

FUNDAÇÃO MAIO BIODIVERSIDADE

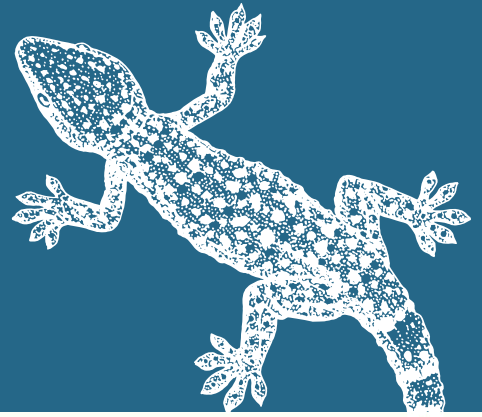
JUNE - OCTOBER 2022
Maio Island, Cabo Verde

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**NEWSLETTER
Nº2**



MAIO'S GECKO



**Maio's gecko,
Tarentola maioensis,
is a small reptile with nocturnal
habits**

Tarentola Maioensis, a species of gecko belonging to the Phyllodactylidae family, which measures about 6 cm and weighs about 6 grams. Its colour is usually brownish, darker or lighter depending on the colour of the substrate where it occurs, as it has the ability to slightly alter the tone of its skin to adapt to its environment.

Tarentola maioensis is the only
Maio Island endemic reptile.

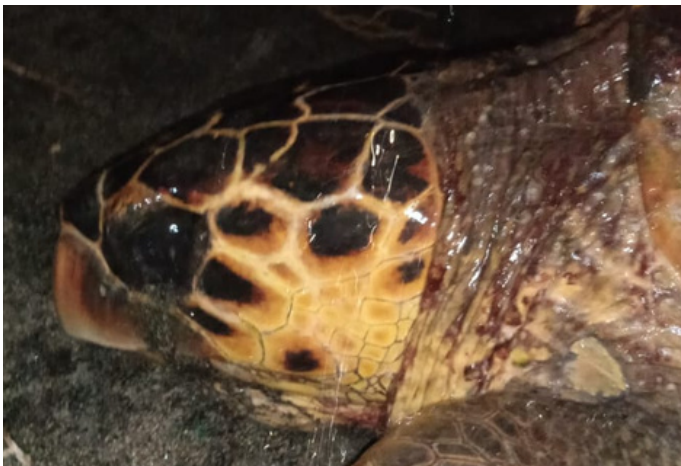
Reproduction occurs throughout the year, but the nesting peak is between March and May (the time when the highest number of females with eggs inside their transparent bellies have been identified).



FIRST RECORD OF HAWKSBILL TURTLE IN MAIO

In Cape Verdean waters we find five of the seven species of sea turtles that exist in the world, and all of them are at risk of extinction: leatherback turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), green (*Chelonia mydas*), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*). However, only the loggerhead turtle nests regularly in the country.

On July 7, for the first time in Maio, a hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), a species that is classified by the IUCN as critically endangered, laid its eggs on the beach of Ribeira Baia, in Pilão Cão. The female, which measured 1 metre long, made a nest 67.7 cm deep, and laid 148 eggs, which were immediately translocated to our hatchery on Bitxe Rotxa beach. In total, 83 hatchlings hatched from the eggs, 25 survived and were released into the sea at the end of August by the FMB hatchery team.



Eretmochelys imbricata hatchlings are smaller than the *Caretta caretta* (which nests abundantly in Maio Island) and have a particular diet that includes large amounts of toxic sponges.

Presently, each of its nests has a high conservation value for the species. The global trade of its shell for handicrafts and luxury products pushed it close to extinction in 2000.

The disappearance of sea turtles and other key species from our oceans would affect the balance of marine ecosystems, and consequently have a major social and economic impact on humans.



