



FRIENDS OF MAZIWE

NEWSLETTER

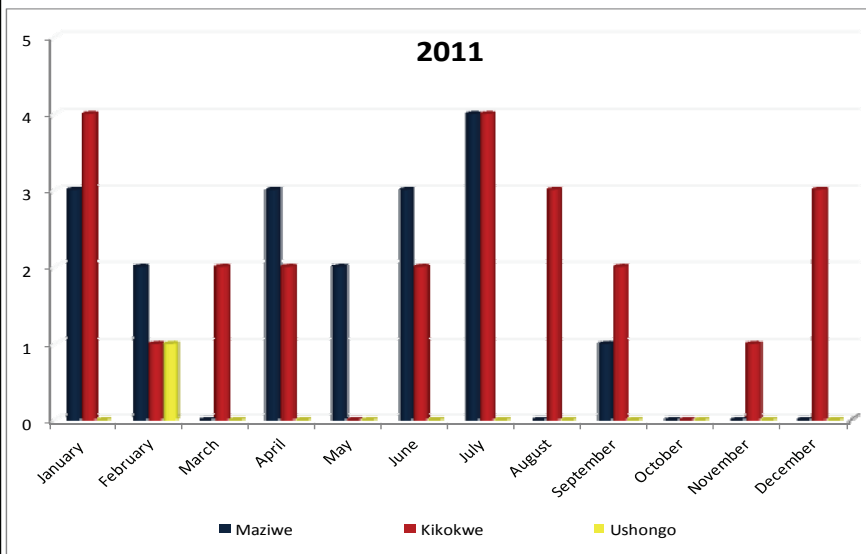
3rd Edition

January - March 2012

Welcome to the third issue of the Friends of Maziwe newsletter. This newsletter will bring you news and updates on the various projects happening along the Ushongo coast and the island itself. Maziwe is a Marine Reserve which supports a vibrant coral reef ecosystem and is a nesting ground for the Green turtle. We hope that this newsletter will help raise awareness and generate support for the coming years.

The turtle conservation project 2011

2011 has been another successful year for the Turtle Conservation Project in Ushongo/Kikokwe. A total of 43 nests were recorded in the last 12 month with 18 nests from Maziwe, 24 nests from Kikokwe and 1 nest from Ushongo. Because of the inundation on Maziwe Island and Kikokwe beach, 41 nests got relocated into the hatcheries in Ushongo. MZ 79 did not get relocated because of high tide water covering the nest completely. 39 nests hatched with 3.394 turtles while three nests are still incubating and are due to hatch in January and February 2012. The average hatching success rate was 62% over the whole year. Lower success rates in Jan - March as well in May and November may be due to high temperature in the nests during summer and heavier rainfall in 2011. The best conditions for nest incubation are around June - September, reaching an average of nearly 80%.



In 2011 only 18 nests were relocated from Maziwe Island, compared to 57 in 2010. One explanation for the decrease of nests could be just a different nesting year since turtles do not lay eggs every year, but another reason could also be the dramatic increase of fishing activities, especially at night when turtles come to shore to lay their eggs. In August 2011 even poaching took place on Maziwe again when a female turtle crawled up the beach to lay eggs and got taken away by fishermen.

In the past year 22 dead sea turtles were found in Ushongo Beach or floating in the sea close by. 15 of them were recorded in March, April and October. Some turtles showed

injuries to the head, others might have drowned in fishing nets and one turtle's carapace was cut off.

Friends of Maziwe, the turtle team and the communities from Kikokwe and Ushongo would like to thank everyone who has participated, supported, helped, advised and funded the turtle conservation project this past year. Your support has given everyone the motivation and energy to start a new and hopefully a very successful season in 2012 with many new ideas.





News Center

- 10 Humpback whales spotted between July and November, most of them were found in between Ushongo & Zanzibar by Mohamed Mfaume.
- The yearly contribution fee for the villages in Kikokwe and Ushongo for their participation in turtle conservation will be paid to the village bank accounts.
- The first Friends of Maziwe Newsletter in Kiswahili is published.



Humpback calve around Maziwe

This calve, approximately 6m long and between 6-7 month old, was found on the 04.10.2011 swimming in the shallow waters of Maziwe Island. A fishing net was wrapped around the head of the whale. A team of snorkelers was able to carefully remove the net and the calve continued heading on its journey south. The whereabouts of the mother are unknown, it might have been the whale that stranded a few days earlier close to Tongoni - Tanga. There is a small chance of survival for a whale this age, according to Matt Richmond (Samaki Consultant, DAR) but with luck it might meet another female whale with a calve that could adopt it and continue the long journey together.

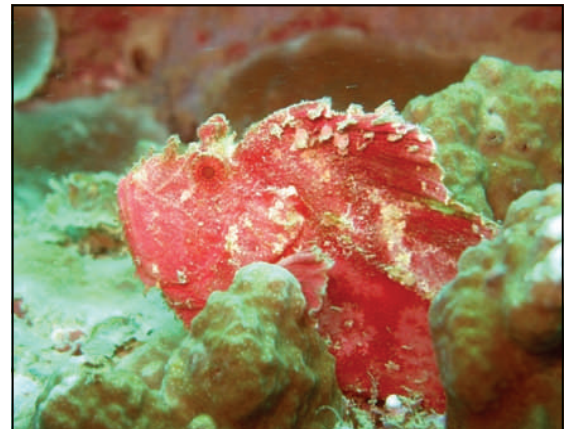
Snorkeling Kikokwe Primary School

Friends of Maziwe continued to invite kids from the Primary Schools in Ushongo & Kikokwe to Maziwe Island. On the 9th of October students of the Louis and Clark College (Portland, Oregon) took, as part of their community project, 15 primary students from Kikokwe to Maziwe Island. The aim of the outing was to introduce and teach the children about the underwater environment and the turtle project. Afterwards the kids learnt how to snorkel and had a fantastic time exploring the coral reef. Since the trips are a real success, Friends of Maziwe is planning 4-5 more in 2012.



The 'Other' Friends of Maziwe

Leaf Scorpion Fish, *Taenianotus triacanthus*, resembles a leaf in structure and behaviour. Its body is literally compressed and has the habit of imitating a leaf or algae by swaying from side to side. Colour varies between green, brown, black, white or purple (see picture). The Leaf Fish is a very common species in the area but is so well-camouflaged that they are easily missed by divers and snorkelers. This small fish is found in coral reefs, usually on shallow reef crests and slopes with sparse vegetation and sponges.



Source: Indian Ocean Reef Guide, by Helmut Debelius. IKAN. 2001.