



Mauritian Wildlife Foundation, Rodrigues

Rodrigues Environmental Education Programme (REEP)



Scout members helped in the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve nursery

Annual Report: January - December 2022

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REEP Annual Report: January – December 2022

This report describes work done by the Environmental Educator to accomplish REEP goals in 2022.

1.0 Objective 1: School based program

The Environmental Educator will carry out the school-based program in both the Government and Roman Catholic Aided (RCA) primary schools along with the secondary schools in Rodrigues. This will involve meetings with the school Inspectors, Rectors, Head Teachers and teachers. Educational talks will be given in the primary schools to support the curriculum on topics such as endemic plants and animals, rare plants and environmental issues. Furthermore, educational outings are organised for the students to experience conservation work in the Solitude nursery and Nature Reserves (Grande Montagne and Anse Quitor).

1.1 Re-initiation of the School Based Program

After a letter was drafted and sent, approval was given by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) and the Roman Catholic Authority (RCA) primary school Manager for the MWF REEP Educator and other staff to continue work in all schools throughout Rodrigues.

1.2 Educational talks in Schools and Villages

Educational talks were given to 77 school children, youth groups and 150 adults on the following dates in 2022 (Table 1, Plate 1):

Table 1. Educational talks in Schools and Villages.

Date	School	Students	Adults	School Level or Age	Topic
19/03/22	Villagers Camp Pintade		12		Mitigating Climate change through reforestation
24/04/22	Rotaract & Interact club Rodrigues	25			Mitigating Climate change through reforestation
13/05/22	Villagers Baladirou		6		Mitigating Climate change through reforestation
04/06/22	Villagers Brulé		10		Mitigating Climate change through reforestation
02/07/22	Vainqueur		17		Founder protection in villages
08/07/22	Villagers Riviere Banane		43		Introduction to MWF Conservation work
08/07/22	Villagers Port Sud Est		20		Introduction to MWF Conservation work
08/08/22	National Youth Civil Service participants	34			Mitigating Climate change through reforestation
27/08/22	Villagers Roche Bon Dieu		27		Mitigating Climate change through reforestation
22/09/22	Solocal Interactive staff		15		Mitigating Climate change through reforestation
10/12/22	Youth Group Adventist Church	18			Mitigating Climate change through reforestation
	TOTAL	77	150		



Plate 1. Educational talks delivered to National Youth Civic Service participants.

1.3 Educational Visits in Nature Reserves and Nursery

Educational visits were given to 571 students and 98 teachers during 2022 at the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve (GMNR), Anse Quitor Nature Reserve (AQNR) and the Solitude Endemic Nursery (SEN), led by the Environment Educator and supported by other MWF staff, when necessary, see Table 2, Plates 2 & 3.

Table 2. Details of students and teachers visiting the Nature Reserves and Solitude Nursery in 2022.

Date	School/Group	Students	Teachers	Other MWF staff	Site
05/03/22	Rotaract Club Rodrigues	4		1	GMNR
23/04/22	Rotaract Club Rodrigues	25		2	GMNR
28/04/22	Church School students-St Barnabas	13	3	0	GMNR
03/06/22	Mt Lubin College	16	2	1	SEN
04/06/22	Rotaract Club & Interact Club Rodrigues	10		1	SEN
17/06/22	Le Chou College	23	2	2	GMNR
17/06/22	Songes College	33	5	2	SEN
18/06/22	Scout Club Port Mathurin	27	3	3	GMNR
22/06/22	Le Chou College	22	2	2	GMNR
28/06/22	Grande Montagne College	12	1	0	GMNR
22/07/22	Les Papillons Pre School	26	25	4	GMNR
10/08/22	Rodrigues College	13	2	0	GMNR
11/08/22	Dis-Moi	31	7	2	GMNR
02/09/22	Tourism Foundation Course participant	18	1	2	GMNR
16/09/22	Songes College	37	7	3	GMNR
16/09/22	Centre Agricole Frere Remi	15	2	2	GMNR
23/09/22	Marechal College	40	9	4	GMNR
03/10/22	Rodrigues College	7	2	1	GMNR
11/10/22	Tourism Foundation Course participant	29	2	2	GMNR
18/10/22	Polytechnics Mauritius (Rodrigues)	22	5	2	GMNR

Date	School/Group	Students	Teachers	Other MWF staff	Site
20/10/22	Tourism Foundation Course participant	20	2	2	GMNR
21/10/22	Tourism Foundation Course participant	21	1	2	GMNR
30/11/22	Gonzague Pierre Louis Learning Centre	25	12	8	GMNR
30/11/22	Emtel staff	8		0	GMNR
30/11/22	Tourism Foundation Course participant	37	2	2	GMNR
01/12/22	Tourism Foundation Course participant	27	1	2	GMNR
07/12/22	Scout Club Mauritius	10		1	AQNR
	TOTALS	571	98	53	



Plate 2. Students and Teachers from Mt Lubin College visiting the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve, led by the Environment Educator.



Plate 3. Identification of rare endemic plant species at the Solitude nursery by Field Officer, John Cliff Jean and Port Mathurin Scout members.

2.0 Objective 2: Curriculum Development

Develop lesson plans for educational talks and outings with Standard V, Standard VI, and secondary school students. These lessons should involve as many visuals (PowerPoint), learning aids (props, artefacts) and practical activities as possible in order to keep the student's attention and to increase the effectiveness of the program. Many studies show that there is a higher retention rate from the participatory approach such as 'learning by doing' and we aim to maximise the use of these methodologies.

2.1 PowerPoint Presentations

A 24-slide PowerPoint presentation was developed on Rare Plants of Rodrigues. This topic was chosen for the Solocal Interactive staff (Figure 1).