SEWING WORKSHOP



'RECICLA DJARMAI'

In order to fight against the plastic pollution reflected on our seas and oceans, FMB, promoted a training in sewing and recycling in July, attended by 13 participants. The focus was to empower women and to combat the problems created by this waste on our island, by being able to recycle it and transform it into bags and purses, using a technique called "thermofusion" to generate new plastic fabrics, along with other techniques such as "upcycling", in which we transform old clothes into new items. This initiative was funded by CEPF (Partnership Fund for Critical Ecosystems) and had the partnership of the Primary School, João Antonio Cruz da Silva.

SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

CABO VERDE, A GLOBAL HOTSPOT FOR MARINE BIODIVERSITY

With the support of our partner FFI, Maio Biodiversity Foundation (FMB), has been collecting much needed data to fill the knowledge gap on the distribution and abundance of sharks and rays in Cabo Verde and helping shape local conservation initiatives.

In the course of our conservation work, FMB has identified at least two, possibly three, nurseries for species including nurse, lemon, tiger, milk and scalloped hammerhead sharks and recorded two species of rays, never seen before in Cabo Verde, the smoothtail mobula (*Mobula thurstoni*) and the West African torpedo (*Torpedo mackayana*).

A global hotspot for marine biodiversity, the waters of the archipelago nation of Cabo Verde harbour over 60 species of [elasmobranch](#) including manta rays, whale sharks and key breeding populations of other threatened sharks.



MANY THANKS TO FAUNA & FLORA INTERNATIONAL FOR ALL THE SUPPORT THEY HAVE GIVEN US OVER THE YEARS, AND FOR THE BEAUTIFUL ARTICLES

RE-NESTING BEHAVIOUR OF LOGGERHEAD SEA TURTLE

For species without parental care, such as sea turtles, nest site selection is particularly important for embryo development, hatchling survival and, ultimately, reproductive success.

We conducted an 8-year (2012–2019) capture–mark–recapture study of the re-nesting behaviour of loggerhead turtles *Caretta caretta* to identify both inter and intra-beach patterns of nest site selection.

This study highlights the priority sites for protection on Maio Island and could help to optimize capture–mark–recapture programmes.

Maio Island, our study site, in the archipelago of Cabo Verde, hosts one of the largest loggerhead turtle nesting colonies globally.



Oryx

Strategic nest site selection in one of the world's largest loggerhead turtle nesting colonies, on Maio Island, Cabo Verde

Published online by Cambridge University Press: 01 August 2022

Juan Patino-Martinez, Leno Dos Passos, Raquel Amador, Arnau Teixidor, Sergio Cardoso, Adolfo Marco, Franziska Koenen, Amanda Dutra, Christophe Eizaguirre, Elisa G. Dierickx, Manjula Tiwari, Tamás Székely and Rocio Moreno

Show author details



1° IUCN AFRICA PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS (APAC)

From July 18th to 23rd, FMB attended the first IUCN African Protected Areas Congress, held in Kigali, Rwanda, a congress that raises the message of hope to do more for Africa, and which involved leaders from different sectors of society and from around the world, to discuss challenges and define action strategies for the future of protected areas.

The discussions were around the key role of these areas in safeguarding Africa's iconic wildlife, promoting sustainable and integrated development, valuing local knowledge and African cultural heritage, and strengthening the participation of women and young people in the conservation agenda.



The congress allowed the identification of the key factors involved in the loss of biodiversity and ecosystems, as well as the commitment of governments necessary to address them more comprehensively. It was an unique opportunity for common learning, among conservationists, scientists and governments from around the world, how terrestrial and marine protected areas function as the most useful tool to preserve ecosystems and biodiversity.

Special thanks to all our partners and funders who contribute to the conservation and sustainability of our protected areas.



BIO-TUR TRAINING: PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT (PAS)

MODULE 8 - MARINE COMPONENT

Between August 20th and 25th, the Bio-Tur Project and FMB promoted module 8 of the Protected Areas (PAs) Management Training that addressed methods of monitoring the marine component, data treatment and analysis. Twenty participants from different organisations from the Cabo Verde islands attended the training.



The training, delivered by FMB's marine programme coordinator Sara Ratão, involved field data collection, such as bird census in Salinas, coral photo-squares at Laje Branca beach, and discussions on PA monitoring and management strategies .



