

Nautical and Tourist Guide to the northwest of Madagascar

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We have been sailing around Madagascar for ten years. We find there what a sailing lover is looking for: calm anchorages (not just in terms of waves!), contact with a welcoming population, cultural authenticity, a predictable wind pattern, an infinite choice of anchorages, non-dangerous fauna, unique flora in the world, the possibility of fishing, fabulously beautiful landscapes. We want to communicate this joy of walking around the “Big Island” and share our knowledge of the fauna, flora, history and traditions. For example, we would like to convey our happiness at surprising a kingfisher (No. 24) during a kayak trip through the labyrinth of a mangrove!

We would like our readers to share our happiness in looking at a sky without any light pollution. The sailors who preceded us for a thousand years observed the Southern Cross or the Large Magellanic Cloud. These constellations allowed them to reach their destination. The Arabs called the Magellanic Cloud the glow. He pointed them south. The name Comoros comes from the Arabic name.

What a wonder to see dolphins (No. 7) swimming in front of the bow, doing their acrobatics, coming to breathe along the hull.

What a joy to see a turtle emerge, just for a breath.

We could give many other examples of the joys of a cruise to the northwest of Madagascar. Madagascar separated from Gondwana 150 million years ago. It remained uninhabited until around 500 years AD. A fauna and flora unique in the world were thus able to develop there. The human population of the island is complex. The chronology of this settlement is still largely uncertain, but it is certain that peoples from Africa and others from the Indo-Malaysian region settled there. They have largely interbred. Other populations from India, Islamized countries and Europe were added.

The area described in this book goes from Cap d'Ambre in the north to Baly in the south (about 330 miles).

Nosy Bé (literally the big island) is the hub. This island is opening up more and more to tourism. The existence of an international airport, various hotel structures, and the beauty of its landscapes have contributed to giving it a growing reputation. The fish-filled waters attract big-game fishing enthusiasts. The opening of a golf course is an important step.

It has also become a base for charter. Every year, sailing lovers come to discover this area by renting a sailboat with or without a skipper. Our guide is aimed at them. It is also aimed at sailors travelling around the world with a stopover in Madagascar before going to South Africa. Unfortunately, since 2008, piracy in the Indian Ocean has made passages in our region rarer. However, the coast that we are describing does not have the problems of piracy from Somalia.

This guide may also be of interest to tourists staying in hotels because we describe the points worth a visit by placing them in their historical context.

A guide like ours is never finished, never perfect. Restaurants close, others are born. General or specific conditions change etc. Do not hesitate to send us

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an email to give us your information. They will allow us to improve subsequent versions. As we navigate, we point out structures (restaurant, bar, store, etc.). Our book does not contain advertising! Our judgments and addresses are given freely. Our work has not received support from any public or private structure.

HISTORY

The Island of Madagascar would have been located since Antiquity. Ptolemy named it Menuthias and placed it among the “Isles of Mosambia”. The name Madeigascar appears from the pen of Marco Polo in 1298. Arab cartographers baptize it with various names (Djafouné, El Komr, Comorbina). However, it seems that there is often confusion with the Comoros or the islands close to Africa. The Portuguese Diogo Dias named it Saint Laurent in 1500. The French named it Ile Dauphine in the seventeenth century before returning to the name Madagascar.

Nosy Bé was long called Assada.

The date of arrival in Madagascar of the first inhabitants is in the middle of the first millennium AD. Navigators from the Indonesian and Malaysian region arrive on the island. This is not an accidental arrival but navigation involving back and forth trips. We do not know whether the crossing of the Indian Ocean was done directly or by following the coasts. The Sarimanok epic (connecting Bali to Mayotte in 1985 with a deep-sea canoe) wanted to prove the direct route, but this type of feat is not conclusive.



Model of Sarimano

The Malagasy language includes many words of Indonesian origin. The outrigger canoe is another testimony like the coconut grater.

Other peoples came from Africa, probably stopping off in the Comoros. Bantus came as free men but also as slaves. The Swahilis (In Madagascar we speak of Antalaotra or Antalotse, people from elsewhere) have for centuries occupied strongholds allowing them to trade in the Indian Ocean. Muslims, mixed-race Bantus and Islamized peoples (coming from Hadhramaut, the Persian Gulf and even Gujarat), they played a very important role in the circulation of people and goods. The French archaeologist Pierre Vérin who excavated the sites speaks of scales. We will later discuss these ruins which testify to their power (Ambanoro, Mahilaka, Ambariotelo, Sada, Nosy Manja, Boina Bay etc).

The first contacts with Europeans were violent. Sada (present-day Anorotsangana) was plundered by the Portuguese like Nosy Manja and the places of Boina Bay (Antsoriheribory, Kingany).

These pillaging only sought to break up Swahili trade without aiming for colonization. The Antalaotra towns recovered from their ruins and had an economic role until the beginning of the nineteenth century. During this period there were close ties between the Sakalava royalty and the Muslims. The kings provided captives which they exchanged for goods (especially guns and ammunition). These weapons allowed the extension and power of the kingdoms of Menabe and Boina. During the Merina conquest in the 19th century, these kingdoms were defeated, bringing with them the Antalaotra.

Let's go back to the beginning of the establishment of the Sakalava kingdoms. Around 1625 there existed a powerful kingdom, that of Itongomaro. The testimonies of the Portuguese Mariano and the English who wanted to colonize Nosy Bé prove this existence. The capital of this kingdom (which extended as far as Majunga), was called Ankoala (the port in Indonesian) and was located on a river 15 kilometers from the sea. We believe we have identified the site on the ancient bed of the Sambirano river. This river, which passes through Ambanja, saw its course change around a hundred years ago. It then flowed south of the Sambirano massif. Nowadays, the mouth is south of Pointe d'Ankify. In the current village there are two prohibited zones (fady) which could be the former location of the capital. Early colonization efforts by European nations were not successful. The Portuguese did not find any gold. The Dutch, who were looking for supply ports on the spice route, remained on the east coast (Antongil). The English (Colonel Hunt) sought to establish themselves in Nosy Bé at the beginning of the seventeenth century. They were decimated by fevers. The French, during this period, chose to settle in the Fort Dauphin region before being driven out.

Piracy did not have the importance in the northwest of Madagascar that it had in Sainte Marie or Saint Augustins. In the days of the sailing navy, the formidable Cap d'Ambre made certain navigations complicated. However, there were stopovers by pirate ships between 1680 and 1710.

Another form of piracy was rampant in the late 18th and early 19th centuries (1790-1820). We want to talk about the sakalava and betsimisaraka raids. Hundreds of canoes carrying warriors came from the east coast, passed Cape Amber and concentrated in the Radama

Islands, joining up with others. They then carried out raids on the Comoros and even on the east African coast. The goal was the plundering of wealth and especially the capture of slaves.

The rise in power in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of the Merina Royalty changed the situation. Great kings provided their population with the structures allowing intensive rice cultivation and livestock development. On this basis, they undertake an expansionist policy. They will thus dominate the majority of the island militarily. This conquest was facilitated by the English who provided weaponry and effective instructors.

The consequences of this English aid will not be limited to the military domain. The missionaries of the London Missionary Society will bring Christianity and the writing of the Malagasy language. They will make it possible to create an official language that brings unity in the face of 18 dialects.

For the populations of the northwest, this Merina conquest was dramatic: exodus, massacre of populations, forced labor... The Antakarana took refuge for a moment in the Tsingy caves before capitulating and fleeing to Mitsio. Thousands of people crowd onto these small islands.

Opposite Nosy, Bé the Béhimisatra royalty represented by the young queen Tsiomeko asks the Sultan of Zanzibar for help. This help is symbolic and she must flee the Grande Terre and take refuge in Nosy Bé. Other sakalavas went to live in Ambariotelo or Kismany and famine decimated them. The king of Nosy Faly, Tsimandroho, must retreat to Tafondro after being chased from his domains on Grande Terre...

Further south, the Sakalaves must swear allegiance to the terrible queen Ranavalona (1818-1861). In this context, France decides to colonize Nosy Bé which will establish a bridgehead to colonize all of Madagascar. On September 29, 1839, the Colibri (with Captain Passot on board) arrived in Nosy Bé. Contacts are established with Queen Tsiomeko. A treaty was signed the following year. He protects the young queen in exchange for French sovereignty over Nosy Bé. A similar treaty is signed with Tsimiaro for the Antakarana concerning the Mitsio and with Tsimandroho for Nosy Faly. These treaties are approved by Admiral Hell Governor of Réunion. In Ambilobé we met the current king of Antakarana, Tsimiaro III (N°65). He showed us the saber offered by France to his ancestor. Actual colonization will begin two years later. It will not be done without "collateral damage". It is situated in the context of Franco-English rivalry.

Hellville became a military port, a base for Catholic missions and Nosy Bé an island dedicated to the cultivation of sugar cane. To develop it, thousands of indentured laborers were brought from Africa (slavery was abolished in 1848). The most numerous are the makoa of Mozambique. The planters are often from Reunion Island. Respect for human rights is not their concern... At its peak, this first sugar period will include 18 factories. You can still visit certain ruins from this time (for example in Ankarakely near Fascène. You can see large chimneys there). All these structures went bankrupt and the sugar industry (and that of rum) was reborn in 1923 with the Dzamanzar factory.

