

# Mayumba National Park

Issue 3

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## Outreach Program News



### Outreach Team Tours Schools with Protected Animals

#### In This Edition:

*Mayumba National Park's Outreach Team completes two village tours during the month of April.*

*A Sports Day at one Mayumba primary school motivates students to protect their environment.*

*A presentation on HIV, AIDS, and other STDs teaches local high school students how to protect themselves from these diseases.*

Our goal is to help children discover the wonders and importance of nature. As part of our effort to achieve this objective, we toured Mayumba's primary schools this month with a presentation about Gabon's protected animals and hunting laws

To help transmit the message, we brought several plush animal toys and puppets of protected animals, a music video about wildlife conservation, and a PowerPoint presentation to illustrate the information that we wish to share with the students and their teachers.

bly halls, invite the whole school to crowd together in one classroom.

In spite of the noise and heat that is generated by having so many students in one classroom, we persist, in hope that we can teach these children to be caretakers of the natural world, for their future, and for the future of our planet.



*Over 100 students came together at Public School 'B' to participate in a presentation about hunting laws and protected animals.*



Each time we arrive at a school, we set up our audiovisual equipment, our portable generator, and, as Mayumba's schools do not have assem-

**Mayumba National Park would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Sea World/Busch Gardens Conservation Fund for their generous support of the Mayumba Outreach Program.**

### Welcome To Our Newest Team Members !

#### Special points of interest:

- 768 people attended our outreach activities during our two village tours this month.
- 696 students and their teachers attended this month's environmental education events in Mayumba's Schools.



This month we welcome two new outreach team members: Miss Stéphanie Mahinou Makaya and Mr. Rodrigue 'Flash' Mbatchi.

Stéphanie is being trained as the new outreach program assistant for Mayumba National Park. She was born in Malembé village and grew up in the Mayumba area. As a high school student, she was the leader of the school's cultural dance and theatrical troupe. Her performing arts talent is evident each time we work with the stu-

dents. In addition, she is keen to begin work on a new project: reinstating a cultural dance program in the Mayumba schools.

Flash is our new village tour boat pilot and also happens to be a great handyman who can repair just about any equipment if it breaks down during our village tours.

A warm welcome to Stéphanie and Flash! We're glad to have both of you on the team!



*Stéphanie Mahinou Makaya, our new outreach program assistant, explains the web of life during an activity in Malembé village.*

## Mayumba's Outreach Team Completes Two Village Tours in April



During our first April tour of the lagoon villages, we discussed protected animals, Gabon's hunting laws, and water treatment methods. The second tour brought activities that explained the food chain and the phenomenon of interdependence in the natural world, along with discussions to verify that what we discussed during the previous tour had been understood and retained.

Each program included questionnaires to test the villagers existing knowledge and

attitudes as well as a measure of any changes with time and as a result of the information we share.

In Mayumba's lagoon villages, elephants have been one of the least popular animals because of the damage they inflict upon the villagers family plantations.

During our second village tour, an encouraging result was discovered: in nearly every village we visited, when we asked whether elephants produce any resources in the

forest, every single person responded "True", and cited the moabi tree as an example of this resource. Moabi is used for its wood, for its sap (moabi butter), and its bark is used to prepare traditional medicines. This information had been explained during our first April visit, and the question was posed during our second tour, three weeks later.

This suggests that people are retaining the information we bring to the villages, and that perhaps, little by little, attitudes toward elephants are changing.

### *A presentation about HIV, AIDS, and other STD's illuminates new information for the students at J B Moandat High School*



*Mr. Jean-Jacques Moro, Natural Sciences Professor at JB Moandat High School, presents a PowerPoint he created about HIV, AIDS, and STDs to his students.*

Early this month, Mr. Jean-Jacques Moro, professor of Natural Sciences at Mayumba's High School and member of Mayumba National Park's Environmental Association, approached us with an idea: to do a presentation on HIV, AIDS, and other STD's for his students. He had already prepared the presentation, but he needed a projector in order to show it to his students. We were more than happy to help.

We then worked together to add a few more illustrations and some additional information from the internet, as the Park office has the only internet access in Mayumba. The result was a very informative presentation

for Mr. Moro's students.

Nearly 100 students and several adults came to the presentation in order to learn more about how to protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases. Their maturity during the presentation of such serious and sometimes shocking information was commendable.

During the event we also showed a local film about Mayumba's natural and cultural resources.

We congratulate Mr. Moro and his colleagues for their initiative and look forward to many future collaborations.

## Sports Day Motivates Students

After having toured Mayumba's primary schools with a message about protected animals, we sponsored a sports day at Public School 'C', in the Tchilole-Ndembé fishing village. A sports festival will be held each month at a different school; in May we will be at Public School 'B', and in June at Public School 'A'.

Each team chose a protected animal as their team name and mascot. For the girls' competitions were: Team Gorilla, Team Turtle, Team Hippopotamus, and Team Elephant. Competing for the boys were Team Python, Team Crocodile, Team Whale and Team Buffalo.

There were volleyball and soccer tournaments, and relay races. Team Gorilla and Team Python won the volleyball tournaments; Team Hippopotamus and Team Python won the soccer tournaments, and Team Hippopotamus and Team Python also won the relay races.

Several prizes were awarded to the winners, including autographed cassettes and postcards from Gabonese singing star Annie Flore Batchiellily, DVDs of the Park's film "Welcome to Mayumba", gorilla posters and turtle stickers. Congratulations to all the teams for their great participation! See you again next month!!



*Angèle Kakpo of Team Gorilla celebrates with a "chest-beat" after her team won the girls' volleyball championship.*