VOLUNTEERING AND HOLIDAY CAMPS

When the nesting season of *Caretta caretta* sea turtle starts, it marks the arrival of our international and national volunteers. Volunteers are a key and very important part of the conservation model we implement in Maio, where we always include local people.

Our volunteers stay with local families - Homestay Programme - supporting the sustainable development of the island and participating in different types of information, awareness and community interaction activities with adults, youth and children.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers who have chosen FMB over the years and have put their heart and their contribution into conserving and protecting the resources of our beautiful Maio Island.

A special thanks to the Portuguese association ParaOnde?, for all the great support over the years.



“UNFORGETTABLE and GRATIFYING. By experiencing local life, culture and local food at first hand, we start to value it more in our lives. We would recommend it 300%. Come with an open mind and heart, embrace everything and make the most of the experience to discover and grow a lot as a curious and responsible person.”

Clara and Marta

TURTLE LEAGUE

For the first time in Maio Island, a football league was held, 'Turtle League', with mixed teams (women and men), involving football and the conservation of sea turtles, where the **winners were the Sperm Whales**, from **Pilão Cão**.

The league aims to induce in young people the love and importance of conservation, and to promote the idea that it is possible to have fun while protecting our biodiversity.

The league is one of several awareness-raising and community dynamisation activities to be carried out this year. Each team in the league has the environmental responsibility of communicating to their community the importance of the animal they have chosen to represent, as well as choosing a slogan for the preservation and conservation of the species representing Maio in each game of the league.

The idea is to bring conservation and people of all age groups together, while also offering traditional board game championships (oril, cards and damas), as well as painting and reading sessions for the little ones.

Thank you to all the communities, and
Congratulations #SpermWhales for the
victory



TALKS WITH EXPERTS

As part of the environmental awareness and of the competition held on Rádio Comunitária Vozes Djarmai (RCVD), experts in different fields have shared their knowledge and experiences about conservation activities done by FMB in Maio Island.

Different themes linked to biodiversity and conservation efforts were addressed during the month. Among the themes already covered are Turtles, Sharks, Environmental Education, Sea and Fish.



NEST ADOPTION

The nest adoption, from the Bitxe Rotxa beach hatchery, is also a way for all of us to contribute to *Caretta caretta* sea turtle conservation.

The hatchery implementation main objective is to reduce threats to eggs and hatchlings, i.e. it represents a second chance for nests that, if left on their original beaches, would be at risk of predation, illegal capture, flooding or erosion.



'Adopt a nest, help a friend'



EXCHANGE WITH INSEAD BUSINESS SCHOOL

During the months of July and August, we had with us Peilu Zhang, as a result of the collaboration between FMB and INSEAD.

Peilu, has been supporting FMB by developing a communication, marketing and funding strategy. Among other activities, she helped in updating the website, newsletter, annual report, the sewing workshop, a plastic study, sea turtle night patrols and community awareness activities.

During these months, Peilu became not only a team member with strong motivation and commitment to conservation, but also provided effective capacity-building support for FMB.

*Thank you very much Peilu and
INSEAD, for all your support, help and
care for FMB!!*





PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC'S VISIT

As part of the visit of the President of the Republic, Mr José Maria Neves, and his delegation to Maio Island, as well as the Mayor of Maio Island, we had the honour and the pleasure to welcome them and present the conservation and sustainable development work being carried out in the island by FMB and partners.

The visit ended with a field trip to see some of the projects.



"Maio is an example in Cabo Verde and in the world, based on *djunta mon*, the conservation of biodiversity and social progress based on respect for local culture and gender equality."



FMB'S VISION

"Promote the protection of biodiversity and the social progress of Maio Island through conservation actions and the empowerment and economic sustainability of local communities."

FMB'S MISSION



Did you know that there is a nurse shark nursery in Maio,
Ginglymostoma cirratum ?

We invite you to be aware of the next edition of our newsletter and get to know more about this species important to our ecosystem.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARTNERS, VOLUNTEERS AND FUNDERS.

Designed by Andreia Adrião & Mariana Souto