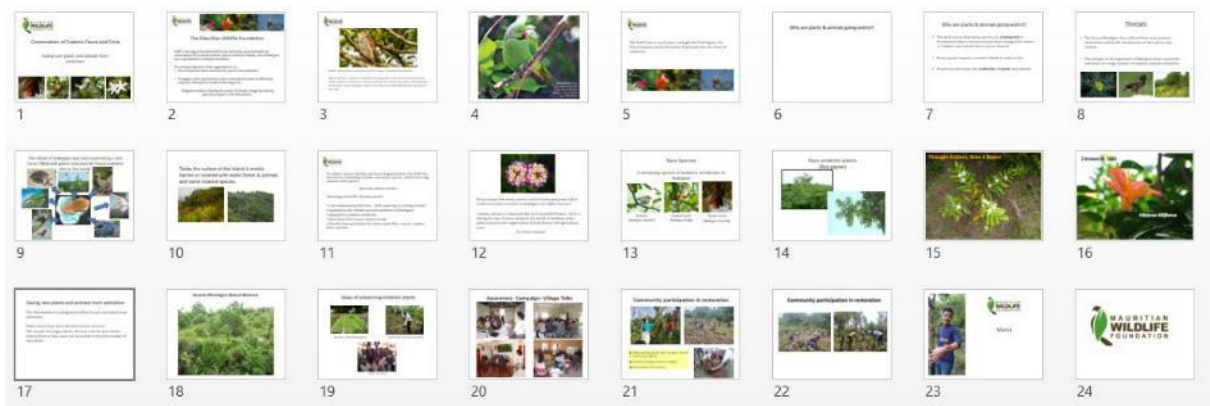


Figure 1. PowerPoint presentation slides developed on the Rare Plants of Rodrigues.

3.0 Objective 3: Develop Indices of Success to assess REEP's impact

It is important to assess the work of REEP and whether the program is attaining its aims and objectives. Thus, a working session will be organised with primary school teachers to assess the impact of educational talks and visits to the Nature Reserves. The feedback can be used during the development of future REEP work plans.

Developing pre and post surveys - To assess the effectiveness of the REEP at changing attitudes and raising awareness on environmental issues, collaboration was sought with the social science research team of Chester Zoo since 2018. All the data collected from the 9 Primary School in 2021 before and after visit of the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve were finalised and input in 2022. These data were sent to Chester Zoo's Conservation Scientist, Greg Counsel in September 2022 for analysis, see Table 3 below for the survey details.

Table 3. Details of the REEP evaluation surveys carried out in 2021.

#	School	Grade	Pre-surveys	Post-surveys	Comments
1	Anse Quitor Community Government School	4	10	10	
2	Anse Quitor Community Government School	5	14	14	
3	Marc Etienne Government School	5	16	17	
4	Marc Etienne Government School	6	17	15	
5	Batatan Government School	5	41	0	Post surveys cancelled
6	Batatan Government School	6 Red	18	0	
7	Batatan Government School	6 Blue	19	20	
8	Port Sud Est Government School	5	31	29	
9	Port Sud Est Government School	6	13	12	
10	Mangues Government School	4	35	41	
11	Mangues Government School	5	37	39	
12	Mt Charlot Community Government School	6	31	31	
13	Araucaria Community Government School	4	40	44	
14	Araucaria Community Government School	5	27	27	
15	Oyster Bay Government School	4	17	17	
16	Oyster Bay Government School	5	21	19	
17	Terre Rouge Government School	6	32	31	
			419	366	Totals

4.0 Objective 4: Develop Educational Tools for 2022

MWF Educational tools, with due acknowledgement to the funders, will be produced to help the receiver remember the educational talk and the conservation issue discussed. The stickers, the Rodrigues Fruit Bat video and brochures on invasive species created the years before will be distributed during the year.

Thought 2022, work continued updating *La Faune et La Flore de Rodrigues*. The 2nd edition of this field guide, authored by MWF Ecotour Officer, Stephen Kirsakye and funded by SBM Foundation was launched on 16th of November 2022 at the Dominique Farla Information Centre in Grande Montagne, in the presence of the RRA Chief Commissioner, Mr Johnson Roussety GOSK, the Chairman of the SBM Foundation, Mr Basdeo Rajee and other staff, various MWF stakeholders and the MWF team. This second edition published in French comprises 16 additional pages, bringing the grand total to 138 pages: the book covers 37 animals and 81 plants and has more than 200 illustrative pictures. Of the 2,000 copies printed at least 100 will be donated to all schools, NGOs and organisations with which the MWF collaborates in Rodrigues, made available in all public bookshops in Rodrigues and at MWF offices in Rodrigues and Mauritius.



Plate 4. Launching of the 2nd edition of *La Faune et La Flore de Rodrigues* in Grande Montagne.

5.0 Objective 5: Develop Community Outreach Strategies

Educational awareness strategies will be developed to improve general knowledge and appreciation of the endemic flora and fauna of Rodrigues and also on other environmental topics such as invasive species. The strategies to outreach to the community will include village talks, corporate talks, newspaper articles, radio talks, donation of plants, and volunteer participation.

5.1 Community Involvement in MWF Projects

MWF ensures community participation in MWF projects by having volunteers help in the Solitude Endemic Nursery, in the nature reserves and during bat surveys. A visit is usually given to each volunteer group, and the aims and objectives of MWF's projects, including the REEP are explained. A lunch or refreshment is provided for all volunteers. During 2022, we welcomed 239 volunteers and 499 volunteer workdays helped contribute towards terrestrial conservation in Rodrigues (Table 4, Plates 5 & 6).

Table 4. Details of volunteer work that helped towards Rodrigues terrestrial conservation.

Date	Location	Volunteers	Group
21/02/22	GMNR	2	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
22/02/22	GMNR	2	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
23/02/22	GMNR	2	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
24/02/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
25/02/22	GMNR	4	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
08/03/22	GMNR	6	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
09/03/22	GMNR	4	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
10/03/22	GMNR	6	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
11/03/22	GMNR	6	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
14/03/22	GMNR	4	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
15/03/22	GMNR	5	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
16/03/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
17/03/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
18/03/22	GMNR	7	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
21/03/22	GMNR	7	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
22/03/22	GMNR	5	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
23/03/22	GMNR	4	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
24/03/22	GMNR	7	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
25/03/22	GMNR	6	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
28/03/22	GMNR	6	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
29/03/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
30/03/22	GMNR	6	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
05/04/22	GMNR	1	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
06/04/22	GMNR	5	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
07/04/22	GMNR	7	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
11/04/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
14/04/22	AQNR	1	Volunteers from abroad
15/04/22	Solitude Nursery	1	Volunteers from abroad
19/04/22	GMNR	5	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
20/04/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
22/04/22	GMNR	5	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
28/04/22	AQNR	10	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
29/04/22	GMNR	1	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
29/04/22	AQNR	8	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues

Date	Location	Volunteers	Group
02/05/22	GMNR	5	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
06/05/22	Solitude Nursery	1	Volunteers from abroad
17/05/22	GMNR	2	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
26/05/22	AQNR	13	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
27/05/22	Bat count at Malabar	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
30/05/22	GMNR	6	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
31/05/22	GMNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
03/06/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
04/06/22	AQNR	10	Rotaract Club & Interact Club Rodrigues
17/06/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
29/06/22	GMNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
14/07/22	GMNR	5	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
18/07/22	GMNR	3	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
27/07/22	GMNR	15	Shoals Rodrigues
03/08/22	GMNR	17	Shoals Rodrigues
10/08/22	GMNR	15	Shoals Rodrigues
11/08/22	GMNR	17	NYCS Participant
12/08/22	GMNR	16	Scout Roche Bon Dieu
08/09/22	GMNR	4	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
12/09/22	GMNR	3	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
14/09/22	GMNR	6	Volunteers throughout Rodrigues
17/09/22	GMNR	6	Rotaract Club & Interact Club Rodrigues
18/09/22	AQNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
21/09/22	GMNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
22/09/22	AQNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
03/10/22	GMNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
04/10/22	GMNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
05/10/22	GMNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
06/10/22	GMNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
07/10/22	GMNR	1	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
10/10/22	GMNR	3	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
18/10/22	GMNR	3	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
26/10/22	GMNR	4	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
05/11/22	GMNR	8	Interact RodCo
11/11/22	GMNR	6	Police de l'Environnement
16/11/22	GMNR	6	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
22/11/22	GMNR	6	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
23/11/22	Island Wide Bat count	30	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
24/11/22	Island Wide Bat count	53	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
25/11/22	Island Wide Bat count	48	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
28/11/22	GMNR	5	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
07/12/22	GMNR	10	Scout Mauritius
07/12/22	GMNR	5	Volunteer throughout Rodrigues
	TOTAL	499	



Plate 5. Volunteers helping water and carry weeding activities in the GMNR nursery.



Plate 6. Environment Police Officers volunteering in the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve.

5.2 Donation of Endemic Plants

Each year MWF Rodrigues donates native and endemic plants to youth groups to embellish school surroundings, create endemic and medicinal plant gardens (Plates 7). A total of 4,531 plants were donated to primary schools, colleges, villages and other organisations during the year 2022 (Table 5).

Table 5. Details of plant donations made in 2022.

Date	Location	N° of Plants
13/03/22	Camp Pintade	1125
21/04/22	Songes College	50
21/04/22	Trois-Soleil	50
21/04/22	Songes College	16
03/05/22	Les Papillons Pre-Primary	51
03/05/22	M.I.T.D Le Chou	10
13/05/22	Participants-Foundation Course in Tourism	16
14/05/22	Morcellement Baladirou	245
21/05/22	Airports of Rodrigues Limited	2
03/06/22	Participants-Foundation Course in Tourism	20
04/06/22	Brulé	340
14/06/22	Oyster Bay Endemic Garden	21
17/06/22	Frere Remi	19
17/06/22	Festival Randonnée (Hiking Festival) participants	100
21/06/22	Vainqueur	245
08/07/22	Port Sud Est	552
08/07/22	Riviere Banane	453
22/07/22	Commission for Tourism (symbolic planting Tourism Site Roche Bon Dieu)	15
22/08/22	Centre Brahma Kumari	12
22/08/22	Francois Leguat Reserve	20
25/08/22	Mauritius Telecom	1
27/08/22	Roche Bon Dieu	550
02/09/22	Airports of Rodrigues Limited	2
13/09/22	Participants-Foundation Course in Tourism	30
16/09/22	Participants-Foundation Course in Tourism	40
16/09/22	Polytechnic Mauritius	19
17/09/22	Participants-Foundation Course in Tourism	62
21/09/22	Songes College	50
23/09/22	Trois-Soleil	50
25/09/22	Bigarade	250
06/10/22	Songes College	16
11/10/22	Les Papillons Pre-Primary	51
11/10/22	M.I.T.D Le Chou	10
14/10/22	Participants-Foundation Course in Tourism	16
21/10/22	Airports of Rodrigues Limited	2
30/11/22	Participants-Foundation Course in Tourism	20
	Total	4,531



Plate 7. Donation of endemic and native plants to Port Sud Est villagers by MWF Nature Reserve Officer, Sweety Shan Yu.

5.3 Media coverage

To sensitise the Rodrigues population on conservation projects, events organised or collaborated on, MWF endeavours to have as many of these actions covered by the local and national press. As such, MWF conservation projects in Rodrigues benefited from numerous social media postings, newspaper, and radio and television coverage throughout the year 2022, (Table 6, Plates 8).

Table 6. Media coverage during the year 2022.

Date	Media Type	MWF staff interviewed	Subject/Theme
08/02/22	Newspaper-Scope	Rodrigues Manager-Reshad Jhangeer-Khan	Bats and cyclones
09/02/22	TV news-MBC	Project Support Officer-Alfred Begue	Badula founder protection
16/02/22	Social Media-Facebook	None	Badula founder protection
22/02/22	TV news-MBC national	Project Support Officer-Alfred Begue	Badula founder protection
09/03/22	TV news-MBC	Rotaract Head	Rotaract/MWF planting in GM
11/03/22	TV news-MBC	Ecotour Officer-Stephen Kirsakye and REEP Educator-Liliana Meunier	Awareness campaign on Phesulma