The cultivation of cane is replaced by vanilla then by Ylang ylang (at the initiative of Father Spiritain Raimbault). This period is marked by frenzied clearing which destroys all the primary forest with the exception of Lokobé.

The Antalaotra are gradually ousted from economic power and are replaced by Indians (Karana) who develop a commercial town in Marodoka/Ambanoro (where there are many shops) and trade mainly with India. Sophie Blanchy's book recounts their growth which persists today.

From 1895, the whole of Madagascar quickly became a French colony. The troops landed at Majunga and quickly reached Antananarivo.

Between 1897 and 1960 Madagascar was a French colony. In 1947 a revolt occurred which mainly affected the east coast and left tens of thousands dead.

The area bordering the Sambirano River is cleared to develop coffee, cocoa, pepper and other cash crops. Powerful settlers like Millot carved out enormous domains for themselves.

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In 1960 the island gained independence under the presidency of Tsiranana under the orders of France. A student revolt chased him out in 1972. Since then, Madagascar has known different Republics: second from 1972 to 1992; third from 1992 to 1997; ecological humanist republic from 1997 to 2001. In 2002, the result of the elections was contested and unrest broke out between the supporters of Ratsiraka and Ravalomanana. In Nosy Be there are around twenty deaths. Ravalomanana was in power between 2002 and 2009. He combined political (President of the Republic), spiritual (Head of an important Protestant church) and economic (Owner of different companies such as Tiko, Magro or Olympiko) powers.

In Nosy Bé the emphasis is mainly placed on tourism development. Industries that employed a lot of labor (Sirama and Crater Fisheries) close.

In 2009 the young mayor of Tananarive Andry Rajoelina took power with the help of the military. The State is becoming increasingly weak, encouraging corruption. Public structures (Education, Electricity, Health, Garbage collection, etc.) are declining. Elections were held in 2013. A new president and a new Assembly were elected.

THE SAILS OF THE MOCAMBIQUE CHANNEL

We borrow this title from our friends on the Azénon boat. They made a nice slideshow on the boats encountered in the Mozambique Channel.

We wrote an article on the sailboats of Madagascar (less ambitious than the book written by Clifford Hawkins on the dhows of the Indian Ocean).

Modestly, here we want to summarize the different types of hulls that we encounter: 1)-The mtepes have disappeared for a century. Their shell was sewn with coconut fibers. There is a life-size reconstruction in Zanzibar. It was the Swahili boat.

2)-Monoxyle canoes are dug into a tree trunk (No. 137). They are becoming more and more rare. They are mainly carried out by paddle. Some have a pendulum.

-The most common canoes are built differently: the keel is a piece of wood. Above, planking is superimposed. They are held by vertical nails and by transverse members. Stability is ensured by a pendulum (No. 136).

The size varies.

The sail is most often quadrangular for the canoes which go fishing around Nosy Bé.

Those that carry out transport (passenger, charcoal, sand, etc.) have a lateen sail.

We once saw, near Nosy Bé, a large canoe with a gaff rig and a jib.

The small ones are governed by a paddle. The larger ones have a rudder.

3) Dhows are the direct heirs of the Arab and Indian boats which roamed the Indian Ocean (Cover photo). All the terms relating to them are of Swahili origin. They have a classic construction on planking and frames. There is no bridge. The rear is a little raised. There is a transom. Sailing is Latin. They carry heavy loads. The piece of wood that juts out at the back serves as a latrine.

4) The schooners are inspired by Breton boats (Cover photo). Under Radama II, two brothers from Reunion Island (Albert and Ludovic Joachim) introduced the Malagasy people to this type of construction. The Bélo sur Mer shipyard builds the largest ones. They can carry loads of several tens of tonnes. They are bridged. There is no transom. The schooner rig is houari. They don't have an engine. An exception: Nofy Bé (which does charter diving and is based in Morondava) has a motor. The technical terms are inspired by French.

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CASH

The official currency since 2003 has been the Ariary. However, the Malagasy people continue to count and think in Malagasy francs. One ariary is equivalent to 5 Malagasy francs. Be sure to clarify what the taxi driver or the saleswoman mean!

Currently (2014), one euro is worth around 3100 ariary.

This currency is not convertible outside of Madagascar. There are notes of 100, 200, 500, 1000, 5000, 10000 ariary. For large sums, we find ourselves obliged to provide large bundles.

Foreign currencies can be exchanged at exchange offices and banks. We are often contacted (for example in front of the Hellville market) by black money changers. Their practice is illegal.

There are four ATMs in Nosy Be: BFV, BNI-Crédit Agricole BOA, and one Ambatoloka. They take exorbitant commissions (5 euros for 300,000 ariary).

Some prices to set ideas:

500 ariary for a ride in tuk tuk.

1000 ariary for a ride in town with a taxi

2000 ariary in a shared taxi between Hellville and Ambatoloka.

3600 ariary for a litre of gasoline

2800 ariary for a litre of diesel.

700 ariary for a baguette

2000 ariary for a bottle of mineral water.

Very few businesses accept bank cards for payment. You must take liquid before going to the countryside. Also remember to have small denominations for tips.

HEALTH

Madagascar is a poor country whose health level is not good. However, by taking a minimum of precautions, we can avoid tropical diseases.

-The major problem is that of malaria which is especially prevalent in the rainy season. It is a malaria caused by *Plasmodium falciparum* species which can be fatal. Malagasy strains are most often resistant to chloroquine. The rules of prevention are to use repellents widely, to cover yourself with loose clothing, and to sleep under an impregnated mosquito net. For short stays, prophylaxis must be organized with a competent doctor. For prolonged stays (several months), prophylaxis does not seem indicated. In both cases, curative treatment must be available at all times (Malarone or Artemeter for example). In the event of a clinical sign compatible with malaria (fever, chills, headache), curative treatment must be taken in sufficient doses.

-Less serious are digestive disorders of the turista type. We must encourage peeling fruits and cooked vegetables and remain vigilant about the quality of drinking water and ice cubes. Cases of typhoid are not exceptional.

-A small fly causes a lot of inconvenience. The Malagasy call it mokafoy, the West Indians call it Yen-yen. Several hours after the bite, or even the next day, violent itching occurs. If you scratch, there is a risk of secondary infection. These flies are tiny and live by the sea and can spoil the fun of resting on the sand.

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-It is very hot in Madagascar (even during the so-called cool season) during the day. You should drink large amounts of fluids to prevent urolithiasis problems. -Intestinal bilharzia is rife in Madagascar. It is best to avoid bathing in fresh water.

-It seems obvious that you must be up to date with your vaccinations.

-Regarding venereal diseases (gonorrhea, syphilis, AIDS) the risk is significant and the people concerned will have to protect themselves.

-Everyone must bring a pharmacy that is as well stocked as possible. Most of the time, it will not be used, but it will make people happy at the end of their stay.

-The healthcare structures in Nosy Be are largely failing: missing additional examinations, disastrous level of hygiene, narrow range of medications, etc.

-In the event of a serious health problem, the best solution is medical evacuation to Mayotte or Reunion. Insurance covering this risk is therefore desirable.

SECURITY

Madagascar is not the riskiest area on the planet. However, the current political crisis and the global crisis have impoverished a large part of the population, 90% of whom live below the poverty line. Crime therefore tends to increase. It mainly concerns large cities. In anchorages outside Nosy Bé, the risk is almost zero.

We will only remind you of common sense rules: store the tender's engine on board (the 15 horsepower Yamahas are very popular), hang it on its gantry every evening, do not leave any valuable objects outside, light the cockpit. We personally use a small portable electronic alarm with an infrared detector. We plug it in every evening. We believe that having a firearm is undesirable for multiple reasons. When walking, you must take the minimum amount of valuables, cash and a photocopy of the passport with the visa page.

It does not seem reasonable to walk at night outside of very touristy areas. We strongly advise against anchoring at Majunga.

Nosy Bé depends on CROSS Réunion. (Telephone 00 262 262 43 43 43)

LANGUAGE

Malagasy is a difficult language. In town, you can easily find people who speak French, Italian and English. On rental boats, there is a crew who can do the translations. Outside of the cities, people do not speak any foreign languages.

In the text some Malagasy words appear in italics:

Andevo: slave

Antalaotra or Antalaotse: Islamized people similar to the Swahilis of the African east coast

Azafady: please

Be: big

Borijano or Borijany: slaves carrying the filanjana

Dahalo: zebu thief

Djamala: Indian hemp

Doany: royal palace

Fady: defended

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Filanjana: sedan chair

Fonkontany: village chief

Hely or kely: small

Karana: Indians or Pakistanis who own the businesses Lamba: fabric

Lapa: party place for tromba Lava: long

Loko: fish

Lolo: spirit

Mbolatsara: hello

Madiro: tamarind

Makoa: people originating from northern Mozambique. Slaves and then indentured laborers came from there.

