us more about it."

Oceana: "The modern business world is constantly changing and we have to adapt our image and product to that modern concept, but we will keep the spirit of Oceana Fisheries which has been a successful story over the past 18 years or so."

"Our mission is to put Seychelles on the world market and make the fish and fishery products from Seychelles well-known worldwide."

SEALife: "What other significant steps/ events herald the new direction Ocean Fisheries is taking?"

Oceana: "We want to modernise the company in such a way that it takes its

right place in the modern seafood business / trade which is continuously evolving; the world is changing fast and we have to adapt to those changes and challenges."

SEALife: "Mr. Low Lam, Four months on, what do you foresee as the most challenging issues you face for the future?"

Oceana: "These are the availability of the resources and the adaptation to a modernised business environment."

SEALife: "How would you measure success?"

Oceana: "It is somehow too early to claim any success of our own, but we hope that we are assuming a positive role in the local fishing industry and economy, one which we are

prepared to play for many years to come. We believe that the -60°C Tuna project will be a strong success. If we have invested in Seychelles, it is because we believe that the potential is huge."



SEALife: "Mr. Low Lam, thank you for taking the time to meet us and for your candid responses to our questions."

SEALife thanks Ms. Tania Solovieva and Mr. Jean-Claude Hoareau for their contribution in this interview.



RECIPE: SHARK CHUTNEY – ‘SATINI REKEN’

By Josephine Lesperance (D)



Wash the shark meat - with skin on - under cold running water. Cook the meat in a large saucepan of boiling water to which salt has been added. (The meat will cook faster if it is cut into smaller pieces.)

When cooked through, drain the meat and place in cold water to cool. Remove the skin, any pieces darkened by blood and any cartilage. Squeeze all the water out of the meat.

Break the meat into flakes and place into a large bowl. Add the onion rings, garlic, ginger, bilimbi, chillies, thyme, parsley, salt and pepper to the bowl of meat and sprinkle the turmeric on top. Mix thoroughly using a wooden spoon to avoid your hands getting stained.

In a big frying pan or a wok, heat the oil. When hot, add the contents of the bowl and stir until all the ingredients are properly cooked. The meat should be a uniform yellow colour by then. Remove from heat and allow to cool a little bit before adding the lime juice or some vinegar, according to your preference. Garnish with some finely cut rings of spring onions.

Serve with boiled rice, green papaya chutney 'satini papay'. Optional – Okra 'lalo' in creole sauce.

Serves 6 persons

Ingredients:

- 1 kg Shark meat
- 1 medium Onion - Sliced into fine rings
- 2 cloves Garlic - Finely grated
- 2 cm fresh Ginger - Finely grated
- 2 Bilimbi - Preferably fresh and cut in half a centimetre rings
- 6 Chillies - Cut in small rings with seeds
- 2 sprigs of Thyme finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon of chopped Parsley
- Salt
- Pepper
- 2 teaspoons Turmeric Powder
- 2 tablespoons Sunflower Oil
- Juice from 2 Limes or Vinegar
- Spring onions - Finely cut into rings for garnishing

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Sailors racing 420s

THE SEYCHELLES SAIL TRAINING SCHEME FROM 1976 TO NOW

In the 1960's and 1970's Seychelles Yacht Club (SYC) members enjoyed handicap dinghy racing in Victoria Harbour during the south-east monsoon. Competition was keen and sailors vied to build the fastest 505's and GP14's. They were keen to promote their sport but few people could afford their own dinghy. As national economic growth depended partly on the sea they wanted to encourage young people to learn basic skills so that they were prepared to take up careers in tourism, fishing and marine transport. Mike Irvine, a teacher and sailing instructor, ran a pilot project during the school holidays of 1976, teaching a group of girls from Regina Mundi. It became clear that full time instructors were needed for an effective, long term project to be set up.

In November 1976 the SYC secretary, Arthur Tuck, was enthused by an article in the RYA magazine describing a sailing project for students in Hong Kong. He was amazed to learn that FEBA engineer, Dave Mason, knew about this project and belonged to the same church as four of the sailing instructors. Arthur Tuck lost no time in

development of water sports.

Under the leadership of Commodore Roger Harter, the SYC sailing committee were successful in finding funds for the Sail Training Scheme (STS) project. The Ministry of Education agreed to pay local salaries for two instructors; the Yacht Club provided a base for STS; individuals groups and companies such as Rotary Club and Temooljee sponsored five Mirror kits. Club members generously offered the use of their dinghies for teaching beginners – until the Mirror fleet was built.

In August 1977 Van Goulding and Sandy Chapman arrived from UK ready to teach, build boats and encourage young people and adults to enjoy sailing. The Principal Secretary for Education, Maxime Fayon, suggested that groups of students from Seychelles College, Regina Mundi School, The Teacher Training College, the Sea Scouts and recently returned graduates should be invited to attend courses.



Arnold was part of the first group to ever learn to sail when the STS opened

harbour were a constant threat. Enthusiastic sailors dared to take the shortest route when racing, regardless of the possible damage to their boats: if the dagger board hit the reef the central casing was knocked out - the dinghy and crew needed to be rescued and the boat was out of action for a week. This problem was finally solved when Jack Holt, the designer of the Mirror dinghy, designed a rotating centreboard for STS to use in the Seychelles Mirrors.

By August 1979 over 100 young people had gained certificates in sailing. Sandy Chapman had left Seychelles on board a yacht and Van's contract had ended. She locked up the shed, handed over the keys and returned to UK. There was no plan and no funding to continue the STS project.

“In his 20 years at the helm Alain has promoted High Level Sports and maintained the sailing schools on Mahe and Praslin.”

Students, led by Chrystold Chetty, presented a successful petition to President Albert Rene asking for STS to be re-started. By January 1980 plans were approved for SYC to build rooms for storage, maintenance and lectures for STS. in return for government waiving the leasehold rent for SYC. A fleet of second hand 420's was purchased by the government: The USA Tracking Station donated a van for storing equipment: Senior RYA Instructor Van Goulding returned



Alain Alcindor, SYA Chairman, and Eston Dubelle

contacting the group and enquired if Mike Green would consider a job in Seychelles building boats and teaching sailing.

Mike, a woodwork teacher in London declined but Evangeline (Van as she became known) Goulding offered to spend a year helping to set up Sail Training Scheme. Mike taught her to build a Mirror dinghy from a kit using marine plywood panels stitched together with copper wire and sealed with fibreglass. Another teacher, Graham Simms, working in the same school, later joined the staff at NYS and assisted with the

Many of the first students enjoyed sailing and followed three courses in succession. Many of the first beginners learned to sail triangular courses and right capsized dinghies. Intermediate students improved their sailing and learned seamanship skills whilst advanced students learned racing techniques, spinnaker handling, elementary navigation and First Aid.

Lessons for school children were free of

charge, but maintenance of the equipment and fuel for safety cover needed finance. Eston Dubel, Alan Belle, George Chang Tave and Alex Auguste volunteered to teach expatriates. Accountants, engineers, lawyers and the wives of SYC members put their lives into the hands of these 14 and 15 year old lads and could be seen ducking under the boom as they changed tacks. All four lads became STS staff members and the expatriates they taught shared their sailing skills around the globe when they left Seychelles.

Coral reefs in the Yacht Club Basin and the Inner

and school leavers were employed to do maintenance and to instruct. The partnership between government and the Yacht Club thrived. Individuals and companies sponsored equipment and STS took off.

A new fleet of plywood dinghies was built using traditional methods under Ron Jurd's supervision at the Technical School. CIMAs, the fibre glass boat building company based at Bel Ombre experimented with building single handers in fibreglass. As there were few sporting activities for young people there was no difficulty in finding new students. Government paid for buses to transport school children from Anse Royale and Anse aux Pins to Victoria once a week. The main barrier to increasing numbers was that only 15% of teenagers knew how to swim, so swimming classes were held in the sea at Beau Vallon for prospective sailors

Class racing in two man dinghies (Mirrors and 420's) was introduced and eventually took over from handicap racing.



Seychelles Sailing Team receiving the Regional Championship Trophy. Presented by late Jimmy Kwast to Patrick Fanchette

Windsurfing, a new sport in the 1980's was growing in popularity. STS students raised funds for a fleet of BIC branded boards. At the same time the British High Commissioner sponsored fibreglass and resin for self help projects so that over the years 100 kayaks – bats, comanches and touring canoes were built by staff and students. Accessories were sponsored by ULC- the stevedoring company then and various embassies.

Embassy and local companies. Frank, who remained working with STS for over 25 years, introduced many children to sailing and gave them a good grounding for careers on the sea as well as for international sailing competition.

Three young sailors from one class at La Rosiere School went on to compete in the Olympics, one of them being Alan Julie. All but one of the successful 2011 IOG Team were first taught by Frank Jean.

Seychelles Yachting Association, set up initially to give Seychelles recognition at the 1985 Indian Ocean Games, organises the racing programmes during the South East monsoon. Its chairman, Alain Alcindor, joined the staff of STS in 1992 and a year later took over

as Senior Water Sports Officer when Van Gouling returned to England. In his 20 years at the helm Alain has promoted High Level Sports and maintained the sailing schools on Mahe and Praslin. The tsunami of 2004 damaged Sail Training Scheme's base and equipment and made it impossible to continue for a while.

Water sports moved to Roche Caiman where there is more space for equipment and easy access to safe areas for sailing.

Five people continue to teach sailing and windsurfing on Mahe and Praslin.

Many Seychellois have happy memories of the early days of sailing picnics on St Anne and Cerf Island and of racing in Victoria Harbour.

Thanks to dedicated staff and the support of NSC,

SNOC, the media, and sponsors many people have learned skills and gained confidence on the sea. Our sailors continue to be a source of national pride and we look forward to them in championships wherever they compete worldwide.



Sailors launching their dinghies



Allan Julie at the Athens Olympic Games

In 2013, Van Gouling's work for Women in Sports was recognised by the Olympic Committee and she received a certificate from Jacques Rogge.

Photos supplied by Evangeline Gouling and Alain Alcindor.



Launching of new Mirror Dinghies by late Minister for Youth and Sports Mr Ralph Adam

The Maritime Department of the Technical School, The School of Tourism and Marine Park Rangers wanted future workers to be confident at sea, and sent students for morning classes. This was made possible by expatriate wives who volunteered to instruct. In the mid 1980's Government employed seven staff at STS and up to 300 people attended water sports courses each week.

Lowering the age limit when children could join STS from 12 to 9 was a major turning point. Frank Jean went to UK and learned how to teach children to sail in Optimists and a fleet of small fibreglass dinghies was built locally, sponsored by the American



Evangeline Gouling with IOG medallists 2011

A LOOK INSIDE THE SAIL TRAINING SCHEME

by Alain Alcindor



Seychelles Team at the All Africa Games - Algeria



Daily Teaching

The Sail Training Scheme (STS) continues to operate and offers instruction classes in sailing, windsurfing and canoeing. We have presently 2 centres, one on Mahé, at Roche Caiman, behind the National Swimming Pool and another at Grand Anse Praslin, which was officially opened in 1999.

STS moved to Roche Caiman in 2005 after we were badly hit by the 2004 Tsunami. We lost all our records then.

At present, we are concentrating with teaching school children from Plaisance, Mont Fleuri and town area. On Praslin we cater mainly to children who reside in the Grand Anse district. We have requests from parents to teach their children who live further from STS centres but much as we would like to help, we are constrained by transportation.

Classes are held daily from Monday to Friday during the public school terms.

We currently employ a total of 5 persons made up of 2 sailing instructors, 2 canoe instructors and 1

windsurfing instructor. I also assist the team and coach the Optimist sailors. Allan Julie teaches on Praslin for 3 days on Mahé on the other 2 days.

Competitions

We hosted the 8th Indian Ocean Island Games (IOIG) in 2011 and it was a great success both in terms of organisation and winning medals by our Seychelles participants.

We have been winning the majority of medals at the past IOIGs.

“Seychelles has been represented at the Olympic Games in sailing since 1996.”

During these games representatives from the 3 participating countries got together to revive the Regional Sailing Championship. The first edition was held in La Réunion last year. We hosted the second edition this year and saw sailors from Mauritius and La Réunion compete against our locals. Once again we excelled in both the competitive and organisation areas. The third edition will take place Mauritius next year.

Our sailors have been competing at various international competitions

on African and World level. Sailing won the first ever All Africa Games gold medal back in 2007 in Algeria through sailor Meggy Gertrude. In 2011, at the All Africa Games in Mozambique, sailing won the only Gold medal through Allan Julie. Rodney Govinden won also a bronze medal in that same class.

Seychelles has been represented at the Olympic Games in sailing since 1996. And have qualified for the 2000, 2004 and 2008 Olympics. We missed qualification by a few places for London 2012.

Our Optimist sailors as young as 10 years old just returned home after having competed at the India International Regatta 2013. They did not win medals but gained valuable experiences. Last year at this same competition Alison Hoareau, a young female optimist sailor won a bronze in the female category.

On the canoeing side our best canoeist, Tony Lespoir, has competed in 2 Olympics, in 2004 and 2008. He qualified for 2008 in Beijing and was invited for Athens. Unfortunately he did not make it to the London games. At previous African Championships, he has won a bronze medal in



2002 in South Africa, and in 2008 a silver and a bronze in Kenya.

Our sailors and canoeists have been doing well during the annual Seychelles Sports Awards.

Meggy Gertrude. Seychelles first ever Gold Medal at All Africa Games - Algeria





Allan Julie has won the title a record 6 times and Tony Lespoir once. Our athletes keep featuring amongst the top 5 Seychellois sportsmen and sportswomen.

