

Work-based attachment with ICS on Silhouette Island | 27 October 2020



Nooks and crannies of Silhouette

Island Conservation Society had a group of students from the Seychelles Maritime Academy who was on work-based attachment on Silhouette Island and Aride Island respectively.

We wish to express our sincere gratitude to all four Seychelles Maritime Academy (SMA) students, namely Lyden Gomme, Hamed Ghislain, Kiran Bhageerutty and Jean-Yves Lesperance for their dedication to the allocated conservation tasks and wish them the very best in their future endeavours even if it means coming to work for ICS. Our gratitude also goes to SMA for their sustained commitment to the internship programme.

Herewith is what Lyden and Hamed had to say about their experience of working on Silhouette Island:

Lyden Gomme: “Silhouette Island supports an exceptional biodiversity. 93% of the island was declared national park in 2010 and the water around Silhouette was declared a marine national park since 1987. The well-protected flora and fauna has made the island an important biodiversity hotspot in the Indian Ocean.

“I was selected by the Seychelles Maritime Academy to do my work attachment on Silhouette Island for a period of two months. The purpose of the work-based attachment is to further increase my knowledge of what I have learned in class and to develop more field work skills.

“I had the opportunity of assisting and learning in different categories of field work whether it was terrestrial or marine related work, some examples are:

- Native plant trail cleaning,
- Amphibian monitoring,
- Seeding collection for nursery propagation,
- Measuring turtles and giant tortoise, however I was able to see only the tracks of the turtles,
- Sheath-trailed bat roost count,
- Literature review,
- Hike among the staffs to do turtle patrol to track the nest,
- Recording rainfall measurements,
- Data collection,
- Tortoise feeding,
- Beach clean-ups,
- Control of invasive species.

“The two months’ work attachment was amazing. I would have loved to have more opportunity to learn more in marine conservation since I am more interested in this field of work.

“Apart from work, in my spare time I would go for small hikes, snorkeling trips, walks on the beach, taking pictures for souvenirs and hanging out with friends. It’s safe to say that Silhouette is meant to be spent outdoors exploring and it’s not all about the nature, it’s the people you work with. They are ready to facilitate the development of additional skills such as data collection and analysis. Thank you ICS and IDC for making this work-based attachment an unforgettable one.”

Hamed Ghislain: “Silhouette Island is classified by conservationists as one of the most important biodiversity hotspots in the Indian Ocean, as there’s a high variety of flora and fauna with a high level of endemism. Silhouette Island contains species that can be found nowhere else but on the island itself.

“I Hamed Ghislain was selected by the Seychelles Maritime Academy to go on a work-based attachment with ICS (Island Conservation Society) on the Silhouette Island to increase my knowledge with real life work experience where I can apply my academic and technical skills learned at school.

“The work base attachment was for a duration of two months where I learned a range of field work including:

- Native plant hiking trail cleaning,
- Amphibian monitoring,
- Native and endemic plant propagation,

- Giant tortoise and turtle data collection, however I was able to see only the tracks of the turtles as we were out of nesting season,
- Seychelles Sheath-tailed bat roost count,
- Literature review,
- Hike among the staffs to do turtle patrol to track the nest,
- Collecting rainfall measurement,
- Tortoise feeding,
- Beach clean-up,
- Control of invasive alien species.

“These field works have enhanced my knowledge on data collection and the skill I have obtained will surely help me in my future career. If you’re really interested in terrestrial conservation ICS is the place for you.

“In my free time on the island, I would usually walk on the wonderful beaches of Silhouette, go snorkeling in the beautiful marine park surrounding it, and go on small hikes and taking pictures for my photography collection. In my opinion Silhouette island is one of the most magnificent places I have ever been to, I highly recommend visiting it. Thank you ICS and IDC for making this work-based attachment an unforgettable one.”

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Photo credits: Hamed Ghislain & Lyden Gomme



Grande Barbe Trail



Let's plant some mangroves



Mangrove site rehabilitation

Native palm propagation