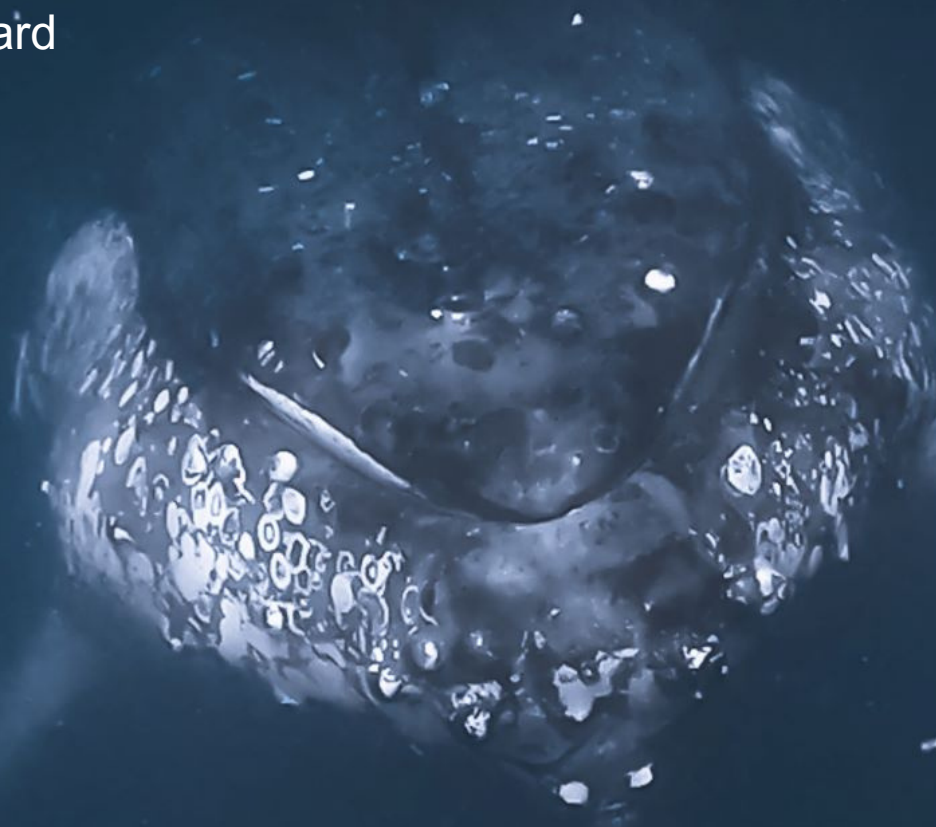


ZAGNAHARIBE, THE GREAT SEDUCTIVE DANSE OF THE HUMPBACK WHALE

A Citizen Science trip with OSI-Cetis

Date: 28th September - 9th October 2024

Photo credit: Enorha Guimard



“We need another and a wiser and perhaps a more mystical concept of animals. Remote from universal nature and living by complicated artifice, man in civilization surveys the creature through the glass of his knowledge and sees thereby a feather magnified and the whole image in distortion. We patronize them for their incompleteness, for their tragic fate for having taken form so far below ourselves. And therein do we err. For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours, they move finished and complete, gifted with the extension of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren, they are not underlings: they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth.”

Henry Beston, The Outermost House: A Year of Life on the Great Beach of Cape Cod

Photo credit: Enorha Guimard



Citizen Science program about humpback whales

Join us for once in a lifetime experience to see and study the population of humpback whales in the North-West coast of Madagascar. Swim in the blue water to discover more of the marine life that this island has to offer.

This trip in Madagascar aims to monitor and study the population of humpback whales in the North-west area of the island in order to better preserve this fauna and understand the variability and the abundance of this species from one year to the next in different sector of the Indian Ocean. Monitoring of these gentle giants has been carried out for many years now in the north-east area of Madagascar but there is a lack of monitoring in the north-west area. Our purpose on this trip will be to remedy this.

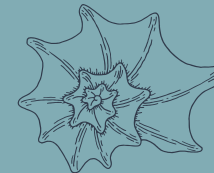
During this trip you have the certainty to learn everything about humpback whales, their behaviours, threats, conservation, acoustic, how to collect data and analyse them, practise photo-identification. You will also have the opportunity to hear the males singing to the females with our hydrophone.

Photo credit: Enorha Guimard



The humpback whales in the Malagasy waters

In the Indian Ocean, Madagascar is one of the breeding grounds some populations of humpback whales in the southern hemisphere. Humpback whales are migratory species and go to the feeding ground in Antarctica during the summer time (November-March) and travel between 5000 to 8000 km up to the warmer waters of Madagascar during winter to mate and give birth. Because the calves don't have the tick layer of blubber when they are born, it is one of the reason that the whales migrate and come up in warmer waters where there is a lack of predators to ensure the safety of the calves. It is also in these waters that the males humpback whales can show incredible displays to seduce females in order to mate.