How I got involved

I started sailing in 1978 when I was in Secondary 2 at the Seychelles College. Since I formed part of the Sea Scouts we were given this opportunity to learn sailing. Once I mastered the basic sailing skills, I started racing in Mirror dinghies, GP14s, Strikers and 420s. My competency as a sailor was recognised by Van Goulding (Van) who asked me to assist in teaching other students,

which I did from 1980 up to 1985 when I went for further studies. Upon my return I started work at Seychelles Industrial Development Corporation (SIDEK).

In 1992, after being persuaded by the National Sports Council, I joined the STS to understudy Van as she was to be leaving in 1993. My first major challenge was to organise the 4th Indian Ocean Island Games in 1993; a first for Seychelles as well.

Since then I have been at the helm of STS. I have seen other staff come and go over these 21 years. I am presently the Director for Water Sports and take care of the National Swimming Pool as well.

“My plan for the future is to work on getting a proper Water Sports Centre, which I would like to see officially accredited by ISAF as a Regional Training Centre.”

International Scene

Since 1999 I have served on various committees of the International Sailing Federation (ISAF), namely the Regional Games Committee as well as the Development and Youth Committee.

On the African scene I am the Secretary General of the African Sailing Confederation. I got this job through my demonstrated commitment and the love and passion for the sea and this activity. Seeing the youth of Seychelles able to sail especially at a very young age is what has kept me into the job and gives me great personal satisfaction.

Future Plans

Since I have been and am still involved with ISAF my plan for the future is to work on getting a proper Water Sports Centre, which I would like to see officially accredited by ISAF as a Regional Training Centre.

My second wish is to have more local youth take up the sports at a very young age and ensuring that there is adequate quality staff available to teach them.

Photos Courtesy of Alain Alcindor



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EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SPAWNING AGGREGATIONS...



By Tove Jorgensen

Some coral reef fish form so called “fish spawning aggregations” when it is time for them to reproduce. The fish will travel to certain parts of the reefs that often are full of holes or crevices and where the current is strong. Some fish travel many, many kilometers to reach their specific spawning sites each year and it has been speculated by researchers that younger fish learn to find their way by older fish, but no one really knows.

Preparing for Spawning

Predatory fish like members of the grouper family and many herbivores such as parrotfish, rabbitfish, and unicornfish form spawning aggregations, which often are timed to the new moon or the full moon when current and the light are most beneficial for the fish larvae’s survival. For some species the males will arrive first to

the spawning site, where they will fight or demonstrate strength by dancing in tight circles with each other, or stand nose to nose while changing colours rapidly. The strongest males will get the best territories and have the largest chance to reproduce with the females who will arrive a couple of days later.

Spawning often occur during dusk during the Northwest Monsoon in the Seychelles. Catches of up to 1500kg within a few days at spawning sites have been reported and it is not surprisingly that at many locations (e.g. in the Caribbean) spawning sites have been depleted and the fish population have collapsed.

Risks at Spawning Sites

There are several risks of fishing at spawning sites: First of all: The fish are very vulnerable to over-fishing during this time. As fish from all over the coral reef gather in dense groups to spawn, this means that fish that usually are spread out over a large area suddenly become very easy to catch and are vulnerable to over-exploitation. For example there are sites in the Seychelles where more than 2000 camouflage groupers gather at an area that are smaller than an football field.

Secondly: The fish are there to reproduce, which means that for every fish that is caught, thousands of fish babies (larvae) will not be born. This in turn will of course affect regeneration of new fish.

And thirdly: Some fish undergo sex-changes during their lifetime, so if you catch all the large fish species, you have also caught all male fish at



Photo by Tove Jorgensen

the reef, which will lead to a shortage of male fish and problems for the fish to reproduce.

Scientists have recently started to investigate spawning aggregations, and although many spawning sites have been over-fished and been lost, new research has shown that if spawning aggregations are protected, fish stocks may recover with time. This is good news, since it means that not only is it beneficial from an ecological and conservation point of view—it will benefit local fishermen too in the long run.

Nature Seychelles, a local NGO that manages Cousin Island, is currently involved in a research project together with SFA and using the latest scientific technology they hope to find out more about spawning behavior in herbivore fish and how to protect them for the future.



Photo Courtesy of Seychelles Fishing Authority

*Beyond imagination
The Seychelles Islands ... another world*



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SUBIOS: SEYCHELLES FESTIVAL OF THE SEA



Few forums have achieved as much in sensitising visitors and locals alike to the wonders of Seychelles' unique ocean environment as has SUBIOS, Seychelles' Underwater Image and Film Festival. From its inauguration in 1989, the brainchild of Dr. David

Reinforcing each year's theme are the guest speakers who enrich the festival with their expertise and whose various films and presentations serve to provoke discussion and so enhance public knowledge of Seychelles' marine worlds.

Diver and Sting Ray – Photo Courtesy of Dive Seychelles - Underwater Centre



Rowat, Philippe Blanchard, Maurice Lousteau-Lalanne and Maryse Eichler, it has continued to fascinate audiences over the years with a tantalising suite of marine-oriented activities, presentations, film-shows, school projects and, of course, image & film competitions.

The twin-pronged approach of educating visitors to the islands as well as the local Seychellois population has been especially successful. Each year, the organizers choose a specific theme that focuses attention on a particular marine domain and which showcases its potential as well as the challenges facing it. Recent themes have included 'Cetaceans: Our Ocean Cousins', 'The Gardens Below', 'Wrecks as Ocean Habitats', 'Seas of a Thousand Species' and 'Wonders Beneath the Waves.'

The Film & Image Competition itself, an ever-popular component of the SUBIOS Festival, assembles well-known film makers and photographers from abroad such as John Boyle, Dr. Andreas Fichtner, Dr. Pedro Vieira, Leandro Blanco, Edward Snijders and Neville Coleman together with local diving experts and speakers such as Dr. David Rowat, Leo Hoevers and Mrs. Elizabeth Fideria to provide a vibrant ambiance and, of course, an interesting film and image contest whose winners are decided by public vote.

SUBIOS also traditionally enlivens the islands' hotels with an array of dedicated SUBIOS evenings in which guest speakers, foreign and local alike, talk and present on a wide range of topics while local bands play and models strut

*Whale Shark at Marianne Island
Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth Fideria - Big Blue Divers*



their stuff on the catwalk. Special intro-dives organised by the islands' dive centres, glass-bottom boat rides into Ste. Anne Marine National Park, an annual Cyber Treasure Hunt and a SUBIOS Man & Woman triathlon event complete an array of activities that continue to make SUBIOS a true celebration of Seychelles marine heritage and one that, after two decades, is still going strong.

In 2011, SUBIOS the platform of the event was widened under the umbrella of SUBIOS: Seychelles Festival of the Sea. The latest edition scheduled to take place between 22nd and 24th November under the theme 'Sustaining Life in a Sea of Change' 2013 will, in addition to the usual host of activities, feature an outdoor exhibition – Lost World Photographic Exhibition by Save Our Seas Foundation and a video presentation by Mrs Elizabeth Fideria.



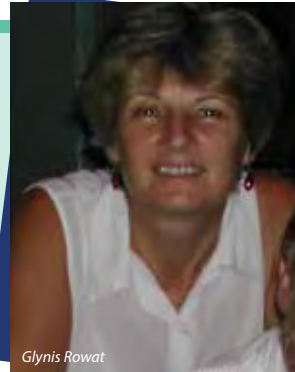
Photo by Peter Driessel by courtesy of Dive Seychelles - Underwater Centre

DIVING

ELIZABETH FIDERIA AND GLYNIS ROWAT REVEAL THEIR FAVOURITE DIVE SPOTS



Elizabeth Fideria



Glynis Rowat

What's your favourite?" We put the question to expert divers Glynis and Elizabeth, and found that they have more than a few things in common. Both are longtime Seychelles residents, Glynis has been here for 30 years and Elizabeth, 20; both tied the knot in paradise - Elizabeth wed Gilly Fideria in 2001 and Glynis, long-time partner Dave Rowat this year. Each together with their husband own and run the islands' best known dive centres which are both located on the Beau Vallon Bay coast and they are both, without doubt, in love with the underwater world of our islands. So let's find out what their favourite dive spots are:

Elizabeth's Best Diving Spots

"My personal favourite is Biter, with a bit of luck the entire "Big 5" - the Whale Sharks, Marble Sting



Sting Rays at Biter Rock
Photo Courtesy of Elizabeth Fideria, Big Blue Divers

Rays, Eagle Rays, Grey Reef Sharks and Nurse Sharks - can be seen during one dive. There are many to be considered among the best sites - Shark Bank, Brissare Rocks, L'Ilot, Grand Barbe, the Ennerdale Wreck... the recently sunk wreck of the Aldebaran is a terrific dive site.

But for me, the best dives are those with special marine encounters. One was a dive at Dragon's Teeth where I was surrounded by Dolphins during courtship. I also have had many Whale Shark encounters, but a few are especially memorable to me.

One such encounter was during a dive at Marianne, where we came to watch the Grey Reef Sharks; already at the beginning of the dive I spotted this huge Whale Shark. For such a big animal she was very playful and stayed with us for more than an hour, during crystal clear diving conditions.

The divers that we had this encounter with keep coming back time after time for another holiday

in the Seychelles, and always tell the amazing story, and show the video, of this whale shark and other memorable encounters during the same period - at the Ennerdale Wreck with the giant groupers, and at Shark Bank I have made many memorable dives with the giant stingray that visit this dive site."

Glynis' Favourite Dive Sites

My Best Dive:

"So what is your best dive ... ever?" is a common question between divers and many have a very fast reply. Not me however, so I took to having a look through old dive logs that act like a diary of my journeys into the underwater world. Going way back to the first ever dive I took, well that was surely the BEST DIVE EVER but being the only one there was nothing else to compare it with. However it was the first ever experience of flying weightless through the water in the crystal clear waters of the Red Sea. Coral walls falling down to depths beyond sight and covered in the

brightest of little orange fish; later I found out they were Antheas. Not knowing what anything was didn't seem to matter as it was all so amazing and thrilling beyond words. So I was hooked, and the SCUBA diving adventure began!

Within 18 months of that day my partner David and I bought the UNDERWATER CENTRE SEYCHELLES now based in Berjaya Resort on Beau Vallon Beach and 30 years later, I now happily own and run a PADI 5 Star Dive Centre. There are many dives in a log book that

spans 30 years so the question, "What is your best dive?" still remains a mystery. The passage of time has seen many changes within the waters of Beau Vallon Bay.

My Favourite Dive Sites:

The numerous and magnificent table corals that each stretched over 3 metres along the back of Vacoa Reef were always a favourite dive site. Surrounded by soft coral gardens and family groups of grouper, snappers, parrot, butterfly and angel fish with the occasional turtle passing by that seemed personally to say "hello" to me was relaxing and heart-warming. Gone are the endless table coral formations after the terrific storm of 1987 but such is the renewable quality of the coral reef, they are replaced by endless coral gardens, so still a favourite.

The Seychelles Granitic reefs are rocks such as Brissiare, Dragons Teeth and Shark Bank, and the sights on these longer distance dive destinations are always impressive. Rocks that raise up from the sandy ocean floor, sometimes 30 to 60 metres

down will always attract the bigger sea creatures and the Seychelles sites are known to impress even the most world-wide, well-dived traveller. A shoal of yellow snapper forming an almost impenetrable but constantly moving wall of yellow from rock bed to shallow waters is a sight never forgotten. Mix this with a passing school of black striped barracuda and silver shimmering dinner plate-sized bat fish and the enjoyment levels are going into overload. Heart stopping is when the giant sting rays swim by with their slow and curved wing movements that leave every diver mesmerised.

Oh! and don't forget the white spotted eagle rays that float by just above your head or the circling



Photo by Peter Driessel courtesy of Dive Seychelles - Underwater Centre

jacks that remind you of Wild West TV films where the wagons are circled and the Indians are racing their horses around and around!! Actually the jacks think your bubbles are small fish and are hoping for an easy snack, but just as soon as the circling tunnel appears the fish quickly learn that there is no free lunch and swim off again ... but what an amazing 60 seconds it was.

So my favourite Seychelles inner island dive site is ... the Granitic Reefs - unique to us lucky few who either live on, or manage to visit Mahé.

ACADEMY BY THE SEA

By Jean-Paul Lebon



The author Jean-Paul Lebon snorkelling

The *Academy by the Sea* is a marine education programme for secondary schools in Seychelles. Jean-Paul Lebon, 12 years of age, from Secondary 1 of the Independent School was selected to participate in the programme recently and has shared his experience with *SEALife Seychelles*.

"I first found out about the *Academy by the Sea* from my English teacher. To join this academy, we had to enter a competition by writing a 500 word essay, making a comic strip or drawing a poster all under the theme of 'Conserving the Ocean'. I chose a comic strip. It was called 'Robert's Adventure' and was about a boy who saves the ocean from a monster. I was one of the twelve students who were awarded with a scholarship for the programme."

"The *Academy by the Sea* programme was held in the August school holidays at Berjaya, Beau-Vallon Bay hotel. We were divided into two groups, 'Whale Sharks' and 'Turtles'. We did lots of interactive sessions, like role plays, quiz and guessing games."

"I rarely take part in outdoor activities, as during the holidays I would spend most time playing my electronic games, but I must admit that the programme turned out to be an adventurous one. I had one of my best snorkelling experiences ever. We snorkelled in the Beau Vallon bay and twice in the Baie Ternay area. I discovered lots of fishes and marine life. I came across a ray fish for the first

time and even got to swim over it – it was just amazing!"

