

Cousin Island Special Reserve - a success story

Title

This video tells the conservation success story of Cousin Island Special Reserve, a former coconut enterprise now turned nature reserve in the Seychelles. Managed by local NGO and BirdLife Partner, [Nature Seychelles](#), Cousin lies approximately 2 km from Praslin Island, Seychelles. The island became the World's first internationally-owned reserve in 1968 when it was purchased by the International Council for the Protection of Birds (now Birdlife International) to save the last remaining population of the Seychelles warbler.

Cousin at the time had been cleared of its native vegetation and planted wall to wall with coconuts. Pigs, chickens and cattle had been introduced. Soon after its purchase, the Seychelles Government designated the island as a Nature Reserve under the Wild Animals and Birds Protection Act. In 1975, Cousin was designated a Special Reserve. This included the marine area up to 400m beyond the High Water Mark. Today, Cousin Island is a bird sanctuary; home to many endemic land birds and an important breeding site for seabirds. It is the most important rookery for Hawksbill turtles in the Western Indian Ocean. The island has been successfully restored to its natural vegetation and has received international awards for its conservation efforts and eco-tourism initiatives.