Date	Media Type	MWF staff interviewed	Subject/Theme
18/03/22	TV programme-MBC	Ecotour Officer-Stephen Kirsakye	13-Minit Natir Rodrig: Phesulma
18/03/22	Social Media-Facebook	None	Amazing success germinating seeds of the Critically Endangered tree bois puant
23/03/22	Internet Webpage	None	Seed banking by MWF in Rodrigues
08/04/22	Newspaper-Le Mauricien	Persévérance et espérance	Rare plant conservation in Rodrigues
08/04/22	Social Media-Facebook	CNRS Entomologist-Dr Sylvain Hugel	Un éminent Entomologiste français en mission à Rodrigues
13/04/22	TV news-MBC	Project Support Officer-Alfred Begue and Nursery Labourer-Espana Flore	Ongoing BGCI project at Mt Cherie
22/04/22	TV news-MBC	REEP Educator-Liliana Meunier	Earth Day
25/04/22	Social Media-Facebook	None	Creation of a small in-situ nursery in the AQNR
26/04/22	Radio show	Rodrigues Manager-Reshad Jhangeer-Khan	The issue of stray animals in Rodrigues
11/05/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	REEP Educator-Liliana Meunier	Endangered Species Day
19/05/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Nature Reserve Officer-Anieta Shan Yu	Restoration activities in the GMNR
19/05/22	TV programme-MBC	Ecotour Ranger-Jenetta Abdool	13-Minit Natir Rodrig: Invasive Exotic Species
20/05/22	Radio news-MBC	Rodrigues Manager-Reshad Jhangeer-Khan	International Biodiversity Day
21/05/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Scientific Officer-Sweety Félicité	International Biodiversity Day - Distribution of rare plants to the community
22/05/22	Social Media-Facebook	None	International Day for Biological Diversity-Community participation in conservation
25/05/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Project Support Officer-Alfred Begue and Nursery Labourer-Espana Flore	BGCI protection of rare plant at Mt Cheri
05/06/22	Radio programme	REEP Educator-Liliana Meunier	World Environment Day
28/06/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Rodrigues Manager-Reshad Jhangeer-Khan	MWF Activities
28/06/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	REEP Educator-Liliana Meunier	REEP activities
07/07/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Rodrigues Manager-Reshad Jhangeer-Khan, Project Support Officer-	Safeguarding plants for the extension of the airport

Date	Media Type	MWF staff interviewed	Subject/Theme
		Alfred Begue and Restoration Labourers- Norbert Allas and Jenica Jean	
09/07/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Project Support Officer- Alfred Begue	BGCI protection of rare plant at Batatran.
11/07/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Project Support Officer- Alfred Begue	Seed banking
16/07/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Project Support Officer- Alfred Begue	Sauvegarder les plantes rare
27/07/22	e-newsletter-EAZA bat	None	Rodrigues Fruit Bat
02/08/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Ecotour Officer-Stephen Kirsakye	Foundation Course in Tourism-Participant
06/08/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Senior Nature Reserve Assistant-Jenifer Cesar and AQNR Restoration Labourers-Eric Marla & Jenica Jean	Restoration activities in the AQNR
23/08/22	TV programme-MBC	REEP Educator-Liliana Meunier	13-Minit Natir Rodrig: <i>Terminalia Bentzoe ssp Rodriguesensis</i>
25/08/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Nature Reserve Officer-Anieta Shan Yu, Senior Nature Reserve Assistant-Jenifer Cesar and the Rodrigues Manager-Reshad Jhangeer-Khan	Restoration of the Anse Quitor River Eco system
13/09/22	TV programme-MBC	Nature Reserve Officer-Anieta Shan Yu	13-Minit Natir Rodrig: <i>Antirhea bifurcata</i>
16/09/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	REEP Educator-Liliana Meunier	World Clean-up Day & Festival de la Randonnée 2022
16/09/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Nursery Labourer-Espana Flore	Nursery activities with Centre Agricole Frere Remi
21/09/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	REEP Educator-Liliana Meunier	World Peace Day-Symbolic planting
04/10/22	Radio news-MBC	Rodrigues Manager-Reshad Jhangeer-Khan	Animal Day 2022
14/10/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Nature Reserve Officer-Anieta Shan Yu	Tourism Foundation Course Training
28/10/22	Social Media-Facebook	None	Relocation of Endemic plants
02/11/22	Social Media-Facebook	None	Rodrigues Plaine Corail Airport-Relocation of five endemic trees.
04/11/22	Vlog from Mr and Mrs Coralie Makoon	Stephen Kirsakye	GMNR

Date	Media Type	MWF staff interviewed	Subject/Theme
16/11/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	The launching of the second edition of the “La Faune et la Flore de Rodrigues” plant guide book	https://mbcradio.tv/article/zournal-rodrigues-novembre-16-2022
16/11/22	Local Newspaper-Kozé rodriguais	The launching of the second edition of the “La Faune et la Flore de Rodrigues” plant guidebook	
25/11/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	The Rodrigues Manager	restoration activities in the GMNR.
07/12/22	TV and Radio news-MBC	Alfred Begue and Dr Malcolm Nicoll	Ile Cocos Sea bird and Wedge tailed Shearwater survey
16/12/22	Echo News 14	None	Launching of the second edition La Faune et La Flore de Rodrigues



Plate 8. MWF Project Support Officer, Alfred Bégué interviewed for the local Mauritian Broadcasting Corporation TV and radio news in the context of the Founder Protection component of MWF’s Botanical Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) rare plant conservation project.

6.0 Objective 6: Celebrate the International Volunteer Day (IVD)

Each year, MWF welcomes hundreds of volunteers that help with the conservation work including helping with the propagation of plants in the nursery or weeding and planting in the Nature Reserves. Each year MWF aims to organise and celebrate the International Volunteer Day (IVD) on the 5th of December. IVD is an important event for the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) as we have a long-term and ongoing volunteer programme. The aim of the day is to celebrate and thank the volunteers for their effort and their contribution in helping us to save the endangered species of Rodrigues.

The annual International Volunteer Day is celebrated each year on the 5th of December. It is viewed as a unique chance for volunteers and organisations to celebrate their efforts, to share their values, and to promote their work among their communities, non-governmental organisations and government authorities.

Through the year 2022, MWF Rodrigues welcomed 239 volunteers, between the ages of 2 and 70, who contributed 499 volunteer days to MWF's conservation work. The main activities volunteers participated in included helping with the propagation of native and endemic plants in MWF's endemic nursery in Solitude, weeding invasive alien species and planting native and endemic species in the Grande Montagne and AQNRs, participating in field work collecting propagation material for the nursery and assisting in Golden Fruit Bat surveys.

This year, MWF Rodrigues organised and commemorated International Volunteer Day inviting all MWF volunteers and 31 MWF staff, for a nature walk from the Grande Montagne Nature Reserve to Saint François beach, where fun activities were organised for the volunteers, a lunch offered, as well as a certificate of participation and a gift handed to each volunteer to show MWF's appreciation for their contribution to our cause. With this event, MWF aims to commemorate and thank the volunteers for their time and dedication in helping save Rodrigues' endangered species of from extinction.



