MARINE CONSERVATION IN THE SEYCHELLES

WILDLIFE ACT
FOCUSED CONSERVATION



Photo: Jaana Eleftheriou

CONSERVING PARADISE
NORTH ISLAND, SEYCHELLES





Experience hands-on conservation on an ecologically significant private island in the Seychelles, as part of a dedicated conservation and research team. A maximum of four volunteers at a time live and work on North Island in the Seychelles, considered by many to be the most beautiful archipelago in the world with its luminous white beaches, granite outcrops and azure oceans.

<u>The project focuses on 3 key aspects:</u>

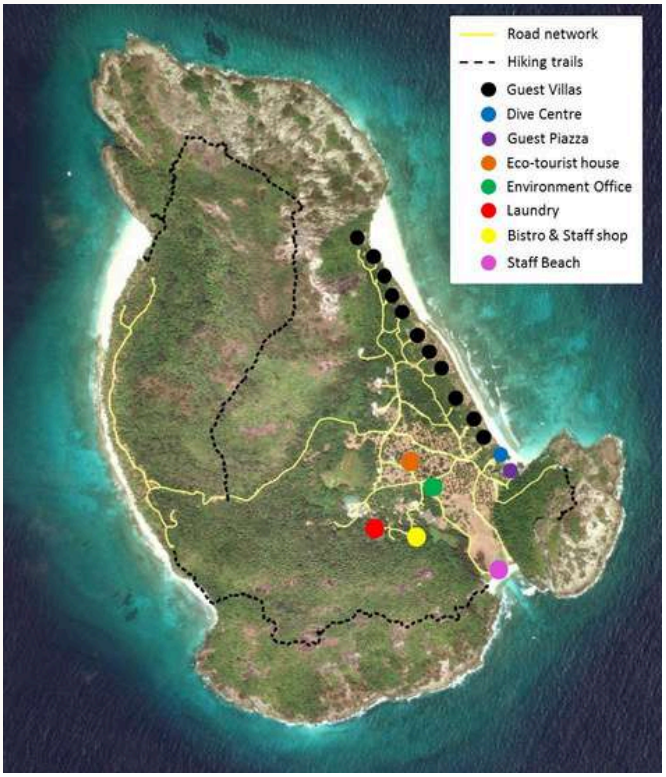
- Endangered Species monitoring
- Marine Conservation
- Ecosystem Restoration

PROJECT LOCATION

North Island in the Seychelles is a tropical island paradise – a rare sanctuary for those seeking island and marine conservation activities in an unspoiled tropical haven.

More importantly, it is a Noah's Ark: a sanctuary where natural habitats are being rehabilitated and where critically endangered Seychelles fauna and flora are being reintroduced and given a place to regenerate.

Wildlife ACT provides an opportunity to volunteer on North Island as an eco-tourist and assist the Environmental Team as they monitor all aspects of the island's ecology.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

When North Island was abandoned as a plantation in the 1970s following the collapse of the coconut industry, many unwanted and intrusive species of flora and fauna remained behind - such as coconuts, casuarina, cows, rats, pigs, Common Mynah birds, cats, barn owls and an especially invasive weed called lantana. After the alarm bell had been sounded by prominent ecologists, the island's owners undertook the challenge of not only reversing the Island's decline but of taking the long road towards the restoration of the Island to its former glory.

A cornerstone of this bold initiative has been the "Noah's Ark" concept by which tortoises and certain species of birds are gradually being re-introduced to the Island along with such indigenous trees as takamaka and the legendary coco-de-mer palm.

The work on North Island covers a range of conservation orientated projects, spanning both terrestrial and marine aspects. The conservation eco-tourists will be involved in all the activities of the Environmental Department, from fieldwork to data entry.

The current main priorities and activities may include the marsh rehabilitation project (terrapin monitoring and relocation, nursery work and replanting), turtle and turtle nest monitoring and Giant Aldabra tortoise monitoring. These activities will take up most of the day.

WHO SHOULD JOIN?