"One sad discovery was a sight of a decomposed humpback whale on Anse Corail beach while we were on our way to the Banyan Tree for some research on the biggest and one of the last wetlands in Seychelles. We visited the Cap Ternay dive centre where we watched a presentation on mangroves. This was followed by a mangrove treasure hunt."

Truly overwhelmed by his experience, Jean Paul told us, "The *Academy* teaches us about the ocean and marine life and then helps us experience it for ourselves by doing fun activities such as snorkelling, movie-making and adventuring."

Jean-Paul concludes, "The *Academy by the Sea* has been an experience of a lifetime. I have made new friends, learnt about the different species of marine life and the importance of preserving it."



Image courtesy of Dive Seychelles - Underwater Centre

"Together with two friends, Frances and Neha, we produced a stop motion movie about sharks being less dangerous than planes. We won the first prize for our category. The movie is posted on the Academy's Facebook page."

The *Academy by the Sea* marine education programme is fully funded by the Save Our Seas Foundation and is coordinated by the Marine Conservation Society of Seychelles.

Participants of the August 2013 Class



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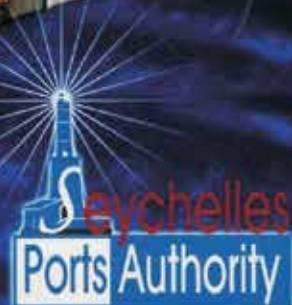


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A lady angler that was on Denis while we were there with Brad. We took them out one morning and she caught and released this massive sailfish. This fish is easily over 40kg. I actually believe it is closer to 45-50kg. The fish was removed from the water for 15-20 seconds while a handful of photos were taken and then it was returned to the water. One has to be careful with big breeders like this big mama sailfish.



By Henry Riggs-Miller

Owner, FINS 'Fishing in Seychelles' Pro-Tackle Shop

FISHING DURING THE SOUTH EAST MONSOON OFF DENIS ISLAND

Having fished most of my life in the Caribbean and the Atlantic, I am accustomed to rough water and welcome the onset of the southeast monsoon here in Seychelles every year. The reason for this is that it is my favorite time of the year to fish. If you are willing to get bounced around a little and aren't afraid of getting wet on occasion then fishing between May and September (the southeast monsoon) will provide you with a bounty of opportunities especially where trolling for pelagic fish is concerned.

In addition to high winds and heavy seas the southeast brings with it cooler water, which is the reason that the fishing is so good. Cooler waters translate into lots of bait with many hungry predators in hot pursuit. There are plenty of opportunities to go fishing when the wind drops a little, especially if you don't have to go far to the drop off as is the case off Denis Island.

Denis Island has some spectacular fishing during the southeast. Marlin, sailfish, yellowfin tuna, wahoo and dorado abound. Bonito, squid, swimming crabs, mackerel, half beaks (ballyhoo) and other baitfish are plentiful, which is what keeps the bigger fish around. It is not uncommon to catch one of the new IGFA Offshore Slams on any given day. To qualify for an offshore grand slam, you must catch 3 out of 4 of the following species: any billfish, any tuna from the thunnus genus (here we have yellowfin and big eye that qualify), wahoo or dorado. To catch a super grand

slam you must catch all four species. We have caught numerous offshore grand and super grand slams while fishing off Denis Island during the southeast. The easiest way to accomplish this is by releasing a sailfish and catching a yellowfin tuna, dorado and wahoo in the same 24 hour period.

Capt. Rolly has been fishing off Denis for over a decade and I recently sat down with him to compare notes about the fishing in general during the southeast and this season in particular.

When analyzing the southeast on a monthly basis there is a definite shift in the species and baitfish that are available. Perhaps a shift isn't the right word. A more appropriate word might be accumulation of species because the ones we find at the beginning are still present at the end of the season. It is just that more species arrive as the southeast progresses so it might be fair to say that the fishing improves as the season evolves. In general, we get a trickling of Marlin in June/July but they really start arriving in good numbers in August and the bite really starts heating up in September. We get a lot of sailfish in June. Their numbers peak in July and the catch stays consistently high all the way through September. Yellowfin tuna and wahoo are always present. Dorado start showing up well in August and their numbers increase in September and remain high into the next few months.

A closer analysis on a month to month basis might reveal the following:

May/June I group these months together because the southeast arrives early some years and later in others. Nonetheless, its influence and its cooler waters can certainly be felt in May and is in full swing by the end of June. We start seeing increasing numbers of sails in May but sailfish really make their presence felt in June. It is not difficult to raise more than ten sailfish per day in the second half of June. We do see a lot of juvenile fish at this time which leads us to believe that some sailfish spawn in the northern waters of the Seychelles archipelago. The cooler water also brings in yellowfin tuna and loads of wahoo. Both these species are caught around Denis year round but we do see an increase from prior months in June. Wahoo can be especially "pesky" during the full and new moon periods during the southeast and June is no exception. We see a dorado here and there but it is not a species you can count on at the beginning of the season. Finally, marlin sightings are sporadic but we always get a couple of shots in June.

July is the top sailfish month of the year in my opinion. I love to fish with light tackle and bait and switch tactics so July is one of my favorite months of the year. You can raise double digit sails almost every day in July and since marlin also become a little more common you must be prepared for multiple billfish species every day.

We usually run at least one teaser while fishing, and keep a 20lb rod ready for sailfish and a 50lb rod ready to pitch to a marlin. However, if the marlin is less than 120kg I will usually go after it with the 20lb line. Yellowfin tuna and wahoo are available in good numbers and we see a few more dorado than we did in June.

August usually signifies the arrival of the little red swimming crabs and with it an increase in yellowfin tuna. When the crabs are in the tuna will follow them everywhere. We have caught 20kg tuna as shallow as 20m with the crabs. Granted that is a bit unusual but it can happen for a day or two if the crabs stay that shallow. Naturally, with an increase in tuna we see an increase in marlin. August is the beginning of the good marlin season off Denis. Sailfish are still around in good numbers as are the wahoo. Dorado catches also become more frequent. August is a great month to catch that offshore grand slam we discussed earlier.

September might just be my favorite month to fish off Denis. By now we have a great mix of everything. All the baitfish have arrived, including swimming crabs and half beaks (ballyhoo), and all the predators are right behind them in hot pursuit. To top things off, the southeast usually gives us a few breaks in the weather during September as its strength starts to waiver a little. Therefore, if you keep an eye on the forecasts you can combine some great fishing with some calm weather this month. Additionally, you can now count on a marlin strike or two per day if you target them specifically, and if you are fishing for a mixed bag with different sized lures you still have a good chance of encountering a marlin every couple of days. Sailfish are ever-present



Nixon the deckhand on Denis prepared this exquisite marlin bait. As you can see the skipjack is beautifully rigged with a circle hook and ready to go after the big one.

and make for great sport on light tackle. Dorado are around in not only good numbers but also larger sizes and you can still count on numerous yellowfin and wahoo strikes to help keep you busy during the day.

Around the world, cooler water many times brings in an influx of green water. I have seen this happen in both Brazil and Venezuela, and experienced it for the first time this year for a week off Denis. However, it is my understanding that down off the Amirantes there was cold green

water for weeks at a time and that it really shut off the fishing. I am also told that this happens with some frequency to the south during the southeast. This is one more reason to log in some fishing time at Denis Private Island. In my four years of living here I encountered green water for the first time for a week this past July. I do not know the reason why Denis Island is rarely affected by green water. Perhaps the island is just fortunate to be located where it sits along the northeast drop off of the Mahe plateau.

We had some excellent marlin fishing this past September. Our good friend, Capt. Brad Philipps, joined us for ten days of fishing. We raised 24 marlin (21 black & 3 striped marlin), 15 sailfish and caught countless yellowfin tuna, wahoo, and dorado. We only released 4 marlin out of a dozen strikes or so, which means we still have work to do to improve our technique. However, this "work" is the fun part where we need to fish and tweak things to attain better results. We estimated the largest marlin we released with Capt. Brad at around 350kg!

The fishing off Denis Island is always good. However, if you are willing to brave the seas a little during the southeast you are almost guaranteed to head home with some great fish stories. A five mile run to the fishing grounds is much easier to handle than a fifty plus mile run. Consequently, the best way to fish the waters off Denis during the bumpy southeast is by staying at Denis Private Island. Give it a try next year. I promise you will not be disappointed!

Photos by Henry Badenhorst, Courtesy of FINS Tackle



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INTERVIEW WITH CAPT. BRAD PHILIPPS

By Henry Riggs-Miller
Owner, FINS 'Fishing in Seychelles' Pro-Tackle Shop

From L to R Capt Brad Philipps, Henry Badenhorst (photographer), and Henry Riggs-Miller with Denis Island in the background.



I have known Capt. Brad for approximately ten years. We have fished together in several of the top angling destinations around the world and fished against each other in a handful of tournaments mainly in Guatemala. I consider Brad and his wife Cindy to be good friends and have a great deal of respect for him as a fisherman. We invited him to come and fish with us last year but we couldn't make it happen. Fortunately, everything lined up for us this year and he joined us from September 3-15, 2013. We fished a total of seven days. We raised 24 marlin (21 black & 3 striped marlin), 15 sailfish and caught countless yellowfin tuna, wahoo, and dorado. We released 4 marlin and estimated the largest at around 350kg!

For those of you who are not familiar with Capt. Brad Philipps, he is considered to be one of the top captains in the world. Many will tell you he is the best, and his numbers certainly back up this claim. However, there is no argument that he is the most prolific billfish captain of all time. On February 2nd, 2013, he reached an incredible milestone when he released his 25,000th billfish aboard his 40ft sportfishing boat 'Decisive' off the coast of Guatemala. We were extremely fortunate to have him join us in Seychelles.

Capt. Philipps has introduced countless anglers to the importance of catch-and-release fishing and provides a prime example of how sport fishing (sustainable fisheries) benefits communities and economies. Throughout his career, Capt. Philipps has been an ardent supporter of The Billfish Foundation (TBF).

At the risk of boring you with unbelievable numbers, here are some of the highlights of his career to this point. He has now released over 25,000 billfish and has caught every species of billfish and tuna (IGFA Royal Slams). In fact, he completed his Tuna Royal Slam with us on Denis Island with a dogtooth tuna. He has caught over 100 giant Bluefin tuna up to 1300lbs and released several Atlantic and Pacific Blue Marlin over the magic 1000lb mark. He has won TBF's Release

Captain of the Year award for the past 11 years running. He has also been the top Pacific Sailfish Release Captain for the past 11 years, and top Pacific Blue Marlin Release Captain for 3 of the past 6 years. He has released an amazing 2759 billfish in a calendar year, released 97 blue marlin in a single year, 51 sailfish in a single day on a fly-rod for a single angler, 91 sailfish in a single day on conventional light tackle, and an incredible 73 sailfish released for a single angler in a single day also on conventional gear.

I asked Capt. Brad if he would be willing to answer a few questions for SEALife readers and he graciously accepted. Here is the interview:

HRM: How long have you been sportfishing?

BP: I have been fishing since I was big enough to hold a rod and fishing offshore since the age of 13.

HRM: To date, what do you consider to be your greatest accomplishment in fishing?

BP: There are so many highlights but at the end of the day I'm probably most proud of the fact that I've been able to stay at it, day in and day out, releasing so many billfish, and that I have been able to make a good living and career out of it.

HRM: What is your favorite fish to catch?

BP: Blue marlin, for their size, speed and fighting ability. Sailfish for their sheer numbers and angler excitement factor.

HRM: What do you consider the most difficult fish to catch?

BP: Blue marlin, their speed and aggression can really test you.

HRM: Is there one specific catch or lost battle that stands out in your mind?

BP: We fought a huge blue marlin off Bom Bom, West Africa in 1997 that broke the 600lb leader after 13 hours and the 9th time on the leader. We had a huge blue marlin up in Madeira in 2008 that did a doughnut around the right short and then surged on the right long but did not bite, it

was truly massive, well over 1500lb. Then there are those we caught, a 1028lb Bluefin we landed in the dark off Nova Scotia and a grander Pacific blue marlin we released off Guatemala on 50lb tackle.

HRM: What is your favorite style of fishing (light tackle, heavy tackle, bait and switch, big game fly-fishing, etc.) and why?

BP: I like them all. This is the beauty of billfishing. To keep things exciting you can match the tackle to the size of the fish or the skill level or preference of the angler and bait & switch gives you the best opportunity to do this. It also means things are never static and there is always room for adaption or improvement.

HRM: Prior to your trip to Seychelles in early September, what had you heard about big game fishing in Seychelles?

BP: I had heard very little except for rumours through a friend who had fished there. I think it is a hugely unexplored fishery and hence my eagerness to get to Seychelles.

HRM: How did your opinion change after the trip?

BP: My opinion is still more or less the same, although I am now more convinced of the opportunities. Denis Island is a beautiful place, the fishing grounds are so close, and the Seychelles in general is very accessible. My trip filled me in with loads of information but there is still so much to explore.

HRM: Do you think Seychelles has an opportunity to become a top big game fishing destination in the world?

BP: I'd like to fish it more and get more experienced information prior to making a sweeping statement on the prospects. However, there is no doubt that there are great possibilities that warrant continued exploration and development. Everything just looks too good!

HRM: What is our biggest challenge?

BP: Like any blossoming fishery in a remote area it takes time for things to develop. One has to overcome that so called 'island mentality' and realize that things are possible. It was not long ago that many other big game meccas were a lot less developed than the Seychelles sportfishery is at this stage. Actively seek development on all spheres, embrace conservation, and realize that everyone will benefit from more sportfishing tourism in Seychelles.

HRM: How long ago did you start releasing fish and why did you change from a kill to a release mentality?

BP: I was brought up with a conservation background and have always embraced the release ethos.