Plate 9. Volunteers present on the International Volunteer Day 2022.

7.0 Objective 7: Support Rodrigues Fruit Bat Field Research

Counts of the endangered Rodrigues Fruit Bat are conducted fortnightly at the Malabar Roost Site by MWF staff. In addition, an island-wide bat count is conducted at 15 permanent roost locations of Rodrigues and 11 temporary roosts once each year in November with the help of volunteers from government and non-governmental organisations, private sector, schools and the community. The Environmental Educator participates in these activities in order to learn about the bat population and patterns in roosting and movements of the endemic Rodrigues Fruit Bat. During the year 2022, the Environmental Educator will organise for volunteers from schools and the community to participate in the regular bat counts to have a more hands-on and personal experience.

7.1 Fortnightly Cascade Pigeon Bat Counts

Bat evening dispersal counts were conducted fortnightly 24 times in 2022 at one of the main roost locations, namely the Cascade Pigeon Roost, every second Friday. The Environmental Educator helped organise and participated in these surveys, together with other MWF staff. Data collected during these fortnightly surveys were entered into the Rodrigues Fruit Bat Excel Database for backup and to illustrate the 2022 and long-term annual trend (Figures 2 and 3).

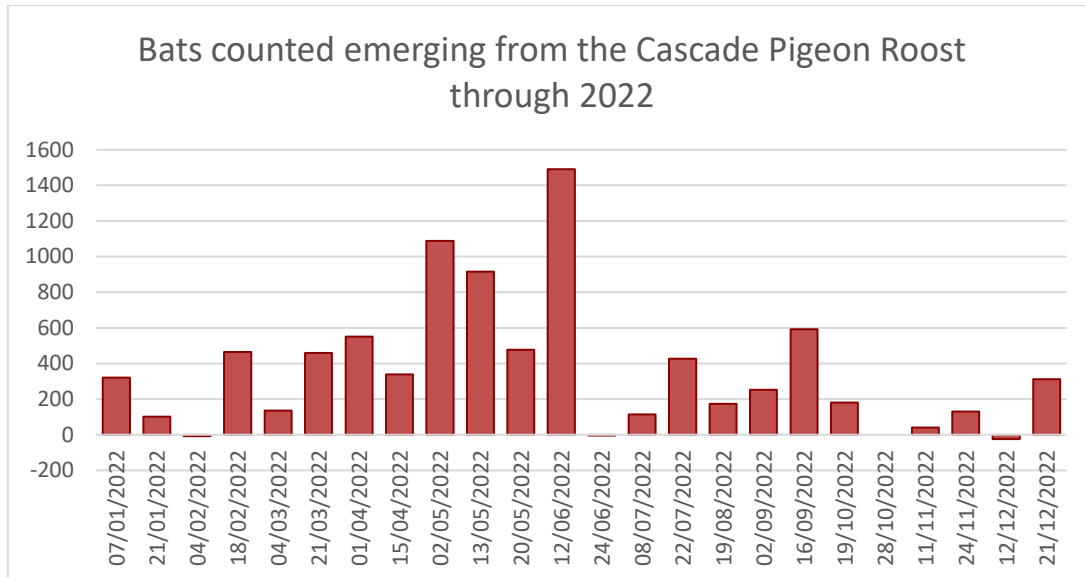


Figure 2. Bat counted emerging from the Cascade Pigeon Roost through 2022

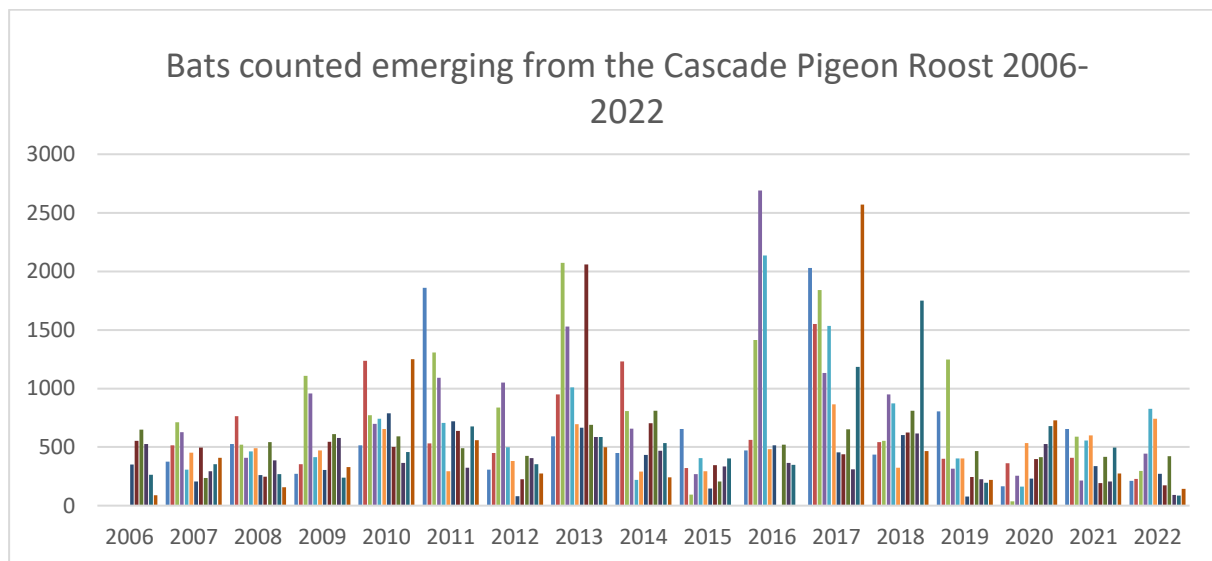


Figure 3. Results of the bat counts carried out on the Cascade Pigeon Roost in 2022.

7.2 Island-wide Bat Counts

The Rodrigues Fruit Bat has been studied since 1974 when it was considered one of the rarest of all vertebrates, with a population of less than 100 animals, and the rarest bat in the world. Since then, the population has steadily increased due to habitat protection and restoration, awareness campaigns and a decline in hunting pressure. Today, the species is known to be recovering with around 20,000 individuals, thanks to Philadelphia Zoo and Chester Zoo's support of The Rodrigues Environmental Education Programme and Rodrigues Fruit Bat census.