Mena: red

Mahabo: royal tomb

Merina: inhabitant of the highlands

Misaotra: thank you

Misy: there is

Mofo: bread

Mokafoys: very voracious little fly

Mora mora: slowly

Moraingy: Malagasy boxing

Nofy: dream

Nosy: island

Ohabolana: proverb

Ohatcino:

Ohatcino: what is the price

Omby: zebu

Rano: water

Sakalava: western coastal population

Talio: solar west wind

Togny: sacred place dedicated to ancestors
Tonga soa: welcome
Tromba: rite of possession
Tsanga tsanga: take a walk
Tsisy: there is no
Tsizozoy: house where sacred relics are kept
Vazaha: Metropolitan
Valiha: bamboo, musical instrument.
Varatraza: trade winds
Veloma: Goodbye
Steal: money

METEOROLOGY

There are two seasons in the area covered by this book. This must be taken into account in your navigation program.

-The dry season is from May to November. It's the southern winter with mild temperatures. It is not raining. The southeast trade winds are blowing. The intertropical convergence zone is further north. It's the most pleasant season.

The trade winds are disturbed around Nosy Bé by the phenomenon of solar breezes. From 11

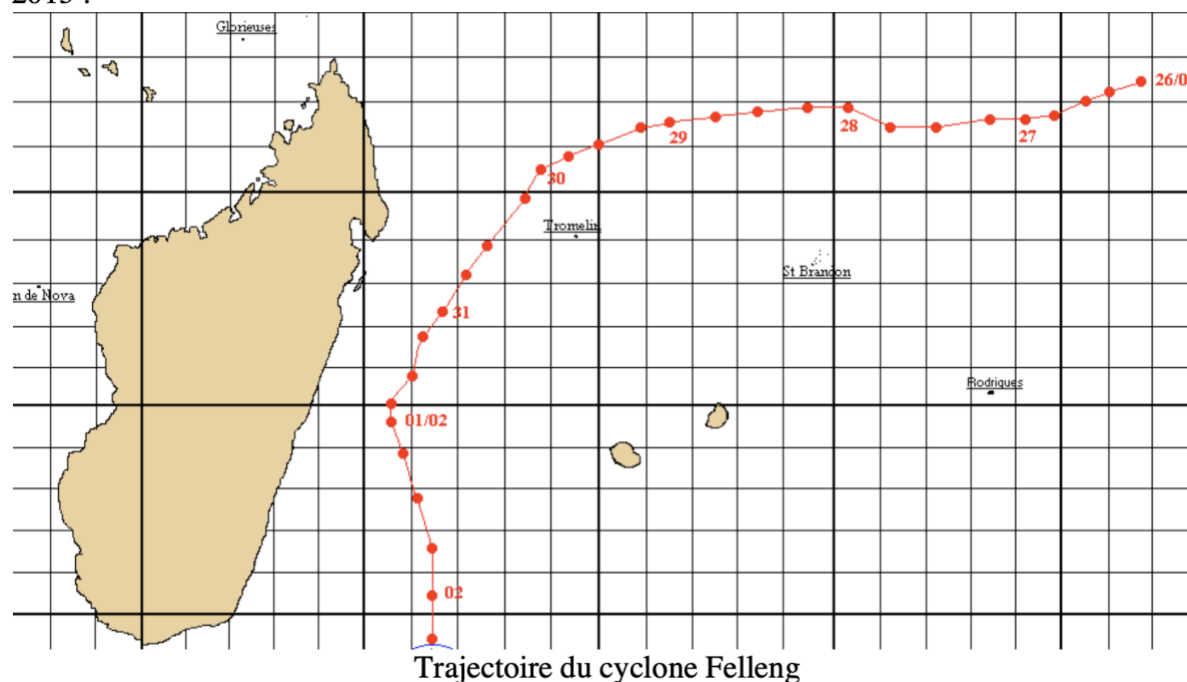
hours, the talio settles. It's a westerly wind. It stops around 8 p.m. It can reach strength 5 Beaufort. At night, the wind blows from the east. Dhows and canoes use this phenomenon which allows them to always sail downwind. Moreover, the canoes here have a quadrangular sail because they rarely go upwind.

To the north of the Mitsio and from the Radama towards the south, the trade wind (varatraza) is predominant. It is often strong (strength 6 or even 7 Beaufort).

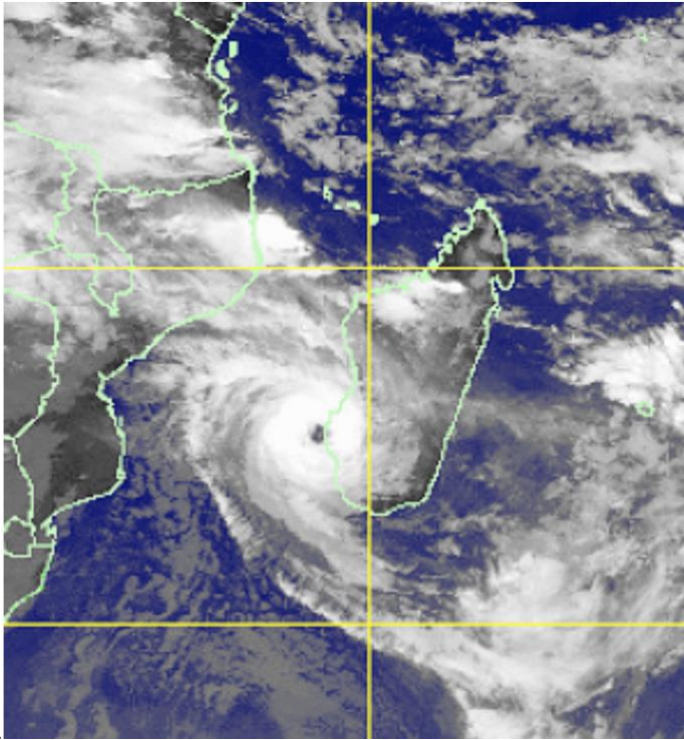
-The rainy season is from December to April. It's the southern summer with scorching temperatures. The intertropical convergence zone concerns the area. It sometimes causes violent storms. The rain occurs mainly at night. The area is little affected by the northern monsoon which is sensitive further to the north and further to the west. This monsoon once allowed dhows to go south.

From December until the end of March, it is the cyclone risk season. They form in the Chagos region. Their dominant trajectory takes them towards the Mascarenes and the east coast of Madagascar. We give as an example the trajectory of cyclone Felleng in 2013:

2013 :



Track of Cyclone Felleng



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Satellite photo Cyclone Haruna

The Nosy Bé region is less affected except when they go further north. Gafilo left behind bad memories... To keep informed of the trajectory of these phenomena, we have several sources of information. The Météo France site in Réunion, MTOTEC, is the most used. We often check the Passage Weather site. Taking GRIB files allows you to complete the information. When you don't have an Internet connection, a NAVTEX receiver is useful. Here we capture the files issued in Mauritius for the METAREA 8 zone. The forecasts do not concern the Mozambique Channel. For years, the Mayotte captaincy station (Charlie Tango) issued a very well done weather bulletin (6216 in BLU). Unfortunately, this essential service for different browsers has ceased for obscure reasons. Listening to Radio Mayotte on 1456 on medium wave only allows you to receive general public bulletins and have the cyclone situation in the Mozambique Channel.

NAVIGATION

The use of GPS and electronic maps has revolutionized navigation. In Madagascar, however, you must be very careful when using these methods because there is sometimes a discrepancy with reality. This discrepancy is not the same everywhere. For example, when we correctly position the map in Hellville, we find ourselves at Mitsio 1/2 mile from the exact position.

It is therefore necessary to favor visual navigation. We will remind you of some basic rules. When accessing a difficult area, you must arrive when the sun is vertical. You should never sail in an area cluttered with coral with the sun facing you. Night navigation in coastal areas must be prohibited. The fishfinder must have a minimum bottom alarm set around six meters.

Using polarized glasses makes vision easier. Climbing into the spreaders can help spot hazards.

Also remember that areas of shallow depth result in a yellow or brown coloring. On our sketches the depths are indicated with reference to the lowest waters. Our sketches complement the text to make it easier to read. They cannot be used as a navigation map. This must only be done with official documents.

With some exceptions (such as the Cap d'Ambre lighthouse, that of Katsepy and Nosy Vorona) no light operates at night. The markings indicated on old maps have, most often, disappeared.

NATURE

It is not the aim of this book to describe in detail the fauna and flora of the region. In the bibliography, we have included some references to plants, birds, lemurs, frogs. We have included some photos in this book to illustrate Malagasy biodiversity.

We have written a book on the plants of the Nosy Bé region. Those interested can contact us to obtain it.

Since its arrival, Homo sapiens has disrupted the ecology of Madagascar. He continues to do so without worrying about future generations. Madagascar became the Red Island due to the exposed laterite. The primary forest is shrinking like nothing else. Slash-and-burn cultivation (tavy) sterilizes the soil. Part of the fertile land washes away with the rains. Animal and plant species disappear in fires. At sea it's not better. The exponential increase in population (6 million in 1960, 22 million currently) means more canoes (and therefore fewer large trees), more nets. Fish are becoming rarer, and so are birds.

Fortunately, some national parks allow you to get an idea of what Madagascar used to be. They are managed by the National Park of Madagascar which replaced ANGAP. There are not many of them in the area we are talking about:

- In Nosy Bé the Lokobé park. Part of it is classified as a complete reserve and is not accessible. A small part can be visited from the commune of Ambatozavavy, another from Marodoka.
- The Tanikely park has an underwater vocation.
- The Sambirano Massif Park has just been created.
- The Tsingy Park of Ankarana is vast and well organized. It is worth a visit of at least two days (N°52 & 53).
- The Nosy Hara Park protects both the land and the sea.