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BLACK BART



HRM: What role does conservation and catch and release fishing play in attracting the world traveling angler?

BP: I have built my career on releasing fish. It plays a huge role, as international anglers frown upon the killing of billfish unless for record purposes or an outright once in a lifetime catch. Many anglers boycott areas that do not practice catch and release with billfish. The Seychelles has enough gamefish and "table-fish" that it is not necessary to kill billfish.

HRM: You are an ardent TBF supporter. Why do you support TBF over other conservation organizations in the world?

BP: I'm a big supporter of TBF. They are the most globally recognized of all the billfish conservation organizations with a balanced understanding of the dynamics involved in our sport. They promote conservation worldwide through research, education and advocacy. One needs to give back to the sport and we need to stand together to promote Billfish conservation, so supporting TBF is a must.

HRM: If you were fishing here on a regular basis what spread would you employ and what tackle would you use?

BP: If I was targeting black marlin on a drop-off that I knew was holding fish I'd fish a large dead skip-bait on one side and a smaller dead swimming-bait on the other, trolled at about 6 knots, on heavy 80lb or 130lb tackle making sure I was not outgunned by a really big fish. If I was looking for marlin, or they were holding over a



A 250 kg black marlin just before release

wider area, I might pull a combination of two lures with hooks long and two large lures as teasers short, to which I would pitch a bait on either 50lb or 130lb tackle depending on the size of the fish on the teaser. I would probably also keep a 20lb outfit ready to pitch to any sailfish that appeared in the spread. Finally, and this is very important, I would rig all of my baits, (dead, alive or pitch baits) with non-offset circle hooks.

HRM: Are there any additional thoughts that you would like to pass along to SEALife readers?

BP: Fish as much as you can, enjoy what you have and release as many billfish as possible. It'll ensure the future of a special fishery in Seychelles. Try and get your clubs, tournaments and all concerned to structure things towards release fishing.

Photos by Henry Badenhorst Courtesy of FINS Tackle



Winner's photo: by Caroline D'Offay

Runner Up: by Tarak Patel

READERS' PHOTO COMPETITION

Last year we launched a competition on the Facebook page of the Seychelles Sports Fishing Club (SSFC) to find a photo of a billfish being tackled by an angler in the waters of Seychelles. We received a few entries and we now have a winner. "The above photo of the sailfish was taken by Caroline D'Offay and has been widely publicised and liked on Facebook." This is a sure sign of a great photo and as anglers have thus spoken, we have no hesitation in awarding the prize for this competition to Caroline. Great shot girl, we look forward to more of such.

The photo was taken during the Sailfish tournament in August 2013 on a boat called Blue Lady, half way between Praslin and Denis Island.

Another notable entry was submitted by Tarak Patel, Chairman of the SSFC.

Caroline wins dinner vouchers for 4 persons at the Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay Hotel.

SEALife congratulates Caroline on her winning entry and thanks Berjaya Beau Vallon Bay Hotel for the generous prize.

Keep your entries coming in for the next edition on SEALife. All entries should be emailed to ace@seychelles.net. In lodging an entry in the competitions, readers agree to their photos/tales being published in any edition of SEALife without further approval needed.

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OIL AND WHALES DON'T MIX

By Dr. Nirmal Jivan Shah

As oil exploration intensifies in our waters, we need to understand the potential impacts of not only oil drilling, if indeed commercially-viable oil deposits are found, but also of oil exploration on marine biodiversity.

Way back in 1990, in a far-reaching paper written by myself and petroleum geologist Phil Plummer, the potential dangers of petroleum exploitation to the marine environment, which is not only beautiful and unique but very important to livelihoods and the present and future economy of Seychelles, were highlighted.

The scientific confirmation this month that the deaths of over 100 melon-headed whales, which stranded on the shores of a lagoon in northwest Madagascar in 2008, were most likely caused by sonar deployed by an ExxonMobil petroleum survey vessel is new proof that we need to put many safeguards in place. The independent scientific report was released on 25th September 2013 (<http://iwc.int/2008-mass-stranding-in-madagascar>).

Seismic survey vessels operating in the area were first considered to be the likely culprits in the Madagascar incident, not least because melon-

headed whales are an open-ocean species that had never before been recorded in the island's shallow tidal lagoons.

After the stranding, the International Whaling Commission commissioned an Independent Scientific Review Panel to examine that evidence. After meticulously examining the evidence including face to face interviews, the Panel found that a survey vessel using a high-power multi-beam echosounder system (MBES) was "moving in a directed manner down the shelf-break the day before the event, to an area approx. 65 km offshore from the first known stranding location". This, the Panel believed frightened the whales, which use a form of sonar for navigation, and when they fled, they swam into the shallow muddy area where they stranded and eventually died.

The use of air guns to conduct seismic surveys for oil in the sea bed is also causing concerns. Since the intense sounds from these air guns can either cause physical damage to marine mammals or cause them to flee, the U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act requires observers to examine the area for marine mammals for a period of at least 30 minutes. If a marine mammal appears within an exclusion zone of 500

meters from the center of the seismic operation, the operation must shut down, and visual examination must resume.

It is to be remembered that Seychelles created and led the movement (The Indian Ocean Alliance) to ensure that the International Whaling Commission designated the Indian Ocean as a Whale Sanctuary in 1978, one of the most significant events ever in international conservation. In 1982, buoyed by the success of the Indian Ocean Sanctuary the country successfully championed the global moratorium in all commercial whaling. National legislation dating back to the 1980's strictly protects all marine mammals in Seychelles waters.





SEA TURTLE BEHAVIOUR AND CONSERVATION AT ALPHONSE ISLAND



By Aurélie Duhec - Island Conservation Society (ICS)

Hatchling Survival

Social cooperation in hatchling sea turtles

Newly hatched sea turtles work together in an interesting example of social cooperation to escape from their nest. The first baby turtle to hatch usually does not start digging until enough of its brothers and sisters are also free of their eggshells and able to join forces together. During the first hours of their life, hatchlings show an amazing group organization. Depending on their position in the nest chamber, the turtles share different tasks: the hatchlings on the top scratch down the ceiling, those on the sides undercut the wall, those on the bottom compact the sand that arrives from above.

On average, a turtle nest is between 50cm to more than 1m deep, with those of Hawksbills being consistently shallower than those of Green Turtles. The vertical displacement of the group can take several days (about 4-6 days), during this progressive ascension turtles take frequent breaks to rest. Unfortunately, it frequently happens that some offspring hatch too late. Without the assistance of the group they may die of exhaustion and suffocation in the sand column.

The ICS team rescues straggler hatchlings from the turtle nest

2012-2013 was a good season for nesting Green and Hawksbill Turtles on Alphonse, so we were able to study the survival rate of a large number of nests. Each new turtle nest recorded during our daily turtle monitoring is flagged so we can easily find it again later. We also record the species, the GPS Waypoint and the laying date.

This last information helps us to anticipate the hatching date knowing that the incubation lasts between 52-74 days. The period of incubation is influenced by temperature, with warmer nests

having a shorter incubation period. We also know that hatching has occurred by checking the sand around the nest site for flies or flipper tracks of baby turtles. Often we find a depression in the sand just above the nest that indicates when the hatchlings have arrived near the surface of the sand. All these clues help us to locate the egg chamber. Then we carefully dig by hand until we reach the empty shells and any dead, unhatched eggs.

We do all this to record rates of egg clutch survival in the nests. Sometimes we find dead hatchlings at the bottom of the nest. But, sometimes we are very excited to find live hatchlings -- the stragglers. Only a few generally stay behind. But we are thrilled to be able to rescue them.

These rescue efforts of only a few individuals may appear insignificant knowing that out of the entire nest of hundreds of hatchlings maybe only two or one (...or none), will ever reach sexual maturity after the approximately 3 decades that it takes for them to grow to adulthood. But we keep up our efforts because the one that we save today just might be the one that will come back as an adult 30 years later!

How we make sure baby turtles find the sea

Visual orientation of hatchling sea turtles

Hatchling sea turtles emerge from the nest when ambient temperatures are relatively low, therefore emergencies happen generally at night (but can also happen during rainy daytime, at dusk or at dawn). The time spent crawling down the beach to reach the sea, needs to be short. They have to go fast to avoid terrestrial or aerial predators.

Vision is the key sense for successful hatchling orientation and, in a completely natural environment, hatchlings will be attracted by the natural light (especially in the blue range) that is reflected from the sea surface. It is helpful to them when light from the moon or stars reflect off the ocean but they can find the sea even on a

completely dark and overcast night.

Unfortunately, their attraction to light makes hatchlings vulnerable to being drawn to artificial lighting. Even in a bright moon night the turtle will be attracted by an even brighter illumination source, and so artificial light can disrupt the hatchling sea-finding behavior. Because such light usually comes from a source on land behind the beach, it tends to draw the turtles inland where they become exhausted, dehydrated, and subject



A hatchling green turtle removed from the bottom of its nest. It was alone among the empty egg shells that its nest mates left behind

to predation by animals such as crabs.

ICS and the hotel on Alphonse Island work together to minimise light pollution

On Alphonse, ICS and Alphonse Island Resort use a number of strategies to reduce light pollution visible from the nesting beach. The hotel equipped its guest house outdoors with red bulbs, a color to which the turtles are less sensitive. We ask the tourists to turn-off unnecessary lights inside their rooms. Lights on the roadways have been made more 'turtle friendly' by placing them at ground level and using dimmer bulbs. Because we keep track of all the nests near the hotel, we know when each is expected to hatch. So prior to their anticipated hatching date, we set up a screen of coconut tree leaves behind the nest to shield the new born hatchlings from visible artificial lighting. Our actions to minimize the light disturbance have greatly improved the hatchling survival on Alphonse and very few disorientation events happen now. The staff and guests of the Alphonse Island Resort have also shown great concern for the welfare of the hatchlings, and are very happy to help us in our efforts to protect these tiny creatures.



Aurélie excavates a turtle nest. She estimates the egg clutch survival and rescues any straggler turtles that she encounters

we use for navigation, have been found in the sea turtle brain. These crystals line up relative to the North Magnetic pole, similar to what they do in our compasses. As the turtles migrate, these magnetic crystals would help the animals distinguish among the magnetic field intensities that exist in different geographic locations.

Scientists have produced evidence that, while running down the beach to reach the sea, the new-born hatchling is imprinting into its own head information about the magnetic field intensity of its nesting beach. This information will likely be used by that turtle many years later to find its way back as an adult turtle to nest in the same area.

Turtle Tagging Programme on Alphonse shows the return of nesting turtles to their natal beaches

On Alphonse since 2007, ICS has been running a turtle tagging program that was designed by Dr. Jeanne Mortimer, well-known in Seychelles by her nickname 'Madam Torti'. Thanks to the application of tags on the Alphonse's turtles, we are able to recognise the same individuals coming back to nest twice or three times in one nesting season, sometimes exactly at the same beach section. We have also this remarkable example of a nesting green turtle tagged in August 2007 by our colleague Pierre-Andre Adam on the eastern beaches and observed again, exactly 5 years later, in August 2012 on that same eastern beach.

The ICS team keeps the Alphonse beaches clean

to help the nesting sea turtles and their offspring. The degradation of the beaches by erosion or by accumulation of debris can cause serious problems for a turtle trying to find a suitable nesting site. During our daily turtle monitoring around Alphonse Island, we sometimes find evidence that turtles stopped by obstacles. The obstacles can be a sand cliff below the beach platform, uprooted trees felled by coastal erosion, growth of invasive young coconut trees and accumulation of broken tree branches or coconuts. In addition to these natural debris we sadly observe an increasing amount of marine waste, the product of human society, washed



A nesting green turtle going back to the sea after having successfully laid on a beach without any obstacle

ashore by the sea. Hatchlings are particularly vulnerable to this kind of pollution. Plastic bottles, caps, flip-flops...are obstacles that can slow down the vulnerable hatchlings in their way to the ocean, and make them more likely to fall prey to crabs or to dry out in the sun. To help the turtles, we regularly remove potential obstacles in the critical nesting sites and undertake routine beach clean-ups around Alphonse Island. Yes, it is an endless thankless task, but it is so great to know that we are helping the turtles!

How we keep the nesting sea turtles coming back for more

The possible role of the Earth's magnetic field on nesting sea turtles

Sea turtles migrate long distances — hundreds or even thousands of kilometers — between their home/feeding areas and the beaches where they nest. Their nesting beaches tend to be near the beaches where they were born themselves. You probably wonder what makes turtles come back to the same area to nest time after time?

This little-understood event may happen thanks to the Earth's magnetic field: it resembles the dipole field of a vertical giant bar magnet placed at the center of the Earth. Field lines curve around the planet from South to North. The inclination of the field lines curve varies with latitude; lines are parallel to the ground above equator and are perpendicular to the ground at the poles.

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BIRDS EGGS SEASON IN SEYCHELLES

By Arnold Chetty



Seabirds are an important part of any marine ecosystem and recent studies have shown that the health of seabirds is a very good indicator of the quality and condition of the seas on which they depend.

The seas around the Seychelles archipelago are considered to be still in pristine shape. Only last year, the Ocean Health Index (<http://www.oceanhealthindex.org>) had this to say in a new survey: **“The ocean around Seychelles and Germany are the healthiest on the planet”**.

In reaching this conclusion, the researchers measured the oceans according to 10 categories including food provision, their ability to support coastal livelihoods and economies, clean water, coastal protection, artisanal fishing, carbon storage, tourism and biodiversity.

Such conclusions from numerous other recent studies are only just coming to our attention and authorities worldwide now pay closer attention to the findings.