We seek participants with a keen interest in tropical Island conservation and ecology. Participants on our North Island project need to be quick learners and be prepared to work independently in the field after only a few days' induction.

The four week program accepts participants between **ages 21 to 60**, in **good physical condition**. It is essential that our eco-tourist participants be **physically fit** (i.e. able to hike up to 5 km per day on deep sands and hilly terrain) and have a good sense of observing animals and birds. Eco-tourist participants must be prepared and able to perform physical work in **high temperatures** (30-35 degrees Celsius), at times with high humidity (up to 80%).

[Please note that the North Island team are unfortunately unable to accept any participants who have severe allergies to bees, wasps, or insect bites.]

NOTE: Since we form part of the Research Team on the island, our Eco-tourist participants will be expected to adhere to and comply with **existing Staff Grooming standards** on North Island.

VIRTUAL INTERVIEW SCREENING

Those applicants who fulfil the above basic requirements for participation, will be required to conduct an online interview (in English) on MyInterview, to ensure that the applicant is a good fit for the project. Within the week following the interview, applicants will be notified of their approval. We can then email the payment instructions for a deposit payment, to secure the placement.







A TYPICAL DAY IN NORTH ISLAND

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Ecotourists work six days a week, with Fridays off.

- Monday to Thursday: 6am to 3pm shift, free time after.
- Friday: day off, island free time
- Saturday and Sunday: 6am to 3pm shift, free time after

Bicycles, paddleboards, and kayaks are available to use after 4pm on East Beach and at any time on Staff Beach .

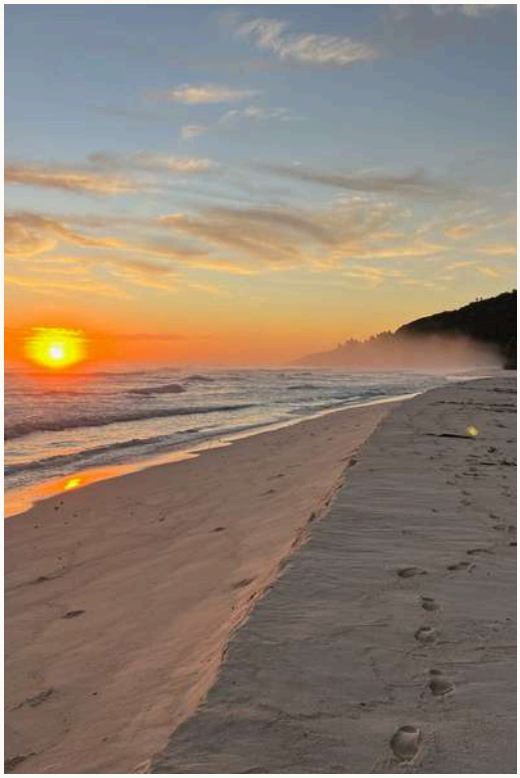
Beyond the day's core conservation work, there are always a few extra island chores to fit in. Which ones come up, and when, depends on the weather, the project's priorities that day, and each ecotourist's ability.

Expect a mix of tasks/chores daily such as:

- Filling water bowls for the Aldabra Giant Tortoises
- General bicycle maintenance (the main way to get around the island)
- Watering the indigenous plant nursery
- Re-marking tortoises' identification chips

Sustainability is also part of the daily routine and must be practiced wherever possible. Ecotourists sort their waste for recycling and compost food scraps where possible, carry a refillable water bottle instead of buying single-use plastic, and use rechargeable batteries where they can. Personal toiletries must be biodegradable and reef-friendly.







ENVIRONMENTAL TASKS

Kindly note that these tasks depend on daily priorities, as guided by Island Management, and on the weather conditions. While there are usually opportunities to birdwatch and snorkel, the primary activities are related to turtle monitoring and vegetation management.

- Monitoring of **Green** (Chelonia midas) and **Hawksbill Sea Turtle** (Eretmochelys imbricata) populations:
  - Daily patrols are recommended to start at 6am, followed by breakfast.
  - Hatched turtle nest excavations – shell-counts of old nests (when needed).
  - Translocations of nests at risk of being washed away (when needed).
  - Assist with turtle nest hatchlings (where possible).