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-Ankarafantsika is located 110 kilometers from Majunga. Its wildlife disappointed us.

-The Baly Bay Park is both maritime and terrestrial. You can see endangered land tortoises there. This reserve is very isolated. By sea, our boats provide access.

There is an animal that does not seem to be in danger here. From June to October, humpback whales (No. 8 *Megaptera novaegliae*) come to breed in the area. They are easily recognized by their large pectoral fins and the hump in front of the fin. It is easy to observe them and the show is always full of emotion. Be sure to respect the approach rules.

Another animal, the zebu (No. 37 to 40 *Bos indicus*), is very symbolic for the Malagasy people. He pulls the carts with courage. He gives his milk. It serves as savings for days of poverty. Its cut ears mark property and often the clan. Its meat is tasty. Above all, it is part of all the ceremonies which punctuate the life of the Malagasy people (birth, marriage, mourning, tromba, circumcision). In the 18th and 19th centuries it was the main export item (meat and skins) with rice (vary). The Mascarenes suffered from hunger when these products no longer arrived...

Zebu theft is part of Malagasy culture. During the wars of the past, the zebras of the vanquished were taken (his women and his slaves too!). The future groom had to steal a zebu to prove his valor to his bride. Nowadays the dahalo have become highway bandits armed with assault rifles and under the orders of corrupt politicians...

POVERTY

We are constantly faced with poverty. Many Malagasy people struggle to survive on a daily basis. Attitudes towards this misery vary depending on the individual. Certain practices seem to us to be prohibited: distributing candy, giving money... Other attitudes seem more effective: distributing notebooks, pencils, slates, chalk to children. For adults, certain donations will always be a pleasure: medicine, fishing hooks, fishing line, clothing. We are often asked for diving equipment (fins, masks, arrows and even underwater rifles). Everyone will give according to their possibilities. If you wish to make a financial donation, it is better to do it to an effective NGO.

There are many beggars in the cities. Sometimes they are very insistent and the gift of a small cut is, unfortunately, the only solution to keep them away. On Fridays, many Karana traders give 200 ariary notes as part of the alms giving which is one of the commandments of Islam.

RESPECT FOR CUSTOMS

Madagascar is the country of *mora mora* (slowly). The Malagasy people have difficulty understanding certain *vahaza* behaviors. They have their customs and want them to be respected. We must accept customary prohibitions (*fady*). We must have respect for uses and customs. Europeans' clothing is freer than in Madagascar. Walking around in a swimsuit in a village is frowned upon (just wear a shawl). Go

"top less" on a beach is experienced as provocation. Malagasy law does not authorize homosexuality. A homosexual couple must take this into account. Throughout this guide we will try to suggest what not to do.

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COMMUNICATIONS

There are three mobile telephone networks: Orange, Telma and Airtel. Coverage is different from one network to another and it can be useful to have several SIM cards.

3G+ is available to connect to the Internet. But the covered area is more restricted. The further you go from Nosy Bé, the more random the network becomes.

In Nosy-Be you can go to internet cafes. Some cafes like Nandipo and Oasis have WI-Fi connection. In Nosy Komba there is a connection "at Yolande". In Sakatia you can contact Sakatia Lodge.

It is possible to send and receive faxes in Internet cafes.

There is no VHF watch at the Hellville captaincy. Madavoile maintains an intermittent watch. Few boats turn on their VHF...

We will first describe the different anchorages starting from the north and going south.

HOLIDAYS

January 1: New Year

March 29: Anniversary of the troubles of 1947

May 1: Labor Day

June 26: Independence Day

August 15: Assumption

November 1: All Saints' Day

December 11: foundation of the Fourth Republic December 25: Christmas

DIVE SITES

We give some diving sites:

Ankazoberavina 13° 28 442 S 48° 00 314 E

Falling black 14° 13..029 S 47° 42. 376 or 13° 44 034 S 47° 42 376 E

Cyclone 14° 13. 029 S 47° 39° 037 E

Grand Reef 12° 16.655 S 48° 56.416 E

Roche Gabriel 13° 37.80 S 47° 46 69 E

Zaïda wreck 13° 25 92 S 48° 12 60 E

Falling 14° 00 47° 41 E

Kalakajoro 13° 52 97 S 47° 41 30 E

Nosy Lava 12° 44 15 48° 40 31 E

Beaver 12° 51 S 48° 25 E

Dives Bank 12° 45 S 48° 29 E

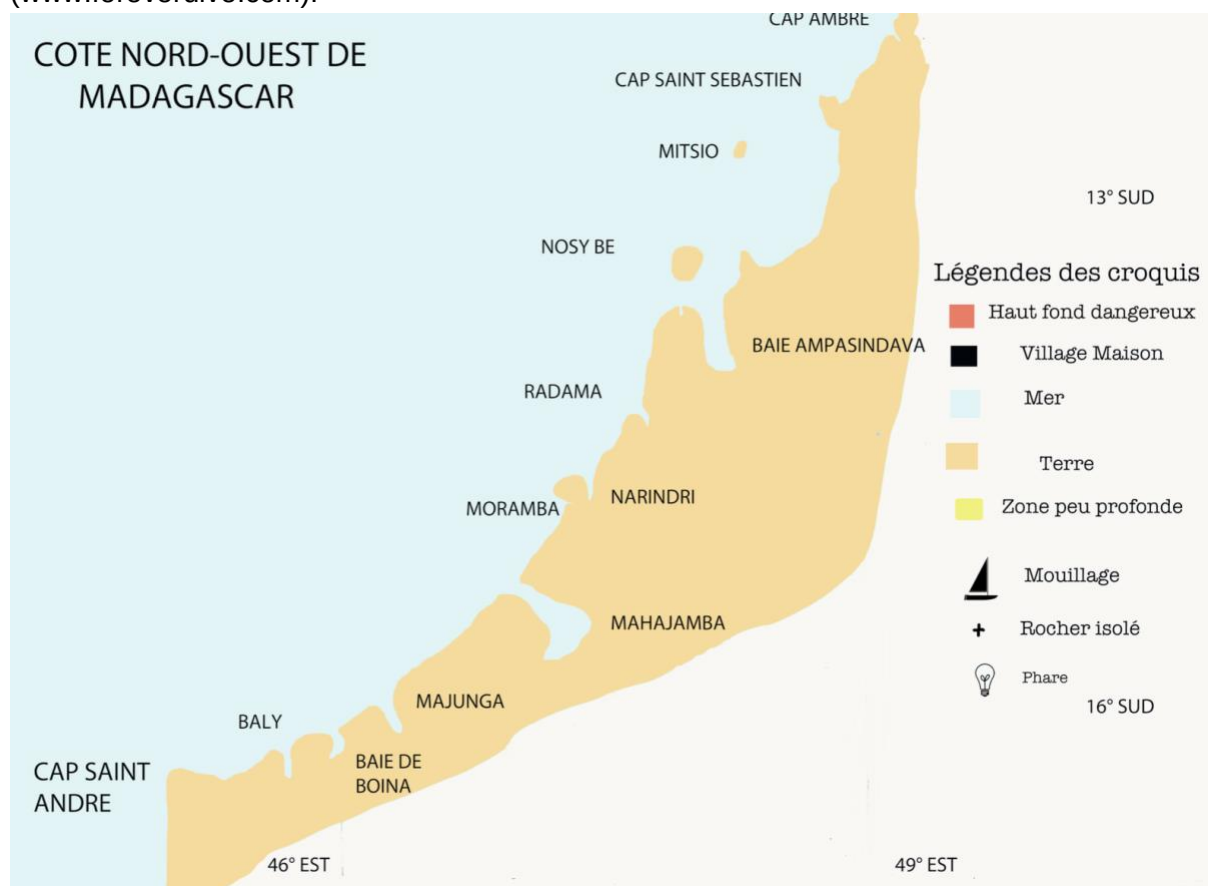
Nosy Iranja 13° 38 47° 46° 17 E

Gregg Wall 14° 09.474 S; 47° 38.912 E

There are many others: The cave, Black Coral, Camel bench, Manta Point...

Divers should take into account the current absence of a decompression chamber. It should be functional in the near future.

There are several diving structures. In Nosy Bé you can contact Scuba Joker (www.scubajoker.com), Aqua Diving (www.aquamadagascar.com), Manta Dive (www.mantadiveclub.it) Tropical Diving (www.tropical-diving.com) or Forever Dive (www.foreverdive.com).



CAPE D'AMBRE



It marks the northern limit of our guide. Its bad reputation is justified. The trade wind is the dominant wind. It blows from the southeast. It is channeled there through the earth. It commonly reaches 35 knots but can be much stronger. During the austral summer, it can be replaced by northerly winds.

The South Equatorial Current has an east-west direction across the entire Indian Ocean. When it arrives in the vicinity of the Cape, it strengthens to reach several nodes. It meets the current which runs along the west coast of Madagascar and which flows north. This latter current is sensitive to tide times and can reverse its course. The result is a confused sea which often breaks.