It would appear that the millions of Sooty Terns (*Sterna fuscata nubilosa* – *Goelette*) which have continued to visit our shores for as long as the Seychelles have been inhabited, have known this all along. Which is why every year they return to breed and raise their chicks to the outer island sanctuaries of the Seychelles group.

Without fail, at the start of the South East Monsoon, in the month of May certain islands in the Seychelles group receive amongst them approximately 2.8 million pairs of Sooty Terns. These seabirds will spend those 6 months of this monsoon laying their eggs and rearing their chicks and preparing them for the migratory journey at the end of the season at the end of October.

This spectacular natural phenomenon, probably unique to only a few areas of the world, of which Seychelles is one such place, can be witnessed at close hand on one of the islands which is readily accessible by air; this is on Bird Island, some 60 nautical miles north of Mahé Island.

In this article we discuss, the one thing which most Seychellois associate the Sooty Terns with

and this is their eggs. We shall try to examine what is behind all the fuss as well as the policies that are in place to ensure that the future of the Sooty Terns colonies are protected so that indeed for generations to come each Seychellois who is ever born will taste this at some stage in their lives.

Sooty Terns Eggs; A National Delicacy

Expectations run high around June each year that Sooty Terns eggs will be harvested and shipped to Mahé, Praslin and La Digue where most families hope to get their fair share of this much sought after ‘commodity’. In the years when this does not happen, there is great disappointment and hundreds of ‘experts’ on birds come out with their own theories on what should be done to ensure uninterrupted annual supplies of these eggs.

Most Seychellois living today, will have tasted Sooty Terns eggs that perhaps the taste of this is now so deeply embedded in our DNA that our offspring love them from a very young age. And if we do not get our annual quota of these, we sulk, no doubt about this! Visitors to the islands frown on this practice and some overly conservative visiting environmentalists even deplore this national craving for the consumption of Sooty Tern eggs.

What is little known however is that the authorities and owners of private islands where the birds come to nest, go to great lengths to ensure that the colonies are protected and that there is no over harvesting.

Protecting the Colonies

There are many measures in place to protect the colonies of Sooty Terns. This combined with sound management of the harvesting has resulted in the increase of the size of colonies over the years.

The following table shows the main breeding islands where the birds congregate, as well as the current estimated size of the colonies;

Island	Estimated Population (pairs)
African Banks	5,000
Aride	300,000
Bird	700,000
Cosmoledo	1,100,000
Desnoeuvs	360,000
Farquhar	260,000

Smaller colonies can also be found on Booby Islet, Recif, and Ilot Frégate.

The most closely followed management of a Sooty Tern colony has been on Bird Island, a private island owned by Mr Guy Savy & Co. for over 36 years. It is estimated that the colony of Sooty Terns on this island has grown from around 18,000 pairs of birds in 1960s to close to 700,000 pairs today. This is indeed remarkable. This is no accident and is attributed to direct efforts of the owners who have painstakingly engaged all stakeholders in bringing the best practices to the fore of their conservation efforts in a scientific manner.



Researchers with all manner of qualifications have landed on Bird Island to lend a helping hand with the efforts being done there. In a paper published by Prof C. Feare, the world-renowned and leading scientist in the field summarized the success of this as follows:

“The Sooty Tern colony is now the largest in the world that is readily accessible to tourists. The rate of increase over the first six years of current ownership indicated that Bird Island received Sooty Terns that had been born in other colonies and ringing studies have demonstrated that the Bird Island colony continues to attract birds from other colonies. This attraction, together with the increased productivity of the colony, sometimes leads to problems of birds nesting on (1) the airstrip, where they pose a flight safety hazard, (2) grassland close to the workers’ houses, where they are extremely noisy, and (3) on parts of the beach that are subject to erosion by the sea, where eggs are lost as a result of inundation. Bird Island management wishes to maintain the large and healthy Sooty Tern colony, but also wishes to minimise these problems. In addition, there is a desire to capitalise on the large colony to generate income for the island through the commercial exploitation of eggs.”

“The cost of a Sooty Tern egg has gone up considerably and there is a great deal of moaning about it.”



Furthermore, the report stresses that there is no reason why the island should not undertake commercial harvests of eggs although Prof Feare cautions that the harvest should be undertaken in the context of the overall Sooty Tern population to ensure that in any one year no more than 20% of the total area of Sooty Tern colonies is harvested.

Preparing for Harvest:

In advance of the arrival of the birds, the management of island decides which parts of the breeding area will be ‘reserved’; no eggs will be harvested from these demarcated area. The entire breeding area is then prepared and excessive growth of shrubs and herbs vegetation is dealt with. This is so as to make the breeding ground as accessible and comfortable as possible. Sooty Terns lay their eggs on the ground and as such, it is important that the vegetation is not dense.

Part of the reason for the increased population on Bird Island is exactly this. Clearance of part of the coconut plantation, following the island purchase in 1967, served as a catalyst for the rapid growth of the colony. The eradication of rats and other introduced pests in 1996 had significant effect on colony growth and size.

Elsewhere on the islands which are managed by the Island Development Company, the preparation of the breeding area is not too different. On the Desnoeuvs Island where commercial harvesting is carried out every other year, the ground preparation for the breeding season becomes a costly exercise as workers have to be shipped there ahead of the season to prepare the area and cut back the vegetation. It is believed that the widespread growth of ‘zepi ble’ (an invasive shrub) there is partly responsible for the decrease in the colony.

Harvesting and Distribution of the Eggs.

Harvesting of eggs commences in early June and continues through to the end of July and is carried out only in predetermined demarcated areas and in relation to activities of the previous season. At the end of July collection is stopped, so that the breeding and hatching can continue without interference.

Eggs are still picked manually; this is an arduous task but there are no other methods of doing this without breaking the fragile eggs or causing extensive damage to the breeding area. They are

packed into egg trays which are subsequently put into cartons which are in turn protected with a plastic sleeve to protect from the sea water during transportation to Mahé and the other islands. Some of the vessels carrying this ‘bounty’ are now equipped with chilled rooms and wherever possible these are utilized to ensure that the eggs arrive at destination in the freshest condition possible. This is a far cry from the olden days when the eggs were packed in bulk in wooden cases which bore the brunt of the rough seas and upon arrival at destination, a good percentage of the eggs had been damaged. The vessels carrying them then were sail-powered, hence the sea passage took much longer than on arrival, the resultant smell of the damaged eggs was enough to put some people off them.

Distribution of the eggs are done by shopkeepers who have to register with the island operators. Bird Island carries on this operation from the island itself. There is the usual mad ‘scramble’ for the eggs the moment word is out that ‘birds eggs’ have arrived. Mobile phones and social media now ensure that words of the landing of the eggs spread a lot faster and if you are not fast off the block, you would be left craving for the eggs until the next season.

Cost of the Eggs.

The cost of a Sooty Tern egg has gone up considerably and there is a great deal of moaning about it but despite this, they fast disappear from the outlets. People question the logic behind the cost of the eggs, which are laid by wild birds which do not have to be fed or looked after, they claim.

While this is a fair assumption, we tend to forget the huge logistics associated with getting the eggs from the breeding ground to the market. The costs; made up of labour, from ground preparation to harvesting, packing, transportation and distribution are all very high and is simply not comparable to rearing chicken in barns or cages. In the case of Desnoeuvs Island, manpower has to be transported there as the island does not have a permanent population.

The hidden indirect costs which go on year round, associated with conservation efforts must also be factored into the costing.

Feasting on the Eggs

Seychellois mostly prefer the eggs hard boiled and eaten the moment they come off the stove, while they are still warm, accompanied with a dash of salt and pepper.

Any remaining hard boiled ones, can be sliced and made into a salad with other ingredients of choice but with an onion based dressing on top.

If you are lucky enough to have got a few trays, the next most popular dish made out of them is the omelette and this makes a very good lunch or dinner dish.

A bird egg curry is also a great dish but this is assuming that you have been very lucky and obtained at least a carton of egg and have exhausted all the other preferred cooking methods above. Although the eggs can be fried, you will find very few families indulging in this cooking method.

Is the ‘scramble’ for the eggs worth it?

As the population of Seychelles grows, the demand for the eggs will inevitably grow. In that they are not a critical element of the day to

day diet of Seychellois and that they are not an important food source, we need to pose ourselves the question whether the continued harvesting of the eggs for commercial exploitation and consumption is worth it in the long term. There continues to be diverse views on this subject and the debate will continue unabated for quite a while.

We know for certain that the costs of harvesting these are high, as are the costs of a monitored conservation and management programme. In both situations, there is a degree of interference by man. Should we at some stage decide to stop harvesting and let nature follow its course and allow the birds do their own thing?

No one can offer plausible answers as to what will happen to the colonies if the breeding grounds were not prepared, in other words, we stop man's interference and allow a return to how we found the breeding grounds in the first place. Will the birds disappear?

Perhaps the colonies may reduce initially but because the harvesting has stopped, Mother Nature may find a way of correcting this, as it always does in many other such situations.

Where do the birds go after the close of the season?

There are various theories on this but no one can say with any degree of authority and certainty that any one theory is conclusive. It has been put forward that they migrate to the Northern Hemisphere for the cooler conditions



of the winter there while others insist that they simply roam the Indian Ocean going from place to place. However, there is now growing evidence of their migratory patterns, established through geo-locators attached to the birds. We shall bring you the details of this study in a future edition.

While we may not know their errant habits, what we do know however is that in common with habits of many other species of the animal kingdom, it has been proven that the birds who are born in one location tend to return to the same location to in turn breed. This gives us some degree of comfort that we need not fear of losing the colonies of these migratory birds. After all

they know that our seas have their 'food' in great abundance. As for harvesting of their eggs, the days of this practice may well be numbered.

SEALife Seychelles will continue to report on the debate on this controversial issue and offers its support to all stakeholders in their quest to find a solution to sustain this spectacle which Seychelles has been blessed with.

We thank the management of Bird Island and Prof C. Feare for the information supplied for the production of this article.

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“GO FOR WORLD RECORDS!” URGES SEYCHELLOIS ANGLER, FAIZAL SULEMAN



Grouper (Vyey Tyof)

This is the challenge that the Seychelles representative of the International Game Fishing Association (IGFA) has ‘cast’ to Seychellois anglers. The rep, Faizal Suleman, an experienced and keen angler who has been practicing this sport since the age of 10, elaborated on this challenge when SEALife caught up with him.

When he is not busy managing his mobile phone repair business, “Alo Alo”, Faizal is busy preparing his gear for his next fishing trip or reading about what’s been happening in the world of fishing.

His album of fishing photos is almost an encyclopedia of ‘fishes of Seychelles.’ Amassed over the last 25 years, they speak for themselves about the diversity and richness of the Seychelles fish resource. A sight of the album is enough to whet any enthusiastic angler’s appetite to go out and load up the boat.

Faizal holds the honour of being the personal fishing guide of the Emir of Qatar whenever he visits the Seychelles, a position which is much envied by fellow anglers. Always willing to share his experiences and techniques with his fellow anglers, Faizal has also given lectures free of charge to the students of the Seychelles Maritime School on behalf of the Seychelles Sports Fishing



Amberjack (Somon)

Club of which he is an active member. But now he wants to take his mission further.

In a recent post on Facebook, Faizal urged members of the Seychelles Sports Fishing Club to concentrate their bottom fishing efforts on landing world records. He told SEALife Seychelles “Our marine resources are so rich and teeming with potential world records that we need to take advantage of this in a serious manner as to help place The Seychelles firmly on the world fishing map and as a destination of choice for sports fishing.” “Each ‘big catch’ in each category of bottom fish caught is a potential world record breaker,” Faizal added.

Follow the rules!

“A catch, however big, can only be considered as a contender for a world record if the IGFA rules are obeyed. And this is where local anglers are failing,” explained Faizal.

Most sports or recreational fishermen still prefer to use the traditional tackle known as the ‘gremen’ to get the big ones from the bottom. The objective there is not to go for world records but to catch as much fish as possible and the nicest variety of good eating fish. It is also a source of immense pride and satisfaction for those anglers to have 4 or 5 fish at the end of the ‘gremen’. The latter is a rig comprising of usually 5 to 8 hooks, all baited and sunk to the bottom with a sizeable weight. The leader of the rig is usually assembled using monofilament line (80 lbs class or more) and then tied to the heaving line, twine or spools.

But as Faizal points out, fishing using this method is a non-starter for world record consideration. “Anglers really need to change their fishing habits if we are to make any progress and adopt the IGFA rules, especially in tournaments,” urged Faizal, who supplied the IGFA rules reproduced hereunder.

“Of course this is not an easy task,” he concedes. “The weekend sports fishermen going out for bottom fishing have one sole objective and this is to take back home as much fish as possible. In tournaments, unless it is one specifically designated to run under IGSAF rules, anglers go out to ‘catch’ as many trophies as possible and hence fishing under the IGFA rules will severely handicap their efforts.”

The Seychelles Sports Fishing Club has over recent years stepped up its efforts to get anglers to try to follow many aspects of the IGFA rules in trolling tournaments. It has not however addressed bottom fishing in the same manner for reasons mentioned

above.

Faizal believes that we may need to have some bottom fishing tournaments run along these lines and is actively seeking support of anglers for this to happen. But he warns that it will take a number of years for this to happen, because to go fishing



Humphead Snapper (Bordomar)

is quite expensive and sports fishermen all want to take home a decent catch for their own use so that the costs are defrayed to a certain extent.

“We must all embrace this challenge now”, said the defiant Faizal.

Finally Faizal had this to say about SEALife Seychelles, “I would personally like to congratulate Sealife for their efforts in promoting fishing in Seychelles. Keep up the great work.”