- Juvenile **Aldabra Giant Tortoise** (Aldabrachelys gigantea) feeding and enclosure cleaning.

- **Seychelles Black Mud Terrapin** (Pelusios subniger) population monitoring:
  - Assist with seasonal trapping & notching for population size estimates (wet season only)

- **Vegetation rehabilitation work:** (activities depend on seasons)

  – Coconut seedling removal in rehabilitated areas
  – Cultivating of seedlings in the tree nursery
  – Planting of indigenous trees in rehabilitated areas
  – Alien vegetation removal
  – Marsh rehabilitation project: assisting with terrapin capture, measuring and relocation, and replanting of the restored marsh

- **Snorkelling along the coral reefs** of the island in order to compile a photographic ID database of fish occurring on the reefs. Learn to identify fish species and enter sightings into the database. ***Please note that this activity is seasonally dependent.***
- Collecting and digitizing the oceanic trash that washes onto the beaches of North Island. **This data is entered into an online database managed by The Ocean Conservancy to assess trends in global trash movements** around the world's oceans.
- **Monitoring beach movement patterns** on the three beaches of the Island by means of photographs and by using Abney levels.





WHAT TO EXPECT

CLIMATE

Seychelles is an ideal destination all year-round, as it is **always warm** and **does not reach extremes of heat or cold**. The temperature typically ranges from 24 - 30 degrees Celsius. The sea is generally calm and the weather warm and humid, with average winds of 15 – 22 kilometers per hour.

A larger amount of the **annual rainfall** falls during the months of **November to March**, compared to other months. This generally occurs in short bursts rather than prolonged rain. It is also fairly cloudy at times, and warmer during those months.
The months of **May to September** bring **drier, cooler weather**, and **livelier seas** and winds of 19 – 37 kilometers per hour are common.







ACCOMMODATION:

Four eco-tourists will live in a shared-accommodation house, and will have opportunities to mix with staff after hours. The house can be mixed-gender, however rooms are same-gender only.

The house consists of 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom (and one outdoor shower), 1 lounge, plus a fridge, kettle, dishware, bicycles and a TV/books . The house has air-conditioning in the living area. As a tropical island, there will of course be insects including mosquitoes, cockroaches, spiders, beetles etc. They may occasionally come into the house as well.

Eco-tourists need to take responsibility for cleaning the house.







MEALS:

Participants eat together in staff canteen – all meals provided (3 meals a day).

Breakfast usually includes a variety of cereals, baked beans, a meat item (sausage or bacon etc.), porridge, and bread, jams and spreads. Eggs (fried, scrambled or boiled) are also provided.

Lunch and dinner are buffet-style with staples such as fish, rice and lentils provided every day. A second meat option is provided at every meal together with vegetables and various salads. Local and international cuisine is cooked.

Coffee and tea are generally only provided at breakfast and at tea time. We suggest bringing some of your own if you are an avid coffee/tea drinker.

The staff shop is open 4 times a week: **Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday**, from **6-7pm**. Items for sale include ice-cream, juices, wine, beer, cigarettes, various snacks and toiletries. Alcohol is for sale everyday, with a maximum of 4 alcoholic beverages per person, per shop day. Items are limited so be sure to bring your own should you have specific requirements or preferences.

There is clean drinking water available on the island and a water cooler with purified water is provided in the eco-tourist house.

INTERNET ACCESS:

WiFi is available in the eco-tourist house at all times. There is also WiFi available in most of the staff and guest areas.

There is mobile phone coverage on North Island – "Cable & Wireless". This is the only Seychelles provider which works on North Island. Your international roaming however may not support Cable & Wireless (depends on individual Cell phone Providers). AirTel is unreliable - you may need a local SIM/eSIM before arrival.

LEISURE TIME:

Ecotourists can enjoy discounted activities such as spa treatments and scuba diving.