To estimate the Rodrigues Fruit Bat population, island wide surveys were conducted simultaneously at the 15 permanent roost locations for three consecutive evenings and for one evening at 11 temporary roosts, over 3 days in November. The counts at the temporary roosts were conducted usually a day before the counts at the permanent roosts to reduce counting errors due to inter-roost movements. All permanent bat roosts are surveyed using the Evening Dispersal Count (EDC) method, where bats passing a line (e.g., above a road, above a crest line, a ridge, flying out of a valley) are counted using a hand tally counter. Bats coming into the roost from another roost or bats returning to roosts also accounted for and subtracted to avoid double counting.

EDCs are conducted as from 16hrs, which is before the bats usually leave their day-time roost sites, up to the time bats can no longer be seen because of the dark. Bats are counted over five-minute intervals and recorded on a standard record sheet. Ideally, each site has one MWF experienced staff member and one trainee volunteer working together for security reasons, and to divide the work between the numerator and data recorder.

In early 2010, villagers around Rodrigues began reporting the presence of roosting fruit bats in other parts of the island, besides the ten permanent (traditional) roost sites. Surveys were carried out by MWF staff to identify these roosts and include them in the monitoring programme. The temporary (recent) roost sites were thought to represent roosting areas of lower suitability being used by an expanding population facing scarcity of higher quality sites, or the creation of new permanent roost sites (some of the temporary roosts even hosted more bats than the permanent roosts) or indicated an old, abandoned roost being re-colonised. Bats in the temporary roosts cannot be easily counted so the number of bats roosting in the treetops is estimated directly by one to three members of staff, the number of observers depending on the site, this is the In-Situ Estimation (ISE) Method. The staff are allocated to the same temporary roost site each time, so they are familiar with the site and there is less variation in their estimates.

A continued increase in the fruit bat population up until 2016, led to a further expansion of the area of the island that was occupied. As such, in 2016, in collaboration with University of East Anglia M.Sc. student, Ms Sarah Gottschalk's research project on the Rodrigues Fruit Bat, another round of surveys was conducted, to identify all additional temporary roosting sites. Population estimates reported in this document were conducted at the original nine temporary roost sites as well as new temporary roosts identified in 2016, as part of the island wide bat surveys.

The Rodrigues Fruit Bat population increased to a maximum of 23,962 in November 2018. On the 10th February 2019, Tropical cyclone Gelena reached Class 4, with Max recorded gusts of 160 km/h. On the 27th of March 2019, Tropical cyclone Joaninha reached Class 4, with Max recorded gusts of 161 km/h. A bat mortality event was noted in July, August and September, during which the number of bats seen in the sky and foraging of fruit trees decreased noticeably. Bats were seen eating unripe fruit, fruit they previously did not eat, eating fallen fruit on the ground and licking dew of leaves in the early hours of the morning. The November 2019 IWBC dropped to a low of 5,423. The March 2020 Island wide bat count was not done initially because of bad weather, then because of the COVID-19 lock-down.

During a meeting held on the 7th of May 2020, with MWF Scientific, Conservation and Executive Directors and the Rodrigues Manager, it was decided to stop carrying out Island wide bat count in March and July due to the very low numbers of bats counted in these months that are not representative of the actual population. It was noted from the time-series data, that simultaneous IWBCs carried out in November were the most representative of the RFB population and therefore most useful in estimating the actual RFB population. It was decided to concentrate all efforts on the November Simultaneous IWBC as from 2020, recruiting ex-MWF staff and volunteers in a high-visibility week-long event.

The November survey continues to be run over the last 3 consecutive days of the week; however, preceding this, a 2-day island wide search and assessment of all roosts is carried out to ascertain the main roosts that will be assessed using the Evening Dispersal Count methods from usual or improved or more vantage points. If a roost is observed to have several important bat flight paths, appropriate vantage points are identified, and enumerators scheduled to count from these. Temporary roosts are counted only if they host over 50 bats. In-situ estimates are then carried out in the mornings of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

For 2022, island-wide simultaneous evening dispersal counts were carried out on the 23rd, 24th and 25th of November at 15 permanent roost sites. The MWF team conducted visual in-situ estimates at 11 temporary sites on these same three dates, earlier during the day. The MWF staff team was joined by 30 volunteers on day 1, 53 volunteers on day 2 and 48 volunteers on day 3 for the simultaneous island wide counts. The highest count recorded was 14,928 bats on the 25th of November 2022. Since there had been no major cyclones nor droughts since the last island-wide count in November 2021, our Scientific Director, Prof. Carl Jones and Conservation Director, Dr Vikash Tatayah agreed that the Rodrigues Fruit Bat population had remained stable since 2021 at an estimated 20,000 individuals. The detailed results of the island wide bat counts conducted in November 2022, are given in Table 7, below.

Table 7. Results from the island wide bat surveys in November 2022

Permanent Roosts	23 Nov	24 Nov	25 Nov	Nov 2022 Highest Count
Jardin Mamzel 1	593	611	599	599
Mourouk	274	229	259	259
Riviere Coco	464	477	457	457
Vainqueur	1	1421	1477	1477
Bel Air	65	0	87	87
Acacia	1377	1871	1863	1863
Grand Var	1301	1591	1358	1358
Anse Baleine	1344	1015	1385	1385
Cascade Pigeon Upper	53	63	275	275
Cascade Pigeon Lower	7	44	0	0
Mourouk/Mt Malgache	371	252	343	343
Graviers	301	287	310	310
Cascade Victoire	298	164	185	185
Cascade Pigeon Middle	1163	1493	2026	2026
Anse Ally	0	200	164	164
Riviere Banane Lower	0	0	0	0
Mont Cimetièrre	400	400	400	400
La Ferme	400	400	400	400
Mangues	1000	1000	1000	1000
Cascade St Louis	1000	1000	1000	1000
Total	10,412	12,518	13,588	13,588
Temporary Roosts	23 Nov	24 Nov	25 Nov	
Baie du Nord	75	80	85	85
Fond la Digue	225	225	225	225
St Francois	300	300	300	300
Pistaches	50	60	60	60
Grande Montagne	500	500	500	500
Grand Baie	150	150	150	150
Cascade Manique	20	25	20	20
Total	1,320	1,340	1,340	1,340
Grand Total	11,732	13,858	14,928	14,928

8.0 Objective 8: Organise the 14th Annual Rodrigues Fruit Bat Day

This year MWF will maintain its awareness programme on the Rodrigues Fruit Bat to promote the work done by MWF to protect this unique species with the aim for people being keen to protect the animal and change their attitude towards it. The 14th Annual Rodrigues Bat Day will be focused on giving talks, doing group work on finding solution to mitigate the human and wildlife conflict and showing of the video 'Treasure of Rodrigues: the Rodrigues Fruit Bat' in villages and to youth groups.

