



COUSINE ISLAND
SEYCHELLES



February 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

The month of February has been a busy one for the conservation team on Cousine Island. With the hawksbill nesting season still booming, the Northwest Monsoon season seabird census was undertaken. The surveyed species included White-tailed tropicbirds (*Phaethon lepturus*), Fairy terns (*Gygis alba*) and Wedged-tailed shearwaters (*Puffinus pacificus*). The results obtained show a decline in White-tailed tropicbird numbers (758 vs 1138) which we believe may be related to poor fishing conditions. The wedged-tailed shearwater numbers for this season are also slightly less than last season's numbers. However, Fairy terns are faring better, with an increase in their numbers to 1806 compared to last year's census of 1751.

Ruddy turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*)

Ruddy turnstones are interesting and charismatic members of coastal fauna throughout the world. They can be found along the southern coastlines, such as Cousine Island, and then migrate to the arctic tundra for breeding season. Pairs come together on the breeding territory and remain monogamous, meeting again every season in the same territory. During breeding season Ruddy turnstones are very aggressive and territorial. However, when not in breeding season they are sociable, forming small to large groups and mixing with other shorebird species. They can be seen flipping rocks at the shoreline looking for prey and even foraging inland, on the forest floor.