Meet the team



Anne Littaye

Anne Littaye is an oceanographer and ecologist. After working for a number of different organisations and on different oceans, and as a precursor to the creation of the 6th natural marine park, she joined OSI in 2020 as head of the OSI-CETIS participatory research programme. She is also a university lecturer in marine ecology.

Languages spoken: French, English



Enorha Guimard

A marine biologist, Enorha is an expert observer, specialising in acoustic monitoring. She has worked in various countries on cetacean monitoring campaigns to check compliance with regulations during offshore mining prospecting. She started to work as a wildlife guide in Iceland and she is currently a whale watching guide in Australia, where she lives. She is also a wildlife photographer and storyteller.

Languages spoken: French, English

About OSI and OSI-Cetis

OSI-Cetis is the ocean program of the **NGO Objectif Science International (OSI)** which organise different citizen science trips for children, teenagers and adults in different fields in science. OSI has the ECOSOC consultative statue with the **United Nations** since 2011.

The program OSI Cetis has organised several **citizen science trips** on marine biodiversity in different places in the world in order to get people involved in marine science, developed **skills**, being **inspired** and contribute to the **preservation** and **conservation** of the ocean. Inspiring people through **education** is essential and the key in order to give the chance to preserve our planet. Travelling to beautiful places for a good cause to preserve marine life is a way for you to give **your labor**, an opportunity to travel not only to see but to **give**. Our purpose at the end is not to let you go back home with only memories and beautiful photos but also making **friendships, opportunities** and participating to a project that **give values** to you but also to the environment and the community. That is the **objective** of all **OSI-Cetis programs**



Our partners: Cetamada and Globice

Cetamada is an NGO based in Madagascar. Their mission is to preserve the populations of humpback whales and their habitat in the Malagasy waters.



We collaborate with Cetamada and share data of humpback whales distribution and photo-identification in order to understand better this gentle giants that use this very less-studied area on the west coast.



Globice is an NGO based in La Reunion island dedicated to science and conservation of cetaceans in La Reunion and the Indian Ocean. Our collaboration with Globice is to collect and share acoustic data of humpback whales and other species of cetaceans in order to compare the vocal sound of this animals between different populations in the Indian Ocean.



Photo credit: Enorha Guimard



A paradise in Madagascar

The accommodation is located in North-West of Madagascar on the main island, to the North of Ilot Iranja. This area is full of wildlife and lies close to the deep sea, the edge of the continental shelf and the abyssal plain of the Mozambique Channel. These topographical features make it an ideal area for cetaceans.

A number of white sandy islets, surrounded by coral reef, are close by and are ideal for a day's snorkelling to discover other species, particularly turtles.

The forests around the hotel are also home to a lot of wildlife



Trip itinerary

The success of our trip is very much depending on the whales and the weather conditions. Two things that are beyond our control.

Day 1: Arrival

We will meet at the hotel Ylang at Nosy Be. During the evening, we will do a presentation of the scientific trip and getting to know each other.

Day 2: Arrival at Naturalia lodge

Departure by boat with equipment and luggage for Grande Terre. It will take around 1h30 to reach the Naturalia hotel. This crossing will give you the opportunity to meet our first wildlife of the trip. In the afternoon, we will do a presentation about the cetaceans, humpback whales, photo-identification and acoustic.

Day 3 to 10: Days with wildlife

6 days at sea to observe humpback whales, taking photos and acoustic data; other species of cetaceans will be the subject of data collection. One day will be devoted to a stroll towards the Baie des Russes, to discover other landscapes and observations. And one day in the morning will be devoted to terrestrial fauna, lemurs and chameleons; the afternoon will be devoted to marine turtles.

Day 11: Departure from Naturalis Lodge

Transfer to Nosy Bê, with equipment and luggage;
Finalisation of data processing and analysis; assessment of the trip.

Day 12: Departure



Photo credit: Enorha Guimard



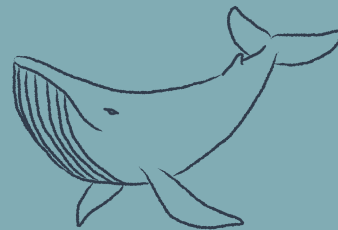
Photo credit: Enorha Guimard

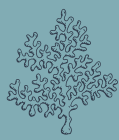


The waters of Madagascar are full of different species of cetaceans such as Indo-Pacific Bottlenose dolphins, Indian Ocean humpback dolphins, pantropical spotted dolphin and other marine megafauna like whale sharks.

Coral reefs are also present close to the accommodation which will give you the opportunity to discover more marine wildlife such as marine turtles, sharks, rays etc.

