



COUSINE ISLAND
SEYCHELLES



September Newsletter

2021

Where nature thrives and man is a silent observer.

4° 20 MINS 55.73 SOUTH / 53° 38 MINS 53.24 EAST

A Conservation Sanctuary

Balance & Harmony

As the Lesser Noddy and Brown Noddy breeding seasons draw to a close, Cousine Island's beach quickly becomes the location for the local flight school; with hundreds of Lesser Noddy and Brown Noddy fledglings gathering on the beach to learn how to fly. These inquisitive youngsters are often found skimming along the oceans surface as they perfect their prey catching techniques. And while one season comes to an end another is soon to begin.

The conservation team patiently awaits the official start of the Hawksbill sea turtle breeding season. Daily beach patrols have begun with the hopes of spotting our first female Hawksbill sea turtle! The team has also begun to set up the annual Wedge-Tailed Shearwater monitoring colony, with 60 nests monitored across the island in order to better understand this species breeding success.

Greater Frigate (*Fregata minor*)

Often found soaring at great heights above the warm waters surrounding Cousine Island, the Greater Frigatebird is one of the larger bird species found within the Seychelles. The all-dark plumage and red throat of males as well as lack of a pale “armpit” helps distinguish the Greater Frigatebird species from the Lesser Frigatebird. With a wingspan of up to 2 meters, a forked tail and distinctive angular wing-shape these birds are hard to miss.

Unlike many other seabirds this species can't get its feathers wet! Instead Frigatebirds have become masters of flight, staying aloft for up to a month and a half at a time by riding the complex updrafts and air flows above the ocean. Often seen chasing down smaller seabirds in the hopes of stealing their prey, or skimming just above the ocean surface to catch an unsuspecting fish, this seabird has evolved and adapted to survive despite being “the seabird that can't get its feathers wet”.