The east-west passage with favorable wind and current does not pose too much of a problem. You can pass a few hundred meters from the dangers. The lighthouse is a good landmark and it operates at night which is exceptional in Madagascar.

The west-east passage is truly "sporty". Many boats have turned around. The best season is early December because the trade winds are less strong or absent and the risk of cyclones is low. You have to use the motor and tack as close as possible to the rocks (to have the minimum current). The southern branch of the South Equatorial Current has a speed of two to three knots and runs along the Malagasy coast to Antongil Bay. Its strength diminishes greatly south of Vohémar.

Let us cite two historical facts illustrating the difficulties of this Cape:

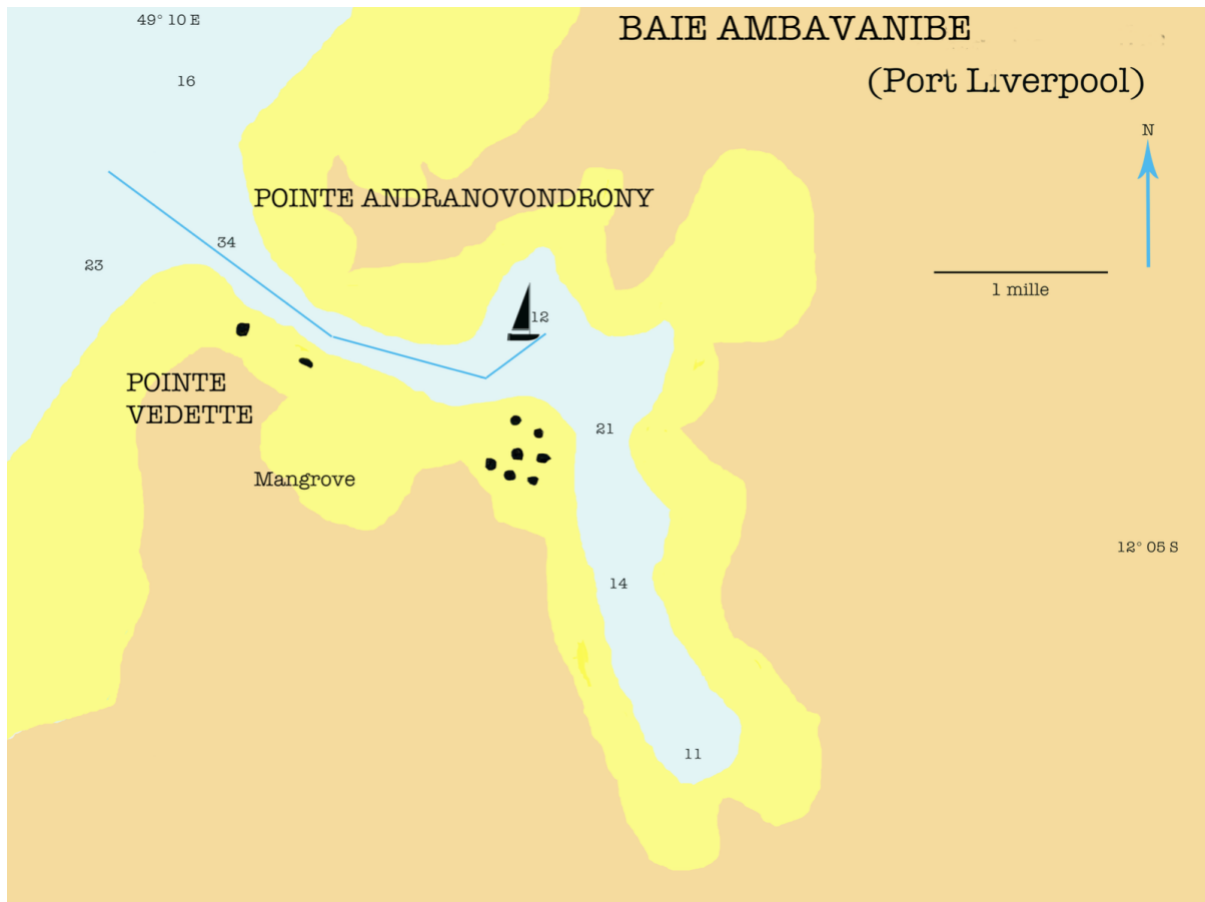
During the Betsimisaraka raids, the canoes were carried on the backs of men between Courier Bay and Diégo Bay!

To supply the numerous slaves requested by the Mascarenes, they were shipped to Foulpointe. Some of them had crossed Madagascar on foot from the west coast.

16

The anchorages between Cape Town and Mitsio are subject to a "strong" trade wind from April to October. It is easier to visit them in November and early December.

17



AMBAVANIBE BAY (LIVERPOOL PORT)

12°03.140 S 049° 10.523 E

All the sailboats that stayed in the bay were enchanted.

Entry is not very difficult in the middle of the day. The pass is clearly seen between the reefs which break to the north and south. The wind is often strong.

We have only indicated one anchorage, but there are many others depending on the direction of the prevailing wind. For example 12° 03 65 S 49°11.60 E. It's up to you to discover them, explore them, appreciate them. You can stay here ten days and not see the time passing.

The bay is sparsely populated. The villages are scattered and small. The people are smiling and welcoming.

With a good dinghy, you can go near the entrance corals and catch fish. The water is not very clear and you have to pay attention to the current.

On land, those who love plants and trees will be delighted.

As for birds, we admired a Madagascar Buzzard (N°14 Buteo brachypterus), a purple roller (N°16 Eurystomus glaucurus), a partridge (Margaropedix madagascariensis), a Ward's flycatcher (N°15 Pseudobias wardii) and traveling terns (No. 17 Sterna benghalensis). Specialists will see many more.

From certain points, we admire Windsor Castle in the distance. This mountain dominates Courier Bay. The French soldiers had set up an observation post there.

Unfortunately, like everywhere, bush fires are gradually destroying this beautiful nature.

NOSY HAO 12° 07.537 S 49° 02.474 E

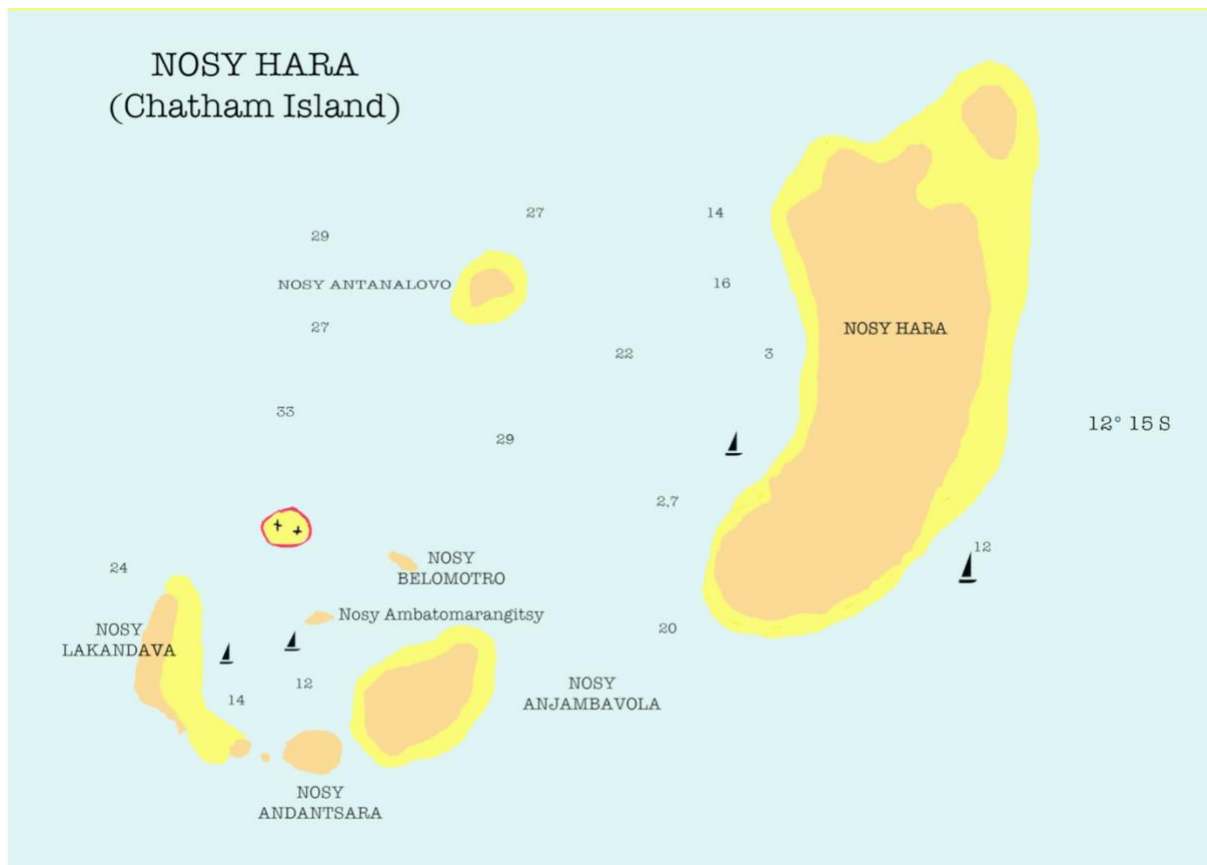
You can anchor near the southern tip to the west of the island. It is almost deserted apart from the fishing camps.

