



## **Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) celebrates the World Biodiversity Day 2010**

The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) is the sole terrestrial conservation NGO in the Republic of Mauritius. MWF is strongly involved in saving biodiversity, which we marvel at and celebrate through our daily endeavours. In recent years, the World Biodiversity Day has been celebrated in Mauritius and Rodrigues in greater pomp each year, and reflects a growing awareness and concern about environmental issues. The Republic of Mauritius gave a strong signal that it wished to protect its biodiversity by being one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Convention on Biodiversity. There were dozens of activities conducted nationwide, but MWF celebrated World Biodiversity Day in a small way, though touched those involved in these activities on Mauritius and Rodrigues in a great way.

### **Planting for World Biodiversity Day in Nature Reserves at Ile aux Aigrettes (Mauritius) and Anse Quitor (Rodrigues) – *The Green Wave***

The United Nations designated 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity and the UN Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity coordinated a global campaign – *The Green Wave*. *The Green Wave* is a global outreach and awareness programme designed to educate a new generation of environmental champions about the importance of biodiversity and the consequences of its loss. MWF teamed with Imagine Communications, a Mauritian marketing agency representing Airbus Industries Ltd, Air Mauritius and Airports of Rodrigues Ltd. to plant native species in Mauritius and Rodrigues. The airline industry recognises its contribution to green house gas emissions and has taken the commitment to reduce these through actions that includes forest conservation. This explains the support of Air Mauritius towards habitat restoration in Mauritius and Rodrigues through the ‘one tree – one take off’ project.

In the run up to World Biodiversity Day 2010, a symbolic tree planting ceremony was held on Ile aux Aigrettes with students from State Secondary School Marcel Cabon on 21 May 2010. Teaching staff, MWF staff, representatives from Imagine Communication and Air Mauritius joined the tree planting ceremony, which was followed by an educational tour of the island under MWF’s ‘Learning with Nature’ programme.



Planting of endemic Mauritian species on Ile aux Aigrettes and ‘Learning with Nature’ educational visit.

On World Biodiversity Day (22 May 2010), the MWF staff of Rodrigues, together with Air Mauritius, Airport of Rodrigues Ltd, and volunteers from Marechal College and Port Sud Est Village also participated in the Green Wave initiative by planting over 100 endemic and native plants on this special day at Anse Quitor Nature Reserve. Among the species planted were *Fernelia buxifolia* (bois bouteille), *Doricera trilocularis* (bois chauve-souris), *Gastonia rodriguesiana* (bois blanc) and *Antirhea bifurcata* (bois goudron). *Antirhea bifurcata* is almost extinct on Rodrigues and thus critically endangered. These plants were planted in the GEF SGP UNDP plots.



Planting at Anse Quitor Nature Reserve (Rodrigues)

The Green Wave initiative gained wide publicity in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

**Planting of Rare Plants at Grande Montagne (Rodrigues) on World Biodiversity Day**

The Mauritian Wildlife Foundation staff and Forestry Services planted 3 rare plants at Grande Montagne Nature Reserve in Rodrigues on 21 May 2010. Two *Ramosmania rodriguesii* (cafe marron) and one *Badula balfouriana* (bois papaye) were planted.



Planting of *Badula balfouriana* at Grande Montagne (Rodrigues)

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