The assigned Staff Beach on North Island provides the perfect opportunity to go swimming, snorkelling or even a sun-downer after work in the afternoons, weather and availability dependent. Please note that the Staff Beach is not suitable for swimming and snorkelling during the South monsoon period

Equipment such as surfboards, paddleboards and kayaks are available for use every day after 4pm on East Beach (provided that no Island Guests are utilizing them).

There are surfboards, paddleboards & kayaks **available at any time on Staff Beach.**

There is a staff gym available for use.





IMPORTANT NOTE:

North Island is one of the world's most exclusive private-island resorts where guests pay a high fee for privacy. With this in mind you will not be able to use the guest beaches (West Beach and East Beach) for relaxation purposes and will not be able to make use of the guest facilities on the beaches (sun loungers etc.). You will not be able to use the guest swimming pools or eat in the guest restaurant. Your contribution to the conservation work on the island means that you will be a part of the staff on the island.

You may also not be seen without a staff uniform around the island (the only areas where personal clothes may be worn are at the volunteer house, in the staff village, and at the Staff Beach.)

G-string bikini bottoms are STRICTLY NOT ALLOWED (including on the Staff Beach.) As members of the conservation team on the island, our staff and volunteers should always be appropriately dressed in order to uphold our professional standards. We thank you for your understanding and co-operation in this regard.

SCHEDULED STARTING DATES

We accept a maximum of 4 participants at any given time.

Eco-tourists arrive on North Island on a MONDAY and will need to depart 25 days later (on a FRIDAY).

OUR STARTING DATES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

2026

- 02 February
- 02 or 30 March
- 27 April
- 25 May
- 22 June
- 20 July
- 17 August
- 14 September
- 12 October
- 09 November
- 07 December

2027

- 04 January
- 01 February
- 01 or 29 March
- 26 April
- 24 May
- 21 June
- 19 July
- 16 August
- 13 September
- 11 October
- 08 November
- 06 December







GETTING THERE

ARRIVALS

The main island of Mahé, is home to the “Seychelles International Airport”. All travellers need to use the Seychelles Travel Portal, named "SEYCHELLES TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION”- seychelles.govtas.com (either via the mobile app or the website), to gain entry into the Seychelles. You need to do this within the 30 days of your scheduled arrival.

There is free Wi-Fi for 1 hour at the airport, as well as ATMs available; Visa/Mastercard only (Amex/Discover limited).

There are NO COVID-19 travel restrictions to enter the Seychelles.

North Island will provide a proof of accommodation letter for the duration of the Eco-tourist's stay on North Island. Eco-tourists will need to arrange their own accommodation bookings if overnighting on Mahé Island prior to their Monday arrival.

North Island will arrange and pay for a taxi to take you from the Airport to your accommodation on Mahé Island, as long as it is <u>within 10km from the Airport, in the DIRECTION OF VICTORIA (where the "Marine Charter" harbour is located).</u>

OVERNIGHT STAYS ON MAHÉ:

"Hilltop Boutique Hotel"

Address: Serret Road, St Louis, Victoria.

<u>Website</u>: https://www.booking.com/hotel/sc/hilltop-boutique-victoria.en-gb.html

North Island will arrange a taxi from the airport so please tell Hilltop Boutique Hotel not to send a taxi to fetch you when you arrive.

If you do NOT want to stay at the above listed option, the PRE-PAID taxi transfers will **ONLY COVER ACCOMMODATION THAT IS WITHIN 10km of the Airport in the DIRECTION OF VICTORIA** (where the "Marine Charter" harbour is located).





HOW DO I GET TO NORTH ISLAND?

ARRIVAL:

A taxi will pick you up from your accommodation and take you to the staff boat at 08:00 - 08:30 am. The boat, which will take you from Mahé Island to North Island, is the North Island staff boat, which leaves from the "Marine Charter" Harbour in Victoria) at 09:00 am on a Monday morning, and takes approximately 1 to 1.25 hours to reach North Island. This boat is free of charge, and we will make sure your name is placed on the list for the boat.