The activity, usually planned for and held at the end of August was unfortunately cancelled in 2022 due to Rodrigues Regional Assembly-imposed restrictions on holding social events and gatherings, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that broke out and spread across the population in Rodrigues in early 2022.

9.0 Objective 9: Support Environmental Activities

MWF Rodrigues will support and participate in activities organised for Environment Week in June along with other environmental activities initiated by the government or other non-governmental organisations.

9.1 World Wildlife Day

World Wildlife Day 2022 was held under the theme "Recovering Key species for ecosystem restoration" to raise awareness of the state of endangered and critically endangered wildlife. To celebrate the World Wildlife Day 2022, the Educator and the Nature Reserve Officer accompanied 4 Rotaract members for weeding and planting activity in the GMNR.

9.2 International Day of Forests

Each year, on the 21st of March the International Day of Forests, declared by the United Nations, is celebrated worldwide to raise awareness on the importance of forests. For the year 2022, the theme was "Forests and Sustainable Production and Consumption." Therefore, to commemorate and support International Forest Day, the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation organised a distribution of 1,125 native plants to villagers of Camp Pintade and the Rodrigues Manager attended the launching of the Tree Planting Programme in villages and sustainable River Management Programme in Catchment Areas organised by the Commission for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and launched by the Chief Commissioner G.O.S.K Johnson Roussety.



Plate 10. Chief Commissioner of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Johnson Roussety G.O.S.K handing a tree sapling to a member of the public.

9.3 Earth Day

Earth Day is an event held each year on the 22nd of April and this year, under the theme: “Invest in Our Planet” is focused on accelerating solutions to combat our greatest threat, climate change and to activate everyone to do their part. To celebrate Earth Day in Rodrigues, the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation organised with 25 members from Rotaract club Rodrigues and Interact Club of Rodrigues to participate in the weeding activities in the GMNR.



Plate 11. MWF Nature Reserve Officer, Sweety Shan Yu briefing volunteers before weeding activities.

9.4 World Biodiversity Day

Community-based conservation is the future of biodiversity protection. On 22 May, we celebrated the International Day for Biological Diversity, to raise awareness of the vital importance of preserving biodiversity. This year it was celebrated under the slogan: “Building a shared future for all life”. Based on this year’s slogan, the MWF Rodrigues decided to work with the local community to help protect our rare endemic plant species. Peoples' active participation in the conservation of wildlife is critical for the survival of many endangered species. Therefore, on the 21st of May 2022, the MWF Rodrigues staff namely Alfred Begue, Liliana Meunier, Sweety Shan Yu and Sweety Félicité distributed one rare plant species to 10 villagers around Rodrigues on selection. These villagers committed themselves to protect and look after the plant and MWF staff will ensure a regular monitoring of these plants.



Plate 12. MWF staff donating a rare plant to ex-MWF staff, Mrs Jane Raboude, villager of Baladirou.

9.5 World Environment Day

World Environment Day is celebrated on the 5th of June each year around the world. The theme for World Environment Day 2022 is “*Only One Earth*”. “*Only One Earth*” is the campaign slogan, with the focus on “*Living Sustainably in Harmony with Nature*.” To commemorate this day, 10 members from the Rotaract Club Rodrigues visited and participated in the removal of invasive species in the AQNR with all the Restoration Labourers.



Plate 13. Volunteers working in the AQNR under the supervision and guidance of MWF staff.

9.6 Ocean Day

MWF Rodrigues participated in the Ocean Day exhibition organised by the Marine Conservation NGO Shoals Rodrigues on the 8th of June 2022 and held in Port Mathurin, covering seabirds.



Plate 14. MWF Rodrigues Exhibition on Seabirds for Ocean Day 2022 in Port Mathurin.

9.7 Clean up campaigns

World Clean- up Day unites millions of volunteers, governments and organisations around the world to tackle the global waste problem and build up the new and sustainable world. The Educator

participated in the World Clean-up Day and the Festival de Randonnée (Hiking Festival) on the 17th of September 2022 organised by the Commission for Tourism. All the participants collected waste on the way from Roche Bon Dieu to St Francois where an exhibition on MWF activities was held and native plants distributed to the public.



Plate 15. Hike and Clean-up organised by the RRA Tourism Office in collaboration with MWF.



Plate 16. MWF Ecotour Officer, Stephen Kirsakye giving explanations to Fire Service Officers during the exhibition on the endangered flora and fauna of Rodrigues.

9.8 River Clean-Up

On the 24th of October 2022, the REEP Educator participated in a river clean-up campaign at Coromandel organised by the Commission for Environment. Participants were from Rod Riders Club, youth from Coromandel village, Officers from the Commission for Environment including the Commissioner for Environment, Mr Franceau Grandcourt and Officers from Police for Environment.



Plate 17. Officer from the Commission for Environment gathering waste for collection

9.9 World Peace Day

The World Peace Day 2022 was celebrated under the theme “End racism. Build peace”. The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation was invited to participate and celebrate this day by the Brahma Kumaris at Malartic. A symbolic planting of native plants at the Brahma Kumaris Centre was organised to celebrate peace.



Plate 18. The MWF Environment Educator with members of the Brahma Kumaris organisation.

10.0 Objective 10: Support Other MWF Activities

Many of the MWF projects include community participation and have an education aspect. The Environmental Educator will support this aspect of the MWF projects. Furthermore, by participating in MWF projects, the Environmental Educator stays aware of project status and continues to learn about the flora and fauna of Rodrigues.

10.1 Founder Tree Protection

Botanical Gardens Conservation International, (BGCI) is a conservation organisation based in England that groups hundreds of botanical gardens around the world. Since 2019, MWF has received support from BGCI (funded by Franklina Foundation) aiming to protect 9 IUCN Critically Endangered tree species in Rodrigues. One particular activity of the project was to protect founder trees of these species that are in danger of damage by unsustainable farming practices, harvesting of material, soil erosion and cyclones, via the deployment of protective fences and retaining walls. To this effect, the MWF Rodrigues identified 14 villages in Rodrigues where endangered trees needed urgent protection.