Faizal is happy to share with SEALife readers the following photos of various fish categories - all found in Seychelles waters - which anglers should aim for, and go for breaking world records under the IGFA rules.



Longtail red snapper (Etelis)

The following are the basic IGFA rules, which must be followed:

1. For live or dead bait fishing no more than two single hooks may be used. Both must be firmly imbedded in or securely attached to the bait. The eyes of the hooks must be no less than a hook's length (the length of the largest hook used) apart and no more than 18 inches (45.72 cm) apart. The only exception is that the point of one hook may be passed through the eye of the other hook.

A hook may not precede bait, lure or bait/lure combo by more than one hook's length.

2. The use of a dangling or swinging hook is prohibited. Double or treble hooks are prohibited.

3. A two hook rig for bottom fishing is acceptable if it consists of two single hooks on separate leaders or drops. Both hooks must be imbedded in the respective baits and separated sufficiently so that a fish caught on one hook cannot be foul hooked by the other.

4. A photograph or sketch of the hook arrangement must accompany all record applications made for fish caught on two-hook tackle.

Rods and reels must be used at all times and must conform to IGFA rules. The line used must not exceed 130 lbs test. Line backing, double lime and leaders are not required but if used, these must meet IGFA rules which can viewed at www.igfa.org



Emperor Red Snapper (Bourzwa)



Wahoo (Kinfis)



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TEAM "SCORPION" : STING-IN-THE-TAIL WIN SSFC South-East Monsoon Sailfish Fishing Tournament Results

Fifteen boats and over one hundred and fifty enthusiastic anglers headed out in the rough and windy South-East monsoon early Saturday the 31st August 2013 in search of the heaviest sailfish which would win them the tournament that had been organized by the Seychelles Sports Fishing Club (SSFC) and sponsored by EHW HONDA Seychelles.



Winning Boat "SCORPION"

By 6pm when all the fish had been weighed, boat "SCORPION" who was an underdog delivered the "sting-in-the-tail" by winning the tournament with a 26.5 Kilogram Sailfish, edging out last year's winner Team "Dalon" who had fished on boat "Seysetball" and weighed in a smaller 26 kilogram specimen to take the runner-up spot.

The SSFC had once again teamed up with the Marine Charter Association to host the 12th edition of this popular tournament, while the weather made lives hell for the anglers who spent the day on the not-so-friendly open seas. "The sea was very rough and the South-East monsoon was really blowing," Rajesh Chetty the Team Captain of winning boat SCORPION told the Today reporter. "We decided to fish close to

the Mahe banks and our decision paid off and we landed the winning sailfish."

Apart from team captain Rajesh, other members of team "SCORPION" included Prakash Chetty, Farouk and Kamal Jean-Baptiste, Jim Pool, Sebastien and Christopher Nanon.

Last year's tournament winner Team Dalon brought in the second heaviest sailfish at 26 kilos to take runner-up spot, while Team "Marlin" won the heaviest Yellowfin Tuna with a 19.5 kg fish. Team "MIMI 2" weighed in the heaviest Rainbow Runner (Galate) of 2Kgs, and Team "Yebo Gogo" took the Bonito (6Kgs) and Wahoo (19Kgs) categories. There were ties for the Dorado (3.5kgs) between Team Kuki and Dream Catcher, while Top Gun and Blue Moon shared the spoils by weighing in a 13.5 kilo Dogtooth Tuna each.

Sticking to its conservation drive to release as many billfish as possible, SSFC also awarded Team



Tournament Runner-Up - Team "DALON" fishing on boat Seysetball



A busy afternoon at the Marine Charter as the boats return

Special K who was fishing on boat Blue Lady an award for releasing the most sailfish during the tournament. This special award was sponsored by Honda and Mason's Travel.

At a prize-giving lunch ceremony at Chez Batista the following day, the winners were presented with their prizes. The competition's main sponsor this year was EHW, the authorized Honda distributor for Seychelles. The winning team won a brand new Honda motorbike while other lucky anglers took home Honda Generators and power products, artwork by local artist Michael Arnephie and also special trophies and sculptures.

Source: Today in Seychelles, 2nd September 2013

THE "SPECIAL K" ONE Winner of the Heineken Slam Fishing Tournament

For the second time this year, Team "Special-K" walked away with the top prize in a fishing tournament organized by the Seychelles

Cabo Express boat, they won by catching the only "slam" of the competition which was held on Saturday the 15th June 2013.

a tiny dorado of 2 kilograms which was caught at the last minute very close to Mahe.

During the day, the boats battled the billowing South-East monsoon winds. With extremely rough seas, some boats had to cut their day short while many seasoned anglers returned to the Marine Charter docks in search of seasick tablets!

Winning team "Special K" - Ali Al-Harazi, Michael Mason, Faizal Suleman and Aaron-Lyle Manes



Sports Fishing Club (SSFC). The team of Michael Mason, Faizal Suleman, Aaron-Lyle Manes and professional Kenyan angler Ali Al-Harazi have been together for nearly 2 years and fishing in the Heineken Slam Tournament in their 31-foot

"Special-K" did just that and was the only team who managed to catch that elusive slam, with a yellowfin tuna weighing 24 kilograms, an 18.5 kilo wahoo and

This 3rd edition of the Heineken Slam tournament saw 13 boats and over 100 anglers taking part in this unique competition whereby a team had to catch a "slam" consisting of a dorado, a wahoo and a yellowfin tuna in order to win bonus points.



Heineken Slam Billfish Release Team Members from "Blue Moon" and "Tootie"

"One of the worse days at sea", Charles Mazorcchi told the TODAY reporter, while experienced skipper Gonsalves 'Speedy' Larue reported that not only were the fish not biting, but the swells were as high as 4 metres.

During the tournament and keeping in line with SSFC's ongoing programme of promoting catch and release in the Seychelles, Team "Tootie" skippered by Christophe Houareau, with anglers Rod Thorrington, Timothy Pool, Marcus Naiken and international angler Henry Riggs-Miller released a black marlin estimated to be well over 200 kilos. Several other boats



Runner-up Team "Blue Moon" (L to R) – Justin Vitale, Haensel Esther (holding winning dorado), Pat Camille, Conrad Mondon, Arthur Fourcroy (representing Heineken) & Grant Heyer

including Dreamcatcher, Island Star and Blue Moon released numerous fish including sailfish, barracuda and other species. For their conservation efforts, Team "Tootie" and Team "Blue Moon" both won special prizes for having released the most Billfish in the tournament.

Team "Blue Moon", skippered by the experienced Patrick Camille, won the heaviest dorado contest with a whopping 11.5 kilogram specimen, while Team "Special-K" won with the heaviest Wahoo and Yellowfin Tuna categories.

In the final showdown, Team "Special K" won the tournament with 579.5 points, having earned a bonus of 500 points for catching the only slam in the tournament. They won special Coco-de-Mer trophies designed exclusively for the



Team "Special K" with prize-winning yellowfin tuna and Coco-de-Mer winner's trophy

tournament, as well as other gifts such as beer kegs, caps, shirts and backpacks from the sponsor Heineken. Team "Blue Moon" took second place with 28.5 points, while Team "Dreamcatcher" with skipper Nigel Agnes and anglers Chris and Roelos Coertse, Patrick Desaubin and Richard Marguerite

won 3rd place overall with 26.5 points.

Fishing for the first time with avid angler Marc Houareau on "Island Star", Christian Lablache (of the famous 'Dyab Lavwal' charter boat) and Steve Lablache (pilot at Qatar Airways) who were both visiting from nearby Praslin Island took fourth place with a large catch of tuna, wahoo and barracuda. However, their heaviest dogtooth

tuna was unfortunately not one of the species featured in the slam tournament.

Source: TODAY in Seychelles, 17th June 2013.

THE ANNUAL NATIONAL ROTARY FISHING COMPETITION



The annual Seychelles National Fishing Tournament, brought to you by Seychelles Sport Fishing Club and the Seychelles Rotary Club, took place over the weekend of the 19th to 21st April 2013.

Excitement was high as 17 boats left Marine Charter on Friday at 13:00 to take place in the event that saw over 24 hours of trolling and bottom fishing taking place. A large crowd gathered for the festivities at Marine Charter on Saturday afternoon to welcome the returning

anglers home for the 16:00 cut off time and weigh-in. The Team from Sea Harvest were on hand to weigh and load over 5 tons of fish, the proceeds of which will be donated to various charities and charitable projects.

On Sunday afternoon at Chez Batista, the competitors, their families and friends gathered to celebrate a successful event and to hear the final results as the prize-

giving got under way. After various prizes were handed out for specific species it was time to move into the special prizes. Blue Lady walked away with the prize for "Best Trolling Catch" whilst Island Star was credited for the "Best Trolling Catch." Island Star also walked away with "Best Total Overall Catch" as well as "Best Value Catch" (financial worth of the fish caught). Paola was awarded for "Best Average Catch" (weight of fish caught divided

by fisherman in team).

Team Blue Wave walked away with second place after being awarded for "Best Team Runner Up," for having the second highest points score for the event. In the end it came down to one team who brought home an impressive catch-load and dominated in the prize categories. Team Island Star was crowned the "Best Team" and overall winner with a total point score of 45.

Source: TODAY in Seychelles, 22nd April 2013



TEAM "DYAB LAVWAL" WINS SSFC LA DIGUE OFFSHORE FISHING TOURNAMENT 2013

The Biggest Fishing Tournament in the South West Indian Ocean



Team "Dyab Lavwal", with skipper Christian Lablache and anglers Joel Confait, Matthieu Ferrari and Giovanni Labonte, made history on Saturday the 12th of October 2013, by winning the La Digue Offshore Fishing Tournament for the fourth time in five years.

This special 10th anniversary edition of the annual competition organized by the Seychelles Sports Fishing Club (SSFC) saw 26 boats and over 200 keen anglers from Mahé, Praslin and La Digue gather at the jetty at 5pm on the evening of Friday the 11th October 2013 to kick off the tournament. The fishing teams were vying for a total of 28 cash and trophy prizes, including 21 prizes for the heaviest fish in trolling and bottom-fishing, plus 7 special trophies for best team, best-team runner-up, best trolling catch, best bottom catch, best overall catch, best lady angler and best junior angler under 18 years.

Even the nasty weather that prevailed throughout the night could not stop the enthusiastic anglers from returning home with over 3.2 tonnes of fish, which kept official weigh-masters Alain Khan and Philippe Hoareau, busy. The colourful variety ranged from Yellow-fin Tuna to Dorado, Vara Vara to Bordomar, Karang and Bourgeois, with the fresh fish being bought by the Mahé-based fish processing firm, Oceana Fisheries.

The prize-giving ceremony was held on Sunday the 13th October at the La Digue Island Lodge.

Prizes were divided into two main categories for trolling and bottom fishing, which were further segregated into specific fish classes. There were 7 major trophy awards and the winning teams were chosen for the most aggregate points won throughout the competition.

Notable category winners included Chill2 (Barracuda), Blue Moon (Kingfish), Island Star (Vyey Platte), Dalon (Yellow-fin Tuna), Pippies (Bordomar), Paola (Bourgeois, Captenn Rouge & Karang). The Best Total Overall Catch went to none other than last year's tournament winner, Team Island Star who landed a total of 418.16kgs of fish which was more than any other boat in the tournament.

The newly introduced Best Under 18 Junior Angler trophy was awarded to Tariq Suleman

who landed a 26.6 kilo sailfish. The in- augural Best Lady Angler award went to Caroline d'Offay who landed a sailfish of 25.5 Kilos, edging Natalie Edmond who had landed an 18 kilo kingfish.

The Runner Up trophy, went to Team Paola with 24 points, with father-son team Charles and Charlie Marzocchi and seasoned

tournament anglers Noel Jumeau, Joe Morel and Marshall Hoareau.

Finally, the Best Team award which was sponsored by Seychelles Breweries went to Team Dyab Lavwal from Praslin, who won the winner's trophy back after losing out last year to Team Island Star. Their total 28 points were an accumulation for winning the heaviest fish categories of Dorado, Kingfish, Rainbow Runner (1st and 2nd), Sailfish



and Vara Vara. The team also won a unique SR 20,000 white gold fish pendant sponsored by local jeweller, JOUEL.

"We are truly happy to have won the tournament once again," Dyab Lavwal's Team Captain Christian Lablache told TODAY. "It was probably our most difficult tournament ever as the weather was horrible and battered our small boat around," he added. "But our entire team worked tirelessly for those trophies."

This year the SSFC made a special note of recognizing 6 individuals who were instrumental in starting and developing the La Digue fishing tournament over the past 10 years. Specially-engraved mugs were handed out to Marc Houareau, Gonsalves 'Speedy' Larue, Captain Pierre Grandcourt, John Lucas, Ebrahim Chaka and La Digue's own Robert 'Babi' Labiche. "I am happy that SSFC has recognized the individuals behind this tournament," Babi told TODAY. "I am proud that this event has grown from strength to strength and has now become a permanent and popular event on the La Digue social calendar," he added.

During the afternoon, two marine-life paintings by talented artist Michael Arnephie were also auctioned to the highest bidders to raise additional funds for charity, with a large canvas depicting 2 emperor snappers (Bourgeois) being sold to a private individual for a record SR 25,100.

As is customary each year, the SSFC donates the proceeds from the sale of the fish to a worthwhile community project on La Digue, and this year's funds will go to the Ministry of Education for special projects that will benefit the island's children.



"Best Lady Angler" - Caroline D'Offay

"The Offshore Fishing Tournament has become the most popular fishing tournament in our region," Chairman Tarak Patel told the TODAY reporter. "For several years now, SSFC has donated the proceeds of the fishing tournament to the La Digue community and future tournaments will continue to benefit the people of La Digue," he added.