A tropical forest nearby the accommodation is full of wildlife that you can encounter like the chameleon, lemurs, different species of birds and insects.





Are they many options for food at the Lodge ?

NATURA LODGE also has a bar and a restaurant to offer guests the maximum possible service. The Bar Restaurant is open from 7am until closing time. The Lodge offers guests a daily menu consisting of starters, main courses, meat and fish, and dessert. The menu is well thought out to offer fresh, typical products every day and a variety of dishes from land and sea. So you can have quite many options.

Can I drink the tap water?

No. Tap water is not safe to drink anywhere in the country. Most hotels filter and treat the water, so you can fill your water bottles. But in general, we buy packs of bottled water and make them available to participants. It is better that everyone bring their water bottle (to use less plastic), which we fill up as we go along with the large reserve bottles.

Cash or card?

At our departure point, Plage de Madirokely BP 428 Nosy Be, there are cash machines. Where we are staying, it is isolated, no cash machines and nothing to buy either. For small drinks in addition -punch or beer, at the hotel, it is good to bring cash but payment is possible by credit card.

Can you meet certain dietary requirements?

Unfortunately it is not easy to be vegan in Madagascar. In fact, lentils, chickpeas, soya etc are not easy to find. But we could bring a few dry provisions of this type and ask the hotel to cook them. For the vegetarian people, there is no problem.

Do I need vaccinations?

Yes, some vaccines are recommended in Madagascar. Hepatitis A and B are recommended. Malaria is also present in the country but the treatment is too heavy for only 1 week so you don't need to have it. However, do bring tropical mosquito repellent and long clothing (trousers, long-sleeved T-shirt) for the evening. The rooms are equipped with mosquito nets.

Are we guaranteed to see whales

It is important to remember that we never know what we will see when we are on the water. It is wildlife after all and we have no control over them. However you have a very high chance of seeing whales as we will be right in the middle of the high season of this majestic animals. There is also the possibility to encounter other animals such as Omura whales, beaked whales, different species of dolphins, rays, whale sharks, birds, turtles etc.

Are the flights reliable?

The flights are not always reliable and it's best to give yourself a buffer day before and after your trip.

Do I need travel insurance?

It is very important that you have travel insurance as Madagascar is a place where many things change that can affect your travel arrangements. Travel insurance will cover you for loss of baggage and changes to flights outside your control as well as possible tour cancellations.

How many people will be in my group?

Group of 12 participants, 2 supervisors/marine biologists and a Malagasy sailor and boat pilot trained in whale watching tours.

Visa requirements?

For most travelers you don't need a visa before entering Madagascar. Upon your arrival, you will get a tourist visa valid for 90 days. Your passport must be valid for 6 months from your date of entry

Is there internet access?

Telephone connection is available at the lodge, and they offer a free WIFI point in the restaurant. If you need it, you can also buy prepaid cards from the local operator.

Is English widely spoken?

No. Malagasy is the first language and French is the official business language. English is spoken by guides and by some people in the hospitality industry. It's handy if you have some basic French.

What to bring

- Camera with zoom lens (optional)
- Gopro or other underwater camera (optional)
- Hardrive or USB key
- Laptop computer (optional)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Any personal medication
- Spray jacket and warm sweater
- Warm weather clothes
- Reef safe Suncream
- Several swim wears
- Your personal items
- Sunhat and sunglasses
- Sense of Adventure
- Beach Towel
- Seasick medication (for those prone to it)
- Insect repellent
- Waterproof bag for camera
- Walking shoes
- Any other item you deem necessary for the trip

Madagascar is a tropical place so it is usually quite warm during the day. Daytime temperature oscillate around 27 °C. Nighttime brings a reprieve from the daily heat, with temperatures ranging from a cool 19 °C. The island experience a very short times of rainfall between May to October. The sea is quite warm during the winter time with a range of 25 to 27 °C.



Photo credit: Enorha Guimard

What do the cetaceans, acoustic, photo-identification workshop/presentation cover?

Cetaceans & Humpback whales

- A general presentation about cetaceans of the world
- A focus on humpback whales in the world
- Humpback whales of Madagascar
- The feeding and breeding grounds
- Humpback whales behaviour
- The threats and conservation

Acoustic

- A presentation about the sound of cetaceans
- Sound in communication, hunting, mating and feeding
- Listen to recorded sound of different species of cetaceans and try to identify them

Photo-identification

- The importance of photo-identification in wildlife
- Focus on cetaceans photo-identification
- Presentation of Happy Whale website to record whale photo-ids



Photo credit: Enorha Guimard

How to book the trip in Madagascar 2024

To book your space: info@vacances-scientifiques.com

We can't wait to have you with us in this adventure !



Photo credit: Enorha Guimard

Any question ?

Don't hesitate to reach out via email:
infos@vacances-scientifiques.com