In January 2022, the first action took place in the village of Thammes, where the IUCN critically endangered *Badula balfouriana* is found. This plant species commonly name 'bois papaye' is endemic to Rodrigues and only 6 individual mother plants exist in the wild in Rodrigues. Propagation of *Badula balfouriana* is very challenging as propagation by seeds only happened once. Several attempts have been made by air layering and very few plants are propagated. The MWF staff, including the REEP Educator, the restoration labourers and villagers from Thammes helped in the transportation of materials and the setting up of wooden poles for the BGCI Founder protection. The MBC TV covered the activities. Alfred Begue and the President of the village of Thammes were interviewed.



Plate 19. MWF staff, GMNR Restoration labourers and villagers from Thammes helped transport materials to the site.



Plate 20. MWF staff setting up wooden poles and an access gate for the rare *Badula balfouriana*.

10.2 Tortoise Monitoring

Led by the Field Officer, John Cliff Jean and Field Assistant, Cursline Félicité-Cécile, on the 11th of November 2022, the MWF Educator together with the newly recruited MWF Management Support Officer, Mrs Taila Roussety assisted in monitoring of the 10 Aldabra Giant Tortoises living in the GMNR tortoise enclosure, see Plate 21. Data collected allow MWF to understand their growth and assess their health over time. Since their introduction in the GMNR in 2018, the first lot of tortoises have already doubled in size and are thriving in this cool and humid habitat.



Plate 21. MWF Management Support Officer, Taila Roussety helping MWF Field Officer, John Cliff Jean with the monthly measurement of tortoises.

10.3 Insect Survey

Led by entomologist Dr Sylvain Hugel, the REEP Educator together with other MWF staff and three Forestry Service officers, participated in an insect survey during the night of the 28th of July 2022. Dr Hugel is particularly interested in small endemic and native grasshoppers and crickets, and through his regular visits to Rodrigues has already discovered a number of new species, see Plate 22.



Plate 22. Dr Sylvain Hugel, Forestry Service Officers and MWF staff spotting an endemic insect on the native bois cerf (*Olea lanceata*) bush.

10.4 Ile aux Cocos and Ile aux Sables Seabird Census

On the 17th of March 2022, 1st of June 2022 and 18th of August 2022, the Environment Educator participated in seabird censuses on Ile aux Cocos and Ile aux Sables Nature Reserves, with MWF staff Field Officer, John Cliff Jean, Ecotour Officer, Stephen Kirsakye, Project Support Officer, Alfred Bégué, and the newly recruited Field Assistant, Cursline Félicité-Cécile, see Plate below.



Plate 23. MWF Rodrigues staff conducting a seabird census on Ile aux Cocos Nature Reserve.

10.5 Eco-schools Indian Ocean Programme

The Eco-Schools Indian Ocean Programme enables children from island nations, sharing a common ocean and any similar challenges, to take collective action in their schools and communities and gain regional and international partnerships, support and awards. Under the project actions for the development of the Eco-Schools Programme in Rodrigues, it is specified that: Reef Conservation, the Ministry of Education, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the Commission for Education, in

partnership with Rodriguan NGOs will support the Eco-Schools programme in Rodrigues through the following actions: 1) Follow up visits to schools; 2) Assessment of schools (Bronze, Silver and Green Flags); 3) Organisation of an Award Ceremony; 4) Organisation of a feedback workshop about the programme implementation. The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation as per the agreement is responsible to carry out follow up visits in 12 primary schools and 4 colleges for the Eco-Schools programme in Rodrigues.

Throughout the year 2022, Eco-Schools activities have been on hold completely due to the COVID situation. On the 1st of December 2022, the REEP Educator had a Zoom meeting with Reef Conservation Mauritius' Head of Education, Ismael Ramjaun, and Education Coordinator, Nuzhat Lalljee, with regard to Eco-Schools Programme status in Rodrigues. The objective of the meeting was to reactivate the Eco-Schools Programme in Rodrigues. The programme will be reactivated in early 2023 both in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

10.6 Human-wildlife conflict around the Mauritian flying fox

On the 13th of January 2022, the REEP Educator attended an online presentation on Human-wildlife conflict around the Mauritian flying fox: Bringing evidence to benefit fruit growers and threatened biodiversity.

11.0 Objective 11: Training and Exchanges

As learning is a never-ending process, it is important for the Environmental Educator to receive training each year in order to better answer to the demands of the job.

11.1 Tourism Foundation Course

The Rodrigues Regional Assembly Commission for Tourism has among its objectives the professionalisation of the Tourism Sector through the training and capacity building of the local Tourism Operators. The Tourism Authority through the Sus-Island Mauritius Project has agreed to reinstate the "Foundation Course in Tourism" training to local operators up to October 2022.

All the MWF staff were invited to register and take part in the training. The REEP Educator participated in the training on 17th, 19th, 22nd and 24th of August 2022. During the training, a presentation was delivered by the course educators on MWF activities to all students of the MITD, Le Chou.



Plate 24. Camille Degremont showing the Rodrigues Fody to an MITD student during the 'open day'.

11.2 Chester Zoo International Virtual Training

The REEP Educator participated in an online International Educators Networking event with Chester Zoo. The purpose of the event was to get to know other field projects that Chester Zoo is supporting and share experiences and ideas from each education programme. Throughout the year, the REEP Educator participated in the International Education network programme. The table below shows the details for these programmes (Table 8).

Table 8. Details on the Chester Zoo online training

Date	Topic	Objectives
22/03/22	Networking	Get to know other field projects that Chester Zoo is supporting and feel part of a supportive network.
14/04/22	Facilitation skills	Problem solving. Understand the difference between training and facilitation
19/05/22	Overview of interpretation	Looking at different styles and how they might be used to reach different audiences and developing content writing skills.
26/07/22	Tailoring to different audiences	Learning different types of audience. Approach to different audience.
09/12/22	Conservation Psychology 2	Nature connection, empathy and social norm
13/12/22	Conservation Psychology 3	Steps for understanding audience and planning for behaviour modification.
15/12/22	Story Telling	Using different approach

