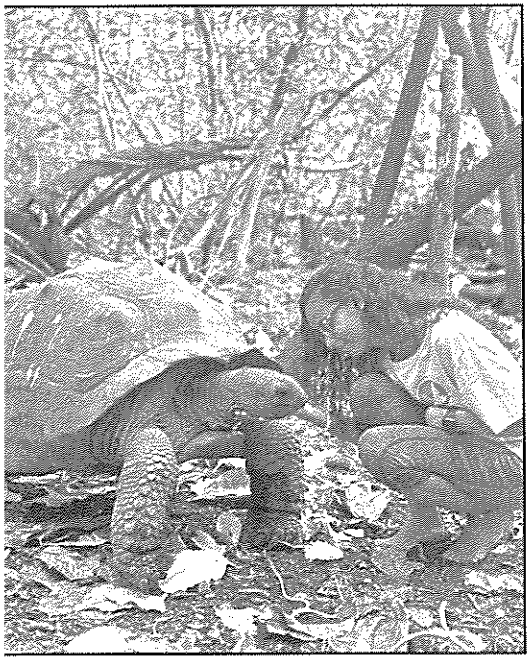
NATIONAL NEWS

Students share internship experience on Aride Island



Melissa

Every year two students from the Seychelles Maritime Academy are given the opportunity to experience life on an island of Seychelles through a partnership with the Island Conservation Society (ICS). This year, two 2nd year students from the Fisheries Science Course spent two months on Aride Island as part of their internship. This is what the students had to say about this unique experience:

Leah Celestine (18 years old)

"Aride was quite different from what I'd imagined. It was much more peaceful and pristine. However, living on the island had its challenges, such as the lack of clean, drinkable water, electricity and signal. There are also no shops on Aride, which is why frequent boat trips to Praslin are essential even in rough weather, which can be a bit scary!

On the other hand, this has been an eye-opening experience. It was an opportunity for me to work with wildlife, learn more about nature, learn how to protect it and appreciate what it has to offer. While on the island, tasks such as daily tour guiding helped me gain confidence to speak in front of a crowd, and improve my socialising skills, while also helping me to step out of my comfort zone. At 18 years old, this was also the first time I lived alone, away from my parents and this has strengthened my independence and helped me to budget and plan ahead.

Teamwork is also a great aspect of living on an island. With only 8 people on the island, the more muscles we had to do a task, the better. For example, we covered more ground as a team while doing vegetation clearance and planting. I would surely encourage other people to volunteer on Aride Island as my two months have been nothing less than fascinating. I got to work with different seabirds. I watched baby sea turtles as they emerged on their first quest to reach the ocean. I spent hours admiring the breathtaking scenery. And I met some amazing people along the way. I will miss many of these things but certainly not the mosquitoes!"

Melissa Servina (18 years old)

"I spent two months on the island during which I gained lots of knowledge and self-confidence. Working on Aride, I had to help out with the visitors and as a shy person, this helped me to become more confident and independent. Aride is beautiful and peaceful but this also brings other setbacks. I did not expect that we would not have electricity throughout the day, as well as phone network problems. Twice a week, the boat left to go to Praslin and I had to budget how I spent my money on food, as well as try to save up. Our regular tasks included helping with the boat and assisting the Rangers in their work, such as bird monitoring. One of my favourite memories I'll cherish forever was when I helped to release sea turtle hatchlings and saw them