Three years ago while trying to pass the Cap d'Ambre we tore the mainsail. We were able to repair in relative shelter in this anchorage.

We saw traces of turtles laying eggs on a beach.

At the southern end we see curious pillars of fossil coral.

Coming from the north you have to pass well north of the dangers which overflow the northern tip of Nosy Hao. The Rance pass is indicated on the maps. We pass between Nosy Hao and Nosy Vaha. There is at least 8 meters of water.



NOSY HARA

Nosy Hara and the group of islets to the southwest are part of a National Park. Before you had to go to Courrier Bay to pay the entrance fees to the Madagascar National Park. Now you can pay them to the Nosy Hara guards on the beach (10,000 ariary per person).

We admired this preserved corner of nature.

The islands are largely made up of fossil coral like the Tsingy. They are home to specific fauna and flora. Recently the smallest chameleon in the world (20 mm long) was discovered in Nosy Hara (*Brookesia micra*). Its head is as big as the end of a matchstick.

The beauty of the site explains the establishment of a climbing and diving camp.

18

The Tsingy are fragile and must be protected. The funds are magnificent and justify their reputation. Lobsters abound there and you must resist the temptation to catch them.

A) Access. Coming from the north (Nosy Hao for example), you must leave Nosy Mavony largely to port to avoid the corals which are to the south of Nosy Hao for more than 8 miles. We then leave Nosy Foty on starboard to pass between Nosy Antanalovo and Nosy Hara. Coming from the south you must pass well to the west of the Grand Récif, then leave Nosy Lakandava on starboard. Be careful before heading for Nosy Hara to pass north of the reef which is located northeast of the northern tip of Nosy Lakandava.

B) Anchorages. We have listed four but the choice is wider. The direction and strength of the wind must be taken into account. During the trade winds, anchorage west of Nosy Hara is best. In November, when westerly solar breezes are possible, it is best to anchor in the east. At the same time you can anchor east of Lakandava.

C) Points of interest

- On Nosy Andantsara is the camp of mountaineers and divers. It is part troglodyte (www.newsearoc.com).

- In front of the western anchorage of Nosy Hara and from the sign indicating the park, a not very long path begins in the vegetation.

- In the lagoon located to the east of Nosy Lakandava, the turquoise waters encourage diving

- The five islands that border it are truly spectacular. It is impossible to enter but there are several beaches, different caves. By going around with the annex, we take superb photos without damaging anything.

- In two hours of walking on Nosy Lakandava, we saw around thirty different plants.

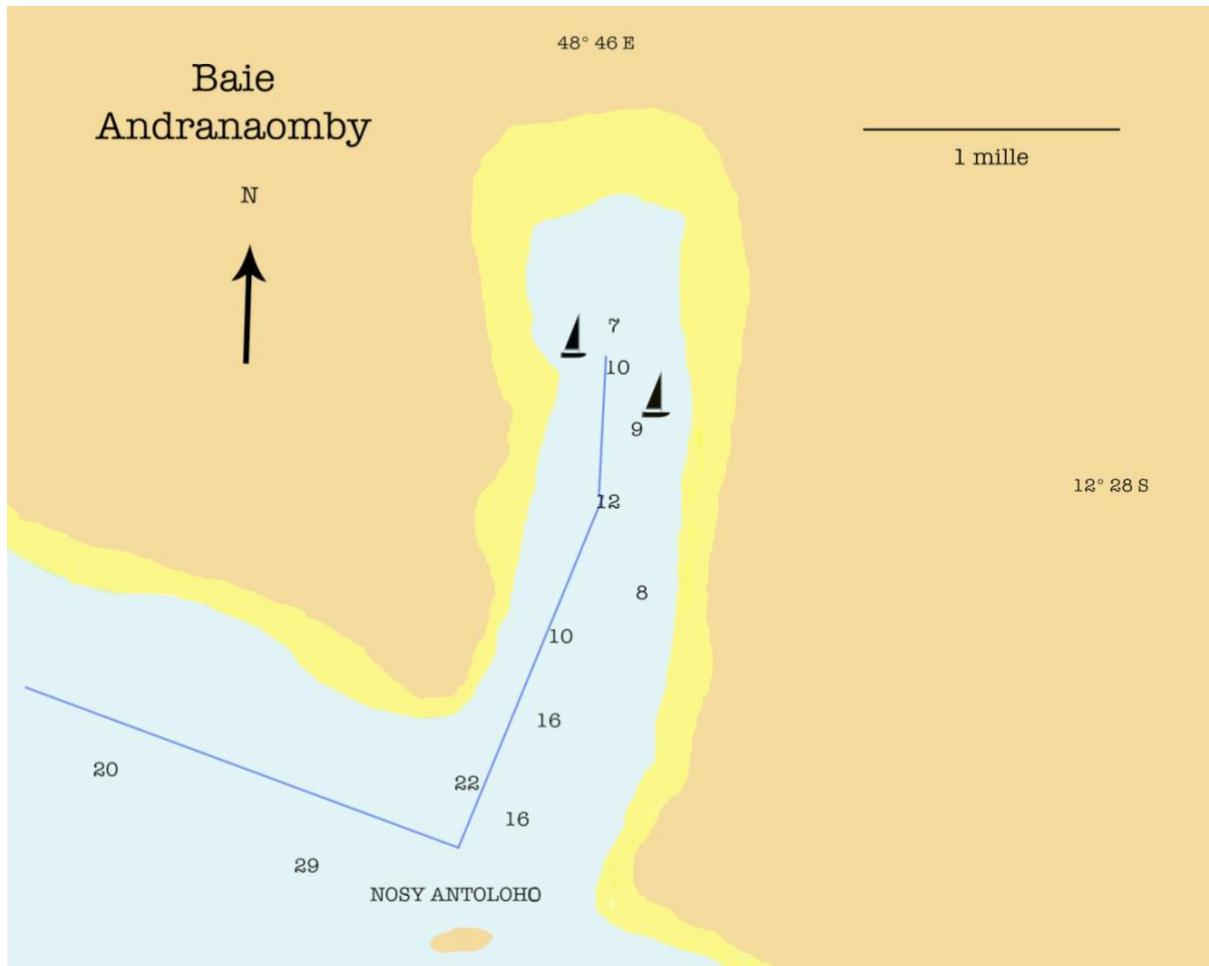
- Courrier Bay is about ten miles away. We visited it by land coming by quad from Diégo.

You absolutely have to go up to Windsor Castle. During the climbing (with a guide) we see many endemic plants. A staircase takes you to the top. The view extends both to the Mozambique Channel and to the Indian Ocean.

CAPE SAINT SEBASTIEN

There are several islets around this cape. The largest are Nosy Valiha and Nosy Manonaka (No. 149). We can anchor, under their wind, for a few hours. The backgrounds are superb.

19



20

ANDRANAOMBY BAY

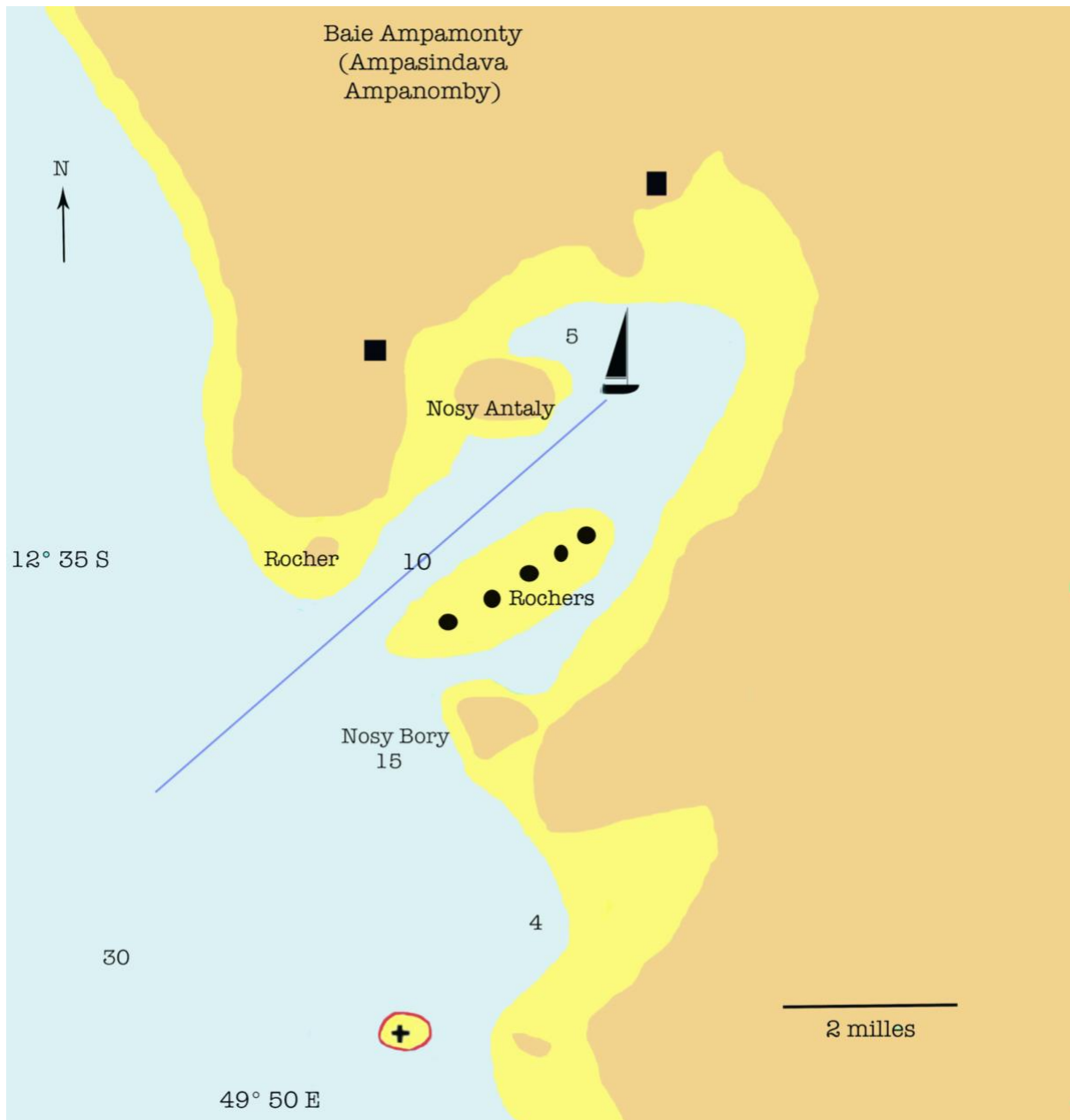
Looking at the map of Andranaomby Bay (where there is water for the zebu), we think we will find a perfect anchorage. In fact, the swell often comes in and the monohulls roll... This bay does, however, have attractions. Big game fishing boats come to spend the night there because there are numerous fishing grounds around Cape Saint Sébastien.

