Title

If you want to see Seychelles nature at its finest, then one of the top places to visit is Cousin Island Special Reserve. Over the last four decades, this former coconut plantation has been transformed into a hotspot of the best fauna and flora to be found in Seychelles. From the seashore to the top of the hill, nature is on display in all its glory. Each year, thousands of people visit this unique island reserve to discover its beauty and diversity. On Cousin the wildlife is abundant and close at hand. No matter what time of year you visit, you are sure to see a variety of nesting seabirds, tortoises cavorting in the marsh, foraging birds of the forest, lizards roaming about in the leaf litter in search of food, and a host of invertebrates such as crabs, spiders, and millipedes. Now in a recent development Nature Seychelles (BirdLife Partner), who are Cousin's managers, have launched a new and exciting website for the island in order to bring its beauty closer to a local and worldwide audience. **www.cousinisland.net** is the new online home of the island. Here you can browse through high quality images of the island's wildlife and also find out information about the island. A history of cousin is described in the first section of the site, which also gives quick facts about the island. The visit section meanwhile, tells you how to go there and when to get there. In order to keep the experience short and sweet, and to reduce the ecological footprint to this tiny island, visits are limited to a couple of hours in the mornings, Monday to Friday. A number of local tour operators who bring visitors to Cousin are listed. Only Cousin Island boats are allowed to land on its shores to prevent the accidental introduction of pests onto the Reserve, so the tour boats anchor offshore while visitors are brought on shore. The exhilarating landing is a major highlight of the visit. The tour structure is also explained; 75 minutes of an experience which no visitor forgets, conducted in English and French and, depending on the presence of a foreign language volunteer, also in other languages like German and Italian. A list of essentials which visitors should bring for the short visit is provided too. The Cousin wildlife spectacle is showcased in the 'discover' section of the site, complete with a photo gallery of the major groups of fauna and flora to be found - land birds, seabirds, reptiles, shore birds, lizards, invertebrates and vegetation. The conservation programme carried out on Cousin, involving research, monitoring and management of the endemic wildlife and habitats, is explained in another section, while another outlines how one can contribute to the island's activities through volunteering. A news section keeps everyone updated with the island's goings on, complete with volunteer and staff experiences. There is no doubt that visiting Cousin should be on anyone's bucket list. But should you be unable to go, then the next best thing is to pay it a virtual visit on the newly launched Cousin Island website.