<u>Crossing schedule: Mahé and North Island</u>

- **Monday and Friday: boat departs Mahé at 9am for North Island, and departs North Island at 2pm for Mahé**
- **Wednesday: departs North Island for Mahé at around 2pm. This time can change, as the boat is bringing supplies to North Island, so please treat it as a guide only**

The crossing takes approximately 1 hour.



For ARRIVAL you EITHER need to book a flight that arrives at Seychelles **International Airport very early on the Monday morning, OR, one that arrives on the Sunday, and stay in Mahé overnight.**

On Monday make sure to wear shorts and easily removable shoes, because the passengers disembark onto the beach at North Island via a Zodiac (inflatable boat).

When you arrive on North Island, your luggage will be placed into a rat-proof trailer and taken to the Rat Room for inspection . A security officer will inspect your luggage, after which you will go to the eco-tourist House to settle in.

TAXI INFORMATION

Here are TWO POPULAR RECOMMENDED OVERNIGHT OPTIONS that are situated close to the "Marine Charter" harbour, (where the staff boat leaves from, to take you to North Island.

"Hilltop Boutique Hotel" - Serret Road, St Louis, Victoria.

"The Ridge Residence" - La Louise.

CAUTION: Beau Vallon and De Quincy, although not far from Victoria, adds anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour of extra driving, due to roads and traffic. There is only 1 road to and from Beau Vallon, over a very large mountain - and thus the traffic is terrible. A taxi transfer to these areas is DOUBLE the cost of a taxi to Victoria.

If you book accommodation in Beau Vallon, or De Quincy, YOU will be responsible for covering the cost of the taxi transfers to and from that accommodation. Participants may NOT book any accommodation on the WESTERN side of the Island, since as this causes significant traffic delays, and you will miss the boat.

DEPARTURE

On FRIDAY the staff boat will take you from North Island back to Mahé Island, arriving at the Marine Charter harbour (in Victoria) at about 3:00 PM.

Eco-tourists are permitted to travel further around the Seychelles after they have left North Island, if they so wish.

GOOD TO KNOW

VISA REQUIREMENTS:

While there are **NO VISA REQUIREMENTS** to enter Seychelles, we do advise obtaining a digital travel authorisation. Further information on this can be found on the Seychelles immigration website.

The following documents must be shown in order to obtain immigration clearance at the Seychelles International Airport:

1. **A passport with more than 6 month's validity**
2. **Return or onward flight ticket**
3. **Proof of any overnight accommodation on Mahé Island; including contact details.**

We will also provide a **Letter of Invitation from the General Manager of North Island**, stating that you will be joining our project. This is sufficient for entry according to the agreement with the Department of Immigration.

VACCINATIONS:

There are NO compulsory/required vaccinations for travel to the Seychelles, although vaccinations for Typhoid and Hepatitis A, are sometimes recommended for travellers worldwide. It is your choice whether to get these vaccinations. They are not compulsory.

A Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is ONLY required for travellers arriving from countries with risk of yellow fever transmission, or for travellers who have transited through the airport of a country with risk of yellow fever transmission.

There is NO risk of contracting Malaria in Seychelles, given that the Anopheles mosquito does not exist in the Seychelles. Mosquitoes can be very abundant on the island (depending on time of year) so it is advised to bring antihistamine creams or tablets, if you are sensitive to bites, as well as some kind of non-toxic mosquito repellent.

CURRENCY:

When travelling in the Seychelles you will need Seychelles Rupee, but the island accepts most currencies (USD, EURO, Pounds, Rupees) and credit cards to pay for staff shop accounts at the end of your stay.

There are Foreign exchange places at the Airport if you would like to change money. PLEASE NOTE: North Island is cashless.



UNIFORM & DRESS CODE

Branded Golf shirts and shorts will be provided, but if participants would like to wear their own shorts or long trousers, they may bring them - in any of the following **PLAIN colours: navy blue (preferred) or black**. (No patterns, pictures, or prints).

