



CHUMBE ISLAND CORAL PARK NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2003



Greetings to you all from Chumbe!!!

As ever, there have been some eventful moments on Chumbe and it seems like just yesterday that we were putting together our last Newsletter!!

The island remains stunningly beautiful and following these latest rains the island forest has leaped to rejuvenated life - with a plethora of vibrantly coloured butterflies inquisitively greeting guests along the paths, energetic red bishops hopping excitedly from tree to tree, kingfishers darting through the mangrove pools and skinks scurrying to feast on the array of little bugs enjoying the fresh vegetation.

But let us start with the all-important ingredient to the smooth running of the project, the TEAM.

As you might remember, Pip and Aaron (island managers) moved on from Chumbe in May 2002 and in their place came Debs and Oliver. Independently hired (not a couple) unfortunately Oliver's time with us was brief and he left for fresh fields in August 02. Debs, who then became the Island Manager, was from Zimbabwe and with her extensive experience in Lodge management made an extremely impressive impact

on the capacity building of the lodge team and really did excellent work in building confidence and commitment.

When she left the project in February this year (2003) it gave us a chance to see if the team was now truly ready to manage the lodge and technical sides of the project on their own.

And...

they have done superbly!!!!!! This was a real opportunity for the team. As you know, the philosophy of the project is that ultimately management responsibilities would be handed to Zanzibari's and Tanzanian nationals. Well... this was the test of the pudding (as it were), and the team were all extremely eager to prove themselves capable. It was their chance to finally put into action all that they had learned.

It has been so impressive that we are now keeping the local management in place. Sadick is now the overall Lodge Manager and has come in leaps and bounds over the last years. Following his scholarship in South Africa (arranged by the Chumbe office -CHICOP-, with some financial support from WWF); where he went to study English Language for three months) he has become more confident and assertive in his role. In his probationary time as Lodge Manager he managed to gain great respect from the rest of the team and his proving himself a fair, considerate and confident leader. He has ensured that Chumbe remains the warm, welcoming home away from home for our guests, and since his promotion the comments book is full of nothing but praise for his expert management of the Chumbe Lodge.

In the technical department Ali Bashiru has been promoted to the Chumbe Island Technical Manager. With the skills he has learned under the previous technical managers, and with his long-term service for CHICOP from the construction days and through all the developments, Ali now has a keen insight into the technical requirements, often quite complex with the state of the art eco-architecture and technology utilized on the island to ensure the Lodge is 100% environmentally friendly.

The Chumbe Education Programmes:

This component of the Project has gone from strength to strength, most astoundingly in the last six months. Following the success of our Phase 2 programme in 2001 where we conducted teacher training workshops and ran pilot schools excursions there was a lull in the education activity on the island due to changes in the political matrix of the Ministry of Education and the need to re-boot the initiative with new counterparts. In order to facilitate

this we took the services of Lisa Baum. Lisa came out to the project in November last year as our Ramadhan Ranger (you may remember that during the month of Ramadhan we get a volunteer ranger to



cover the snorkelling work of the Islamic rangers as entering the water would be considered a break of fast during this time). Well, Lisa excelled as Ramadhan ranger, and, as a trained teacher, she doubled as an English teacher for the staff on the island. With her experience in education she was the perfect candidate to keep on in the position of education co-ordinator; to give the education component the full time commitment needed for re-booting it in Zanzibar.

Following the same protocol, with the "Coral Reef Module" -produced by CHICOP- as a basis for the teaching, Lisa has worked closely with Ranger Khamis (our full time island based education coordinator) and has so far achieved wonderful results in this phase of the programme. Schools have been visiting Chumbe since the beginning of the year and up to ten trips per month have been successfully completed in this time. Television Zanzibar covered the first trips of this phase and things look set to continue and flourish.

Conservation and Research:

The MPA of Chumbe (Marine Protected Area) continues to be safeguarded by the rangers who upkeep their daily reports of activities. In June we are taking on a new role in the Project – Conservation Co-ordinator. This position will be based half on and half off the island. On the island the co-ordinator will focus on furthering the scientific training and developing of the ranger team, enhancing anti-poaching skills and on-site management of researchers.

Both Omari Musa and Khamis Khalfan now have their open water diving certificates, so they can start to more effectively assist researchers and monitoring in the MPA. In the office the conservation co-ordinator will deal with all marine and conservation related issues, research proposals and the like, taking the research component of the project onto the next level.

The preliminary report from our camera surveys for the Aders duiker (antelope) on the island has been completed, by Don and Jenny MacPherson. These animals, first translocated to Chumbe in 2000 are the most endangered species of Antelope in Africa. They have been monitored using camera traps in the forest that sense movement via infrared and heat sensors. Findings so far have identified 2 of the translocated males and 1 of the females as positively captured repeatedly on film. Identification of the remaining animals has proved difficult as the identification ear tags do not always appear clearly in the photos (ie, duiker turning away, leaf in the way etc). It would seem that two of the duikers have teamed up and are repeatedly captured in the same territory area (suggesting a coupling) and earlier trackers findings of juvenile droppings suggest the results of this union have been positive.



Numerous other research projects, from PhD studentships to small scale projects have been carried out on Chumbe in the last year (an abundance study for *Birgus latro*, the coconut crab; an abundance and distribution study for *Uvariadendron kirkii* tree) and we continue to encourage research in both the MPA and Forest Reserve as more information about these fragile habitats emerges.

And finally, a note from the Project Manager:

Hi Everybody,

I hope you have enjoyed catching up with the Chumbe news in this circular and I'd like to take this opportunity share with you some of my own news.

As many of you know, I have worked as Project Manager of Chumbe for nearly six years now and towards the end of last year I took the heart wrenching decision that it was time to move on. It was an extremely difficult decision as Chumbe has been my life and the very air I breathe for the last years. But, as much of my work was to get

the project up and running, much of my work is done and it's time for the project to have a new Leader.

Thankfully we have been extremely fortunate in finding an excellent new Project Manager!! Her name is Helen Peeks and she is a committed environmentalist with extensive work experience in Zanzibar, speaks Swahili, and has lots of experience in Project management. We are confident she will make a very successful Project Manager, and over the coming months I'm sure you will all get to know her.

I have immensely enjoyed working with all of you over the years and I'm sure our paths will cross again. I'm staying in the conservation profession and am hoping to go on to my next project following a few weeks of break time after I leave Chumbe.

The tourism team of course remains in place. The ever reliable Francesca at the helm of "reservations" and the superb team on the island ensuring our guests enjoy the famous Chumbe hospitality and top notch service.

It would be great to stay in touch, and I can always be contacted through the Chumbe office, as I'll still be involved from a distance.

Thank you for helping to make these years with Chumbe some of the most wonderful years of my life.

*With Warmest Regards
Eleanor Carter*