A) Access: It poses no problem. Just go straight

B) You can anchor along both banks, paying attention to the banks which overflow in places.

C) Points of interest: -Around Cape Saint Sébastien there are great opportunities for fishing, spearfishing and snorkeling.

- On land, from Andranaomby Bay you can explore the region. A track takes you north of the Orontany peninsula to Befotaka Bay.



21

AMPAMONTY BAY

The bay is named Ampasindava or Ampanomby on some maps. We often go to this bay. It is not very busy, which for us is a quality. We are protected there from the usual winds. We might even wonder if we could take refuge there in the event of bad weather. Birds should not be hunted too much, as they are not very shy.

A) Access. It is simple. We must leave the rocks on the port side which are a refuge for seabirds. We leave on the starboard side a group of rocks which constantly emerge. We

then bypasses Nosy Antaly from the east. You shouldn't hold it too close. We anchor northeast of Nosy Antaly. The muddy bottom is not holding up well.

B) Points of interest: -the sandbanks north of Nosy Antaly are resting places for wading birds (No. 31).

- If you walk around the island, you often come across nightjars (*N°18 Caprimulgus madagascariensis*) and bee-eaters (*Merops superciliosus*). The vegetation is dense and not cleared by man.
- To the west of Nosy Antaly, we find a small village. People live there miserably
- The mangrove surrounds the bay. For amateurs, it is interesting to identify the different species. At the bottom, there are a few houses. The mangrove can be explored by annex or better by kayak.
- Nosy Bory is deserted. The funds deserve a freediving exploration.

NOSY LAVA

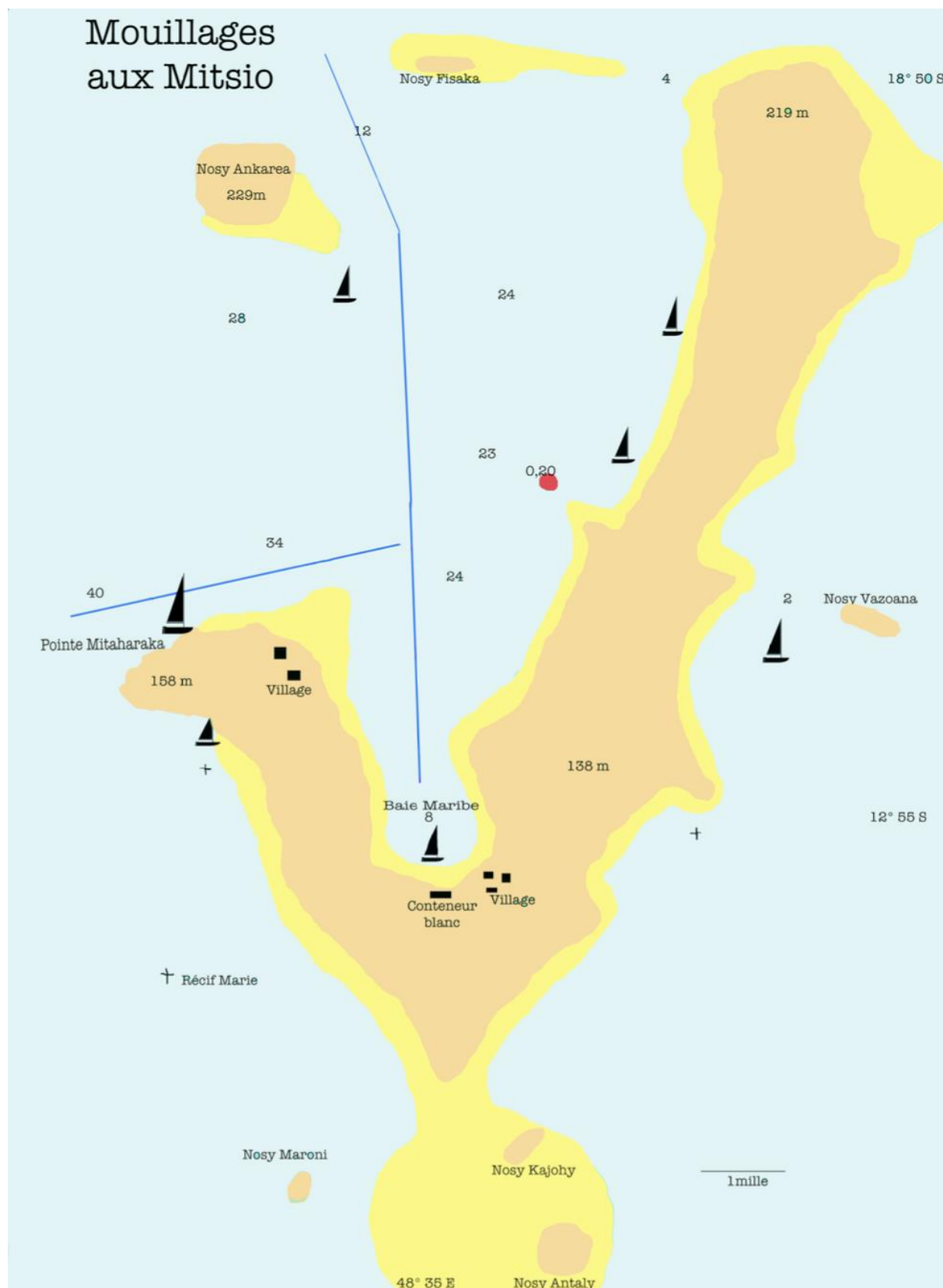
There are two islands with this name (Ile longue). One is located south of Radama and is famous for its penitentiary. This one is deserted. Temporary fishing camps are visible to the south. During the day, you can anchor in several places: northwest of Nosy Lava, north or south of the peninsula located to the southwest. We will choose according to the wind and swell. You have to try to anchor on a sandy bottom, which is not easy.

We land on the sandy beaches which border the peninsula to the north and south.

These white sand beaches are truly superb. The water is clear and makes you want to explore the depths by freediving.

From the sea, we see caves. Graves exist. These are probably Antakarana tombs. Some navigators have explored these caves which are sacred and therefore fady. We believe that we must respect the eternal rest of these people.

We also see offerings (a plate with coins). Tromba probably come to find their ancestors. It is difficult to walk around this rocky island. Some places would require mountaineering skills that we don't have.



NOSY MITSIO

This archipelago is the "must" of a cruise north of Nosy Bé. The only anchorage allowing you to spend the night is Maribé. (No. 59)

A) Access. Coming from the south, you have to go around Pointe Mitaraka (Mitaharaka). This western end of Grande Mitsio is superb. Basalt "organs" bear witness to its volcanic past (No. 55). On these rocks, pachypodiums and other plants cling. To the north, you have to go around, passing well to the north of a shallow area which is located in front of a village and a projection of stones. You can then head towards the bottom of the bay, remaining equidistant from the two banks. A white container is a good bitter.

Coming from the north, you can pass between Nosy Ankarea and Nosy Fisaka (N°58). Then, you have to be careful of the coral bank which is exposed (position 12° 52.487 S and 48° 35.088). At least one catamaran sank there...

B) Anchorages: It is necessary to take into account the solar winds which affect Grande Mitsio. -Maribé: we anchor in 8 meters of water halfway between the east and west banks. The swell can come in if the wind is strong. The muddy bottom is holding up well. This is the only night anchorage. -Ankarea: we anchor at 10 meters, on a sandy bottom a little to the east of the shoal which overflows Ankarea to the south-east.