Source: TODAY in Seychelles, 15th October 2013 - Edited for space constraints.





We introduce this new section to feature news items which you may have missed out on. We hope you find them interesting and that they add to the wide variety of subjects we seek to cover in each edition.

BE ONE OF THE FIRST TO RETURN TO COSMOLEDO

The Alphonse Island guide team has announced that they will be returning to Cosmoledo Atoll, Seychelles. The joint venture between Silhouette Cruises and Alphonse Island ensures that all client expectations are met and guests get to return safely to these magnificent atolls.

In past years, Cosmoledo has become known as the best Giant Trevally (GT) fishery in the world and has become the benchmark for anglers searching for the ultimate saltwater flats destination. The sheer numbers and size of GT's has amazed the fly fishing world, with anglers from across the globe queuing up to sample the ultimate fishing playground, until it was closed 4 years ago due to piracy.

It has been rested and the fishing has most certainly rejuvenated itself to an untouched ecosystem full of hungry GT's. The Cosmoledo trip is unique in the fact that anglers get the opportunity to fish three atolls during their week, namely Assumption, Cosmoledo, and Astove.

Cosmoledo's large white sand flats, lagoon edges and channels are without question ruled by the notorious Giant Trevally, so much so that it is often referred to as planet earth's GT headquarters! Even though the Seychelles waters are considered to be safe there will be 4 security personnel on board at all times as a precaution.

At the time of going to press the following weeks at USD 14,500 per person sharing accommodation and 3 anglers per tender and guide, were still available:

- 19 - 26 March 14, 2 - 9 April 14, 9 - 16 April 14, 16 - 23 April 14



Photos Courtesy of Alphonse Island

FISHING FOR GOLD

JOUEL partners with Seychelles Sports Fishing Club.

Famous luxury brand JOUEL has announced a new partnership with the Seychelles Sports Fishing Club (SSFC) with its sponsorship of seven unique gold pendants worth SR 20,000 apiece to be presented to the winners of the seven annual SSFC fishing tournaments.

The one-of-a-kind pendants have been crafted by one of JOUEL'S designer in Cape Town, South Africa. Each ornament is

uniquely designed in the form of a sports fish and the tournament winners' names will be engraved on all pendants.

"When we were approached by SSFC earlier this year for sponsorship, we decided to offer something different in the form of an authentic piece of jewelry instead of cash or the usual trophies," Mr. Rod Thorrington the Managing Director of JOUEL explained. *"We learned from the SSFC Executive Committee that their vision was to put Seychelles firmly on the world fishing map, and without hesitation we decided to join them in partnership*

in order to jointly promote our country's rich and bountiful fishing grounds," he added.

The jewellery pieces are made of white or yellow gold, and each piece has been handcrafted exclusively for the SSFC awards by the designer rather than cast in a mould machine. As unique pieces, they are not for sale and will not be replicated and are designed to be worn only by those willing and tough enough to take their boats out to sea in the fishing tournaments organised under the partnership.



Christian Lablache of Dyab Lavwal

"We are thrilled to be partnering with JOUEL in our quest to continue promoting Seychelles as a world class fishing destination," Mr. Tarak Patel the SSFC Chairman said. "Not only do these beautiful, expensive pieces of jewellery offer our winners exceptional prizes and more reason to compete in our exciting tournaments, but this partnership ushers in a new era for our club in that it brings us closer to our goal of securing long-term partnerships with companies in order for us to plan our tournament dates well in advance," he added. "This allows us to attract more sports fishing tourists to our shores as they can then plan their trips around our tournament calendar".

JOUEL's is Seychelles' premier luxury retail company, established in Seychelles in 2003, and has its headquarters and flagship outlet located at the historic Kenwyn House in the heart of Victoria. A launch sponsor of SEALife Seychelles, this latest partnership confirms JOUEL'S commitment to all things marine.

The first pendant - in the form of a Bourzwa - was awarded to the Dyab Lavwal team - lucky winners of the 10th edition of the La Digue Offshore Fishing Tournament which was held on the 11th to 13th of October on the island of La Digue. Members of the

White Gold Bourzwa - Trophy Pendant for the 10th anniversary La Digue Offshore Fishing Tournament



fishing community and SEALife readers may see the sports fish pendant in its precious metal flesh and the trophies for upcoming tournaments where they are on display at JOUEL's company headquarters and flagship store at Kenwyn House in Victoria.

Thanks to Today In Seychelles for allowing us to reproduce their article.

White Gold Marlin trophy pendant for the winner of 30 November's "Seychelles Marlin Fishing Tournament 2013" - the final competition of the year.



A NEW CAT COCOS



The new CatCocos "Isle of Mahe" by Inter Island Boats - three decks, total capacity of 475 passengers with 12 crew members

The "Isle of Mahe" - A mechanism to develop and stimulate the tourism market.

Tuesday 20 August saw the new Cat Cocos "Isle of Mahe" launched in a traditional and joyful ceremony held at the Inter-Island Quay. Present for the launching which marked the birth of "Isle of Mahe", the first boat of Inter Island Boats' fleet to boast three decks and a

total capacity of 475 passengers with 12 crew members onboard at one go were dignitaries Minister Vincent Meriton, Minister Alain St. Ange, Minister Jean-Paul Adam, Minister Idith Alexander, Seychelles Tourist Board CEO Ms. Sherin Naiken, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese Denis Wiehe, Anglican Priest Danny Elizabeth, French Ambassador Mrs. Genevieve Lancu, Ex-President James Mancham, and delegates from the public and private sector.

"In early July my father and I flew to test the final sea trial of "Isle of Mahe"; the test was highly conclusive and we were happy with its final results and the boat was signed off on July 5. I would like to congratulate my father, our chairman, Mr. Joseph Albert, a man of vision who has made, through hard work, significant contributions to key sectors of our tourism sector," stated Mr. Guillaume Albert.

Mr Albert thanked Mr. Peter Goldsmith, the first General Manager of Travel Services Seychelles and one of the pioneering minds behind the creation

of Inter Island Boats; Captain Guy Obren, the expert consultant for the manufacturing of the Inter Island Boats' vessels; Mr. Andrew Palmyre, the young local artist who had designed the boat's hood and interiors and local DMCs for their belief in the services of the company and their patronage.

Mr Albert advised of new Customer Care procedures on board CatCocos vessels to be

Minister St Ange and Chairman Mr Joe Albert cut the ribbon



implemented on board along with the introduction of Public Announcement messages to increase customer contact.

Minister St. Ange congratulated and thanked the Albert family and the management of Inter Island Boats for providing such great services for Seychellois and visitors alike and stressed the importance of the new most advanced CatCocos boat as being a mechanism to develop and stimulate the tourism market.

The launching ceremony was followed by a surprise champagne sunset cruise on board the luxurious "Isle of Mahe".



Naming and blessing the new vessel - Bishop of the Catholic Diocese Denis Wiehe and Anglican Priest Danny Elizabeth



THE 1ST ANNUAL JUNIOR FISHING TOURNAMENT

Promoting fishing to the juniors of Seychelles", was the slogan used by the Seychelles Sport Fishing Club to launch the Inaugural National Junior Fishing Competition held on the 10th of August 2013.

Seventy eight excited junior fishers made up of mainly orphans from Foyer de Nazareth, Foyer de La Solitude, Foyer de La Providence and the President's Village set out on various boats



sponsored by members of the SSFC, Mason's Travel and the Children's Foundation to test their skills against each other. For many, this was the first time fishing, let alone setting foot on a boat.

The competition was organised in 2 categories – 5 to 10 yrs old and they did bottom fishing only from MY Anahita, while the 11-16 yrs old took part in both trolling and bottom fishing.

The one-day event which was described as total success by the organisers, ended with the prize giving at the Marine Charter the same day at the completion of the weighing.

The prize winners were:
 Overall Winner Girl: Rusha from Foyer de La Solitude with 7 fishes.
 Overall Winner Boy: Jean Michel from President's Village.



The organisers were delighted with the outcome of the competition, especially with the fun and joy it gave these junior competitors who will surely look forward to the event each year. The prize winners will no doubt wish to proudly defend their titles... in similar manner to the senior fishers.

REVISION OF PORT TARIFFS



On 30th September 2013, the Seychelles Ports Authority (SPA) announced the revision of port tariffs and harbour dues, the first since eleven years. The revised Harbour Dues Regulations of 2002, which is a set of tariffs regulated under the SPA Act came into effect on the 1st October 2013 as S.I. 60 of 2013. According to the press release the revision is part of Seychelles Ports Authority's strategic vision to ensure that it remains financially sustainable and strategically relevant as a regional maritime hub in the face of increasing challenges in the shipping industry thereby safeguarding this extremely important gateway to the Seychelles economy.

There are two main components of the revision:

1. An increase of 25-30% in port tariffs for vessels on international voyages. The objective of this revision is to align old tariffs (since 2002) to the current economic conditions and operational and running costs of the SPA.

2. Introduction of new tariffs for domestic vessels (as per schedule 2 of the harbour dues regulations – S.I. 60 of 2013). The new tariffs is applicable to all coastal vessels (passenger, ferries, cargoes, pleasure vessels) occupying berth, on discharge, or loading. It is to be noted that artisanal and semi-industrial vessels are exempted from the new tariffs. The introduction of the new tariffs for coastal vessels is part of SPA's strategy to have all the domestic jetties to generate their own revenues in order to sustain the development of facilities and services on these respective port facilities.

Announcing the increase in rates the SPA said that the increase in fees was necessary if the Port is to remain profitable and to continue to sustain its infrastructural and operational obligations. Changes in the domestic and global economic landscapes, increases in operational costs such as fuel and other related products and services in the last eleven years have impacted SPA's revenues, thus limiting its ability to invest in new infrastructural and operational capabilities.

"The introduction of fast ferries and more modern cargo vessels have acted as a catalyst accelerating the pace of development of the inner islands while simultaneously increasing both the demand

and expectations for facilities of higher quality. To a greater extent, the rapid development in the shipping industry, and the inner islands such as Praslin, had left the port infrastructure lagging behind, hence the need to improve port facilities and services so as to match the high level of development," said the SPA spokesman. The additional fees to be generated by the revised port tariffs will go towards sustaining SPA's operations and assist in developing new and more modern port facilities on Mahe, Praslin and La Digue, improving the type of facilities and quality of services being offered to all port users, the SPA said.

The SPA advised it was necessary to continue to maintain both the competitive and comparative advantages of Port Victoria in its transformation into a regional maritime hub and to improve the services it renders to both its local and international clientele if it is to consolidate its position as one of the most efficient ports in the region.

SPA gave its assurance that "...despite the increase in port tariffs Port Victoria remains competitive with fees 10% cheaper than most ports in the region. This will help it maintain its comparative advantage as one of the most efficient in the region in terms of cargo handling, stevedoring, tug and other services and keep Port Victoria as one, if not the favoured port of call of the region for cargo and industrial fishing activities."

ALPHONSE 2013 / 2014 SEASON STARTS WITH RECORD CATCHES



A "Super Grand Slam" start

The first two weeks of the Alphonse season saw the most incredible start with a "Super Grand Slam" being landed after only a couple of days by catching a Milkfish, GT, Giant Triggerfish and a Bonefish all in one day's fishing. The memorable catch bell continues to ring every evening to serenade all the fantastic catches that have occurred on a daily basis. The GT's are around in really good numbers sparking an infectious bout of GT fever. The action has been tackle-busting at times, with stories of broken backing, hooks pulling, bite-offs, fly lines snapping and of course a significant number of

great GT photos. The season not only started with a flurry of GT's but the big ones are around with 4 fish of over 60lbs being landed in the first 2 weeks, the biggest being in excess of 70lbs. And on the first morning of Week 3, a 75lbs GT was caught by Paul Buckland.

The Biggest Milkfish Ever Caught on Fly, Monster GT's and More!

The Milkfish fishing has been spectacular with large schools congregating as they feed along the various scum lines to the West of St François. Some teams are hooking as many as 8 fish in a session before returning to the flats to concentrate on Bonefish, GT's, Triggers and Permit. Two anglers came very close to "Grand Slams", with one chap catching 2 Milkfish, some Bonefish and a Giant Triggerfish in a day and the other landing a big GT, Triggerfish, Bonefish but unfortunately losing the Milkfish. A special mention has to be made about Greg De Villiers's 45lbs Milkfish that he landed after a 1 hour 30 minute fight, stretching 2 miles out to sea. Oliver Dawber caught a 60lbs

GT on his second day and then went out on the following day to catch a 70lbs GT. It's all go at the moment - the first day of week 3 started with 16 year old Tommy Hradecka landing a "Grand Slam" and numerous other anglers catching GT's, Triggerfish and Milkfish.

Source: Alphonse Island
Photos Courtesy of Alphonse Island



Greg De Villiers and probably the biggest fly caught Milkfish ever.

THE DESROCHES 2013 / 2014 SEASON STARTS WITH A BILLFISH BONANZA!



The season is on the change as flat calm seas and electric yellow sunrises greet our mornings. As the South-Easterly monsoon starts to dissipate from its annual visit, the seas flatten to allow our boats the chance to venture further away from Desroches to the surrounding ridges and trenches, giving our teams the chance to targeting billfish. Desroches is fast becoming known as the Seychelles destination to chase after billfish, as the waters around this jewel are home to not only fantastic numbers of big Sailfish, but also Blue, Black and Striped Marlin. The Sailfish numbers start climbing in October and stay constant all the way until May.