Shorts must be 10-15cm above the knee for women (very short shorts are not permitted).

The staff uniform is COMPULSORY at ALL TIMES, (except while you are in the staff village, or on the Staff Beach.)

The only clothes you need to bring are for personal use (during off-time and for if you would like to travel to the mainland). Do not bring excessive amounts of clothes - you will not need them. We do suggest bringing navy long trousers and a navy long-sleeved shirt for vegetation work too.





FOR YOUR TIME ON NORTH ISLAND, YOU WILL NEED:

- You can choose to bring your own shorts or long trousers (in PLAIN BLACK or PLAIN NAVY.) Please note: no patterns or pictures on the shorts.
- A broad-rimmed hat, beige/khaki in colour (a peak cap will be provided if needed).
- Lightweight waterproof jacket.
- Please bring good hiking/walking shoes (loafers are not suitable for hiking in the forest), and flip flops, or beach shoes which are easily removed for beach walking.
- Swimwear – **PLEASE NOTE** G-string bikini bottoms are **STRICTLY NOT ALLOWED (including on Staff Beach)**. As members of the conservation team on the island, our staff and Eco-tourists should always be appropriately dressed in order to uphold our professional standards. We thank you for your understanding & cooperation in this regard.
- Snorkelling gear (goggles, snorkel, fins).
- Sunscreen lotion (SPF 50 or higher) and a lip balm with SPF. Where possible, please bring reef- friendly sunscreen products.
- Sunglasses with UVA protection.

- A large (2 litre or more capacity) water bottle to take with you during the day – it is your responsibility to fill it and keep yourself well hydrated.
- A small rucksack to take with you daily to hold your sunscreen, water bottle, camera, etc.
- Camera and a large memory card.
- A flashlight for walking in the evening
- Spare batteries (for your torch/camera etc.) We encourage the use of rechargeable batteries, as opposed to disposable batteries which are not environmentally friendly.
- Plug adaptors/converters (British 3-prong plug).
- Lotion to soothe itchy bites (please avoid insect repellent unless absolutely necessary, specifically DEET/picaridin which is toxic to wildlife.
- A basic supply of personal first- aid items (such as band-aids for blisters, antiseptic cream, painkillers, eyedrops, ear-drops, antihistamines, diarrhoea & nausea tablets, etc).
- Your personal toiletries (shampoo/conditioner/soap/toothpaste etc.)
- Any chronic / long-term medications you may require (enough to last you).
- If you wear glasses or contact lenses, it is advisable to bring spare/back-up options.
- A good book or two, or something to keep you occupied during your relaxing time. Travel-sized board games, cards etc. are also great fun.
- A travel journal, should you wish to record your experience.
- Spending money for the staff shop. Staff shop accounts run on a tab system which is paid prior to departing the island (PLEASE NOTE: North Island is cashless, but has credit card facilities).
- All bed linens & bath towels are provided, but please bring your own swimming towel(s).
- Wine, champagne, beer & cider is available to purchase in the staff shop, but if you prefer spirits, then you should bring your own. One 1L bottle per person is allowed.



NOTE: LAUNDRY

North Island will wash any uniform items which are provided to you, however, you must wash your own personal clothes. There are washing machines and dryers for use and washing powder can be purchased from the Staff Shop. Washing powder can be bought at the Staff Shop, or you may bring a small biodegradable packet of your ownu will part. You do NOT need to bring a large supply of personal clothes for the island, since you will be wearing your staff uniform for most of the day.

WILDLIFE ACT LOOKS FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU!

BEST FOR NATURE-BASED TOURISM
WINNER
1ST PLACE
RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

BEST FOR NATURE-BASED TOURISM
WINNER
1ST PLACE
WTM AFRICA RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS

wtm responsible tourism AWARDS



WILDLIFE ACT
FOCUSED CONSERVATION

CONTACT:

info@wildlifeact.com
+27 (0)63 602 4287
www.wildlifeact.com

CONNECT:

@WildlifeACT
@wildlife_act
@wildlifeact

Scan to learn more