



FRIENDS OF MAZIWE

NEWSLETTER

9th Edition

July - September 2013

Welcome to the ninth 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.

Maziwe Marine Reserve

Marine Reserves Tanzania are defined as “no-take-areas” and are fully protected from all extractive and potentially damaging activities, such as fishing.

Many villagers along the coast believe that Maziwe is protected to serve the tourist sector so guests can go snorkelling and diving. That surely is a benefit but even more important is that the local fishing community can benefit from Maziwe as a protected area. Marine Reserve can be seen as breathing ground for fish and can help repopulate overfished ecosystems and fish stocks.

In 1981 the Tanzanian Government declared Maziwe to a Marine Reserve. Little has been done to protect the reefs around Maziwe and to control the illegal fishing activities. Last year was probably on of the worst years for Maziwe with many boats within the Reserve. The fishing methods used were ranging from spear fishing, the use of all different kinds of nets and even dynamite fishing took place again.

In the end of last year Friends of Maziwe and Marine Park Unit joined together rethinking about new strategies to end the disastrous situation on Maziwe. Honorary Wardens from Ushongo village were selected to conduct daily patrols to Maziwe and in the beginning of July 2013 Marine Park Unit conducted a weekly training, teaching important skills about boat handling, approach of illegal fishing boats, verification of Marine Reserve Tickets from guests and report keeping.

The new team with Mzee, Rajabu, Mudi, Hassani & Armini will try their very best to protect Maziwe as an important ecosystem in our area; for us now and for our future generations to come. Thanks so much to everybody for the hard work and commitment making this project possible!

Please note when visiting Maziwe Marine Reserve to take entrance fee tickets for Marine Parks and Friends of Maziwe.





News Center

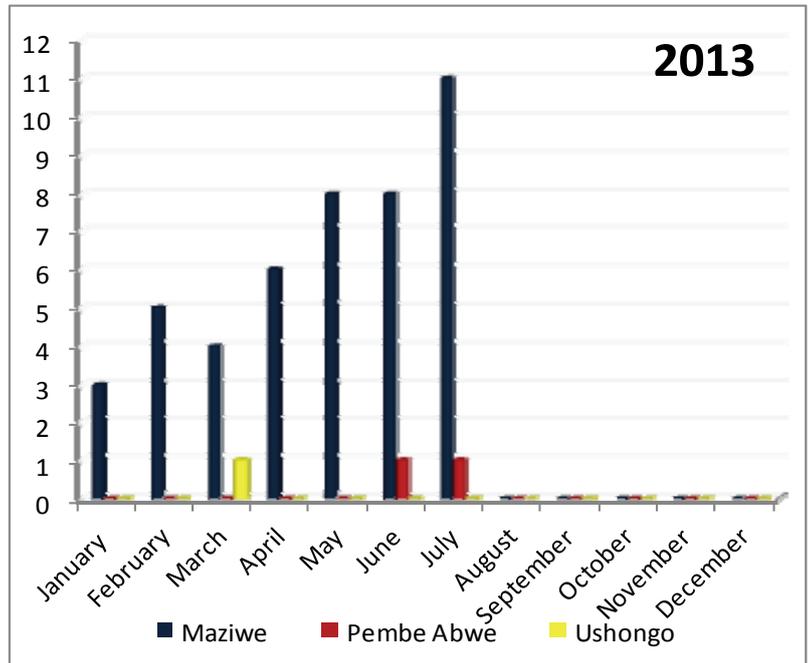
- Fishermen report the first humpback whales
- New Friends of Maziwe patrol system launched

Sea turtle nesting season 2013

In the last seven month green turtles have been very active on Maziwe and the beaches in Ushongo. A total of 48 nests were laid, 45 on Maziwe Island, 2 in Pembe Abwe and 1 in Ushongo. 37 nests hatched and 3.363 baby turtles made their long journey into the sea. In the coming weeks 19 further nests are expected to hatch in Ushongo Beach.

Sadly July has been a bad month for 'dead turtles along the beach. Increased fishing activities resulted in 8 stranded juvenile green turtles with a carapace length between 40 - 50 cm. Juvenile green turtles come close to shore to feed on the healthy sea grass fields.

Fishing nets along the shore remain a threat for our turtles as they easily entangle in the net and are unable to reach the surface to take a breath.



Braeburn School visited Ushongo Beach

In June the 6th class of Braeburn International school visited Ushongo Beach. This year Friends of Maziwe organised a very special introduction into the Turtle Conservation Program. An Imitation of a turtle nest with ping pong balls was made on the beach in front of the dive centre. The kid's task was to relocate the "eggs" into the hatchery, as the nest was threatened by high tide water. Awareness is the key for our future.



The 'Other' Friends of Maziwe

Seagrass beds are important habitats for many organisms. They are territorial plants that have completely adopted to life in the sea to depth of about 20m but the growth is restricted to light Availability. By stabilizing mobile sand seagrass beds are protecting shores from erosion as well does washed up leaves onto the beach. Habitats of seagrasses are also known to be highly productive especially as nursery grounds for fish and crustaceans, providing shelter and food and in recycling nutrients. Seagrass beds are threatened by siltation, prawn Trawling, drag nets and sea weed farming.



Source: A field Guide to the seashores of Eastern Africa, by Matthew D. Richmond,