This season has started with record numbers of Marlin in the area as you can see by the report:

- Day 1 - 1 and a half hours targeting Marlin, 2 strikes, none landed
- Day 2 - Team landed a Black Marlin of 450Lbs
- Day 3 - Vadium Titovets fought a Black Marlin of approximately 500Lbs for 30 to 40 minutes before the hook pulled. 1 more strike but no hook up.
- Day 4 - Team landed a Black Marlin of 300lbs.

Yellowfin, Dogtooth, Sailfish, Wahoo, GT's & Marlin, We Have It All!

During the South Easterly period the catches of Yellowfin, Sailfish and Wahoo were impressive, with regular action packed sessions. Since July the teams have already recorded over 400 Yellowfin, with the largest estimated around the 45kgs. An impressive 20 Sailfish have been caught and released, 5 of those been achieved on fly. As our season progresses the Cast-A-Way team look forward to adding to the growing catches and memorable fish like a Greater Barracuda of 40kgs, extremely large GT's and over 110 Wahoo, with fish of up to 38kgs. Judging by the catches over the last few months we are heading for an exciting bumper times.

Source and Photos Courtesy of Desroches Island

Associations and Clubs



Marine Charter Association 4322126



Marine Conservation Society.....43454



Seychelles Sports Fishing Club..... 4676000



Seychelles Yacht Club 4322362

Authorities and Agencies

Seychelles Fishing Authority 4670300

Seychelles Maritime 4322663
and Safety Authority

Seychelles Ports Authority 4294700

Bait and Ice



FINS – 'Fishing In Seychelles'2531531
Pro-Tackle Shop



Oceana Fisheries..... 4224712

Beach Toys and Accessories

Cressi - HSL..... 4611308



Kidstuff Shop..... 4322008

Boat Accessories

Adesho Marine 4224216

Chelsea Marine..... 4373824

Indian Ocean Marine..... 4224405

Marine Equipment & Services..... 4374448

Boat Charters

Angel Tours Pty Ltd - Praslin 2515327



Elegant Yachting (Pty) Ltd 2515736
Mahe



Island Charters..... 4676000
Mahe



Lady Caroline.....4284700
Praslin

Lone Wolf Charters..... 2570344
Mahe

Reel Time 2515678

Boatyards

Marine & Engineering Works..... 4373439

Naval Services..... 4289000

Dive Centres

Angel Fish Dive Operations 2729021
Mahe



Big Blue Divers. 4261106
Mahe

Blue Sea Divers.....2526051

Octopus Dive Centre 4232602
Praslin



Underwater Centre Seychelles.....4247165

Diving Equipment - Sales, Service, Repairs

Big Blue Divers 4261106
Beau Vallon, Mahe

Cressi - HSL.....4611308

Fishing Tackle



Boaters World4374874

Chelsea Marine..... 4373824

Indian Ocean Marine..... 4224405



FINS – 'Fishing In Seychelles'2531531
Pro-Tackle Shop



The Fishing Specialist, Eden Plaza.....2522508
Mahé

Fishmongers



Oceana Fisheries..... 4224712

Inter Island Ferries

Cat Cocos..... 4324843

Inner Island Ferry..... 4232394

Marinas

Eden Island Marina 4346300

Seychelles Yacht Club 4322362
(Members Only)

The Wharf Hotel & Marina 4670700

Marine Engineering

Adesho Marine 4224216

Hydrolic (Pty) Ltd..... 4374450

Marine & Engineering..... 4373439

Naval Services (1994) Ltd..... 4289000



Sey Yacht Management (Pty) Ltd.....2515736

Marine Equipment and Accessories

Abhaye Valabhji Pty Ltd 4434343

Adesho Marine 4224216



Boaters World..... 4374874

Chelsea Marine 4373824

Marine Equipment & Services..... 4374448

Rouillon Enterprises (Pty) Ltd..... 4421386

Marine Art and Graphics



FINS – ‘Fishing In Seychelles’2531531
Pro-Tackle Shop



Hi-Tech Graphics 4324842

Michael Adams Paintings.....4361006

Michael Arnephie Artworks.....4324842



Switch 4676000

Marine Inboard Engines

Adesho Marine 4224216

Marine Insurance



SACOS Insurance Company 4295000

Marine Outboard Motors



Abhaye Valabhji Pty Ltd 4434343
(Yamaha)

ACE Marine Ltd..... 4373735
(Suzuki)

Indian Ocean Marine 4224405
(Tohatsu)

Maritime Electronics

Seycmi (Tohatsu) 4224563

Marine Paints & Antifouling

Adesho Marine 4224216

Indian Ocean Marine 4224405

Marine Equipment & Services..... 4374448

Penlac Company Ltd 4344606

Maritime Training Schools

Maritime Training School 4322663

Sail Training Scheme 4671200

Seafood Restaurants

Café des Art - Praslin..... 4294800



La Gigolette 4284700
Praslin



La Scala..... 4247535
Mahe

Snorkelling Equipment

Big Blue Divers..... 4261106

Chelsea Marine..... 4373824

Cressi - HSL.....4611308

Kidstuff Shop..... 4322008

Swimming Aids & Beachwear

Cressi - HSL..... 4611308



Kidstuff Shop..... 4322008

Super Yacht Managers

Seal Superyachts Seychelles 4242066



Sey Yacht Management (Pty) Ltd2515736



Speedy Yacht Management..... 4601278

Special Thank You!

TODAY
— in Seychelles —

DID YOU KNOW?

The fastest fish with a maximum recorded swimming speed of 112 km/ph is the:

Sailfish (Istiophorus Platypterus):

Sailfish grows fast and can attain lengths of 1.2-1.5 m in only one year and usually feeds on the surface of the oceans or at mid-depths on smaller pelagic fish. The sailfish do not grow more than 3 meters in length and rarely weigh over 90 kg. Sailfish can be caught at any time in Seychelles although they are to be found in greater quantities in the South East monsoon especially in the months of July, August and September. The average weight of sailfish in Seychelles is between 28 to 35 kgs.

Black Marlin (Istiompax Indica):

The Black Marlin formerly known as Makaira indica, was recently classified as Istiompax indica. They are considered to be amongst the world's premier game fish. The biggest officially recorded world record for this species is the all tackle record of a black marlin weighing 1560 lbs (707.6 kg) taken by Alfred Glassell in 1953 off Cabo Blanco in Peru.

Source: <http://www.AntiqueFishingReels.com/galleryFishing.html>



Photo Courtesy of Marc Houareau

Barracuda, Great Sphyræna Barracuda

Tippet | W-08 kg (16 lb) 60 lbs. 0 oz. - 27.21 kgs | Cosmoledo Atoll Seychelles - Jodie L. Johnson 12/3/2005 FR

Barracuda, Great Sphyræna Barracuda

Tippet | W-10 kg (20 lb) 28 lbs. 0 oz. - 12.7 kgs | Cosmoledo Atoll Seychelles Jodie L. Johnson 12/3/2005 FR

Bonefish Albula spp.

Tippet | W-02 kg (4 lb) 6 lbs. 0 oz. - 2.72 kgs Alphonse Island Seychelles | Ms. Annick Prot-Chopin 4/5/2000 FR

Bonito, Striped Sarda Orientalis

All-Tackle | 23 lbs. 8 oz. - 10.65 kgs Victoria, Mahe Seychelles | Anne Cochain 2/19/1975 AT

Grouper, Moustache Epinephelus chabaudi

All-Tackle | 121 lbs. 4 oz. - 55 kgs Desroches Island Seychelles | Charles-Antoine Roucayrol 1/1/1998 AT

Guitarfish, Giant Rhynchobatus Djeddensis

All-Tackle | 119 lbs. 0 oz. - 54 kgs Bird Island Seychelles | Peter Lee 10/9/1995 AT

Kawakawa, Euthynnus Affinis

Tippet | W-02 kg (4 lb) 6 lbs. 8 oz. - 2.94 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/15/2007 FR

Queenfish, Doublespotted Scomberoides

Lysan M-03 kg (6 lb) 5 lbs. 10 oz. - 2.55 kgs Belombre, Mahe Seychelles | Christophe Houareau 5/28/2007 LC

Queenfish, Doublespotted Scomberoides

Lysan M-08 kg (16 lb) 4 lbs. 7 oz. - 2.01 kgs Anse Royale Seychelles | Christophe E. Houareau 3/10/2007 LC

Runner Rainbow, Elagatis Bipinnulata

Tippet | W-04 kg (8 lb) 8 lbs. 0 oz. - 3.62 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/3/2007 FR

Runner Rainbow, Elagatis Bipinnulata

Tippet | W-06 kg (12 lb) 8 lbs. 0 oz. - 3.62 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/1/2007 FR

Runner Rainbow, Elagatis Bipinnulata

Tippet | W-08 kg (16 lb) 9 lbs. 0 oz. - 4.08 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/3/2007 FR

Trevally bigeye, Caranx Sexfasciatus

All-Tackle | 31 lbs. 8 oz. - 14.3 kgs Poivre Island Seychelles | Les Sampson 4/23/1997 AT

Trevally bigeye,

Caranx Sexfasciatus M-37 kg (80 lb) 31 lbs. 8 oz. - 14.3 kgs Poivre Island Seychelles | Les Sampson 4/23/1997 LC

Trevally bluefin, Caranx Melampygus

Tippet | M-02 kg (4 lb) 6 lbs. 4 oz. - 2.83494 kgs Cosmoledo Atoll Seychelles | Rockwell Hammond Jr. 2/18/2008 FR

Trevally bluefin, Caranx Melampygus

Tippet | M-03 kg (6 lb) 9 lbs. 0 oz. - 4.08 kgs Cosmoledo Atoll Seychelles | Rockwell Hammond Jr. 2/18/2006 FR

Trevally giant, Caranx Ignobilis

Tippet | M-01 kg (2 lb) 4 lbs. 8 oz. - 2.04115 kgs Cosmoledo Atoll Seychelles | Rockwell Hammond Jr. 2/18/2008 FR

Trevally giant, Caranx Ignobilis

Tippet | M-02 kg (4 lb) 12 lbs. 0 oz. - 5.44 kgs Cosmoledo Atoll Seychelles | Rockwell Hammond Jr. 2/16/2006 FR

Trevally giant, Caranx Ignobilis

Tippet | M-03 kg (6 lb) 19 lbs. 8 oz. - 8.84 kgs Cosmoledo Atoll Seychelles Stephane Warnier 5/2/2006 FR

Trevally giant, Caranx Ignobilis

Tippet | W-02 kg (4 lb) 10 lbs. 0 oz. - 4.53 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/14/2007 FR

Trevally giant, Caranx Ignobilis

Tippet | W-04 kg (8 lb) 36 lbs. 0 oz. - 16.32 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/1/2007 FR

Trevally giant, Caranx Ignobilis

Tippet | W-08 kg (16 lb) 45 lbs. 3 oz. - 20.5 kgs Alphonse Island Seychelles | Colleen Vaday 5/27/1999 FR

Trevally giant, Caranx Ignobilis

Tippet | W-10 kg (20 lb) 33 lbs. 8 oz. - 15.19 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/15/2007 FR

Tuna dogtooth, Gymnosarda Unicolor

Tippet | W-06 kg (12 lb) 39 lbs. 8 oz. - 16.55 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/3/2007 FR

Tuna dogtooth, Gymnosarda Unicolor

Tippet | W-10 kg (20 lb) 116 lbs. 0 oz. - 52.61 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/9/2007 FR

Tuna dogtooth, Gymnosarda Unicolor

W-06 kg (12 lb) 38 lbs. 0 oz. - 17.23 kgs Denis Island Seychelles | Ms. Georgette Douwma 3/27/1976 LC

Tuna dogtooth, Gymnosarda Unicolor

W-10 kg (20 lb) 66 lbs. 0 oz. - 29.93 kgs Denis Island Seychelles | Ms. Georgette Douwma 4/7/1977 LC

Wahoo, Acanthocybium Solandri

Tippet | W-08 kg (16 lb) 20 lbs. 0 oz. - 9.07 kgs Aldabra Chain Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 1/16/2007 FR

Wahoo, Acanthocybium Solandri

Tippet | W-10 kg (20 lb) 32 lbs. 8 oz. - 14.74 kgs Cosmoledo Atoll Seychelles | Jodie L. Johnson 10/13/2004 FR

Wrasse humphead, Maori Cheilinus Undulatus

All-Tackle | 43 lbs. 10 oz. - 19.8 kgs Platt Island Seychelles | Vincent Hock Boon 4/4/1997 AT



2014-2015 TOURNAMENT CALENDAR

Year	Tournament Name	Date
2014	SSFC Marlin Slam Tournament	Saturday 18th January
	Seychelles National Fishing Tournament	Friday 11th & Saturday 12th April
	SSFC/Heineken Funfish Slam	Saturday 28th June
	South-East Monsoon Sailfish Tournament	Saturday 9th August
	La Digue Offshore Tournament	Friday 24th & Saturday 25th October
	Seychelles Marlin Fishing Tournament	Saturday 29th November
2015	SSFC Marlin Slam Tournament	Saturday 31st January
	Seychelles National Fishing Tournament	Friday 17th & Saturday 18th April
	SSFC/Heineken Funfish Slam	Saturday 27th June
	South-East Monsoon Sailfish Tournament	Saturday 25th July
	La Digue Offshore Tournament	Friday 23rd & Saturday 24th October
	Seychelles Marlin Fishing Tournament	Saturday 21st November



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/seychellesfishing>

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL: [SSFCMAIL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ssfcmail@gmail.com)

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Distinctly Seychellois



Proudly and freshly produced by Seychelles Breweries Ltd.

NOT FOR SALE TO PERSONS UNDER THE AGE OF 18

DON'T DRINK & DRIVE

DRINK RESPONSIBLY.