- There are several possible anchorages to the west of the eastern "arm" of the great Mitsio.
-The anchorages north and south of Pointe Mitaraka are reserved for the morning.

C) Points of interest: - big game fishing fanatics come here to satisfy their passion. Camps house them on land. Others are housed on catamarans and they go fishing on fast hulls. The favorable zone is vast because it includes the drop-off, the different banks (Castor for example 8 miles to the West), the Quatre Frères etc.

-In addition to fishing, the Quatre Frères allows you to see many seabirds that nest there. You can anchor in calm winds. We see, up close, brown boobies (No. 20 *Sula leucogaster*). and brown noddies (No. 13 *Anous stolidus*). You can also dive while taking the current into account.

-Ankarea has superb beaches (N°54). The vegetation is varied. Pachypodium rutenbergerianum (No. 116) are magnificent when they are in flower. We photographed the phallic *Amorphophallus hidebrandtii* (No. 113). Botany enthusiasts will be able to admire Aloes which are endemic to the island (No. 114 *Aloe mitsioiana*). You will have to climb to the top... It is a somewhat risky adventure because the slope is very steep, and the ground is unstable. We went there alone, but the help of a guide seems more reasonable. You can only climb in dry weather.

To access the slope, you have to walk along the southern beach. Almost at the end there is a hole in the vegetation which allows access to the wall. We follow a corridor through which rainwater flows. You have to use the roots and the trunks to avoid slipping. We thus arrive on a gently sloping plateau. It's a sort of funnel that collects rain. We can then admire the aloes and the pachypodiums. The view around is absolutely beautiful and pays off for the climbing efforts.

Ankarea hosted a fishing camp which was destroyed by a cyclone. There are still some ruins, a well and plants which have become wild again. At low tide, shorebirds come to rest. Diving around Ankarea is interesting.

-On the great Mitsio, the vegetation has suffered greatly from man. Shatan palms (*Hyphaene shatan*) dominate because they resist fire. Two areas (the northern and western points) retain some elements of primitive vegetation. It is not easy to access without

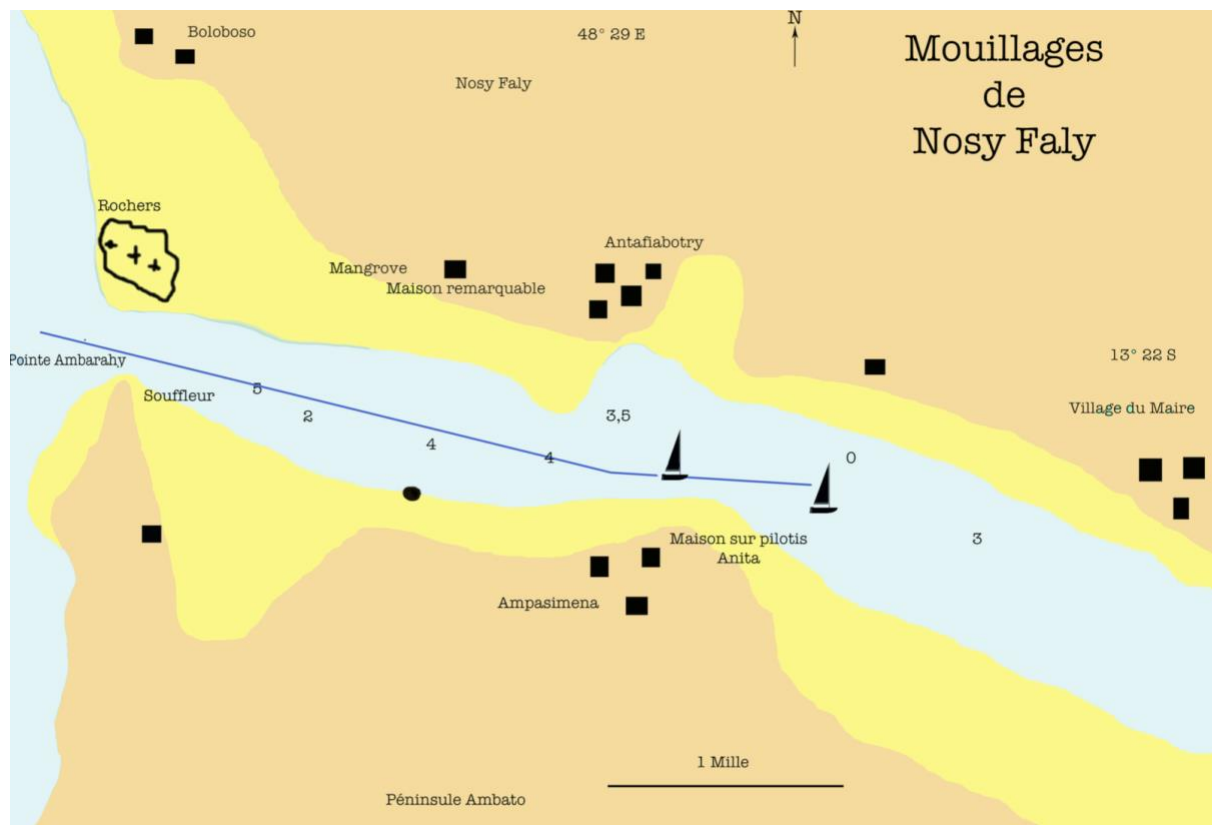
guide. On the rest of the island, you can make astonishing discoveries: a rice field, abundant herds of zebu (but very thin in size).

On the rest of the island, you can make astonishing discoveries: a rice field, abundant herds of zebu (but very thin in the dry season), a sled sliding on the mud, isolated villages, an Antakarana cemetery, goats that cry like babies...

-There are several islets south of Grande Mitsio. With the exception of jina (N°60) which is a hotel island, they are deserted. But it would take several lifetimes to visit all the desert islands in the world!

Regarding Tsara Bajina, we do not recommend anchoring. Antakarana tombs are visible in a cave (see the photo in Annunziata Giancarlo's book).

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NOSY FALY (13° 22' 34 S and 48° 29' 73 E)

Dropping anchor in Nosy Faly (Sacred Island) is always a pleasure. The body of water is well sheltered. The funds are in good condition. You can take pleasant walks on the island and in the Ambato Peninsula. Traditional life takes place there peacefully away from tourist flows. The telephone network allows you to connect to the Internet.

A) Access It is preferable to enter at high tide because you are sure to have at least three meters of depth in the channel.

Coming from the west we notice a bare rocky projection: this is Cape Ambahivavy. When the swell is formed you can see a “blower” very close to the point (No. 61). The entrance (13° 22' 07 S; 48° 28' 44 E) is not very wide between this point and a rock bank which constantly emerges. You should favor the southern part of the pass, leaving Ambahivavy point about fifty meters away.

Just after the entrance, there is a coral patch on which there is at least 1.5 meters at low water.

You then have to head for the narrows between Antafiabotry (on Nosy Faly) and Ampasimena (on the Ambato peninsula). The house on stilts at Anita's restaurant is remarkable. The south side of the channel should be favored.

After the narrows, we anchor in the middle in 5 meters of water, mud bottom. There is a current which can reach 1 knot. It goes towards the west during the ebb, towards the east during the flood.

Chop can form at high tide when the talio (solar west wind) blows.

B) Points of interest

1) On the Island of Nosy Faly

- The Sakalava culture is largely preserved here. The royalty who dominated the island is called Bemazava. In the south-eastern part of Nosy Faly there is a very important royal tomb (No. 62). It is surrounded by prohibitions (fady) which do not allow its visit. However, it is spectacular with its large walls decorated with scissor arches. Traditional ceremonies are regularly held honoring the ancestors who come back to life with the trombas.

- Ancestor worship, inherited from Asia, is still widely practiced. At the southeast end of Nosy Faly, there is a village where the mayor resides. Not far from his house, we see a togy (No. 54) and a lapa (No. 63). Offerings are made to make a wish come true. In the same vein, there are one or more sacred trees in each village. They are identified by the lambas that are hung.

- There is a main track that connects Antafiabotry (literally the dhow port) and the northern tip of Andemby. A junction leads to the old lighthouse which, like all Malagasy lighthouses, has ceased to function since independence but which, like all lighthouses in the world, provides a superb view.

The trail is shaded and you can walk or cycle there.

- The island is predominantly Muslim and you can see small, simple mosques in the villages. In Boloboso there is a permanent and recent one.

- Nosy Faly has long been an important cashew nut production area. For the most part, the trees have returned to the wild but there is still artisanal production.

- The primary forest has long since disappeared, replaced by food production. Slash-and-burn cultivation is, unfortunately, a scourge. It allows the cultivation of rainfed rice and the temporary creation of pastures for zebus. But it contributes to soil erosion. The Madagascar periwinkle (No. 125 *Cathartus roseus*) is fire resistant. Medicines are obtained from this plant to treat childhood leukemia.

There are also pineapple plantations (No. 119).

- economic activity is largely based on sea resources. Until the bankruptcy of the Nosy Bé fisheries, Nosy Faly was a stopover for trawlers who for years dredged shrimp. Those days are over. Depending on the season, fishermen collect maloka (kinds of sardines), tiny shrimps (tsivakiny) and small fish (varylava). These crops are dried on the sand before being sold.

Every day also canoes go to sea and return with the talio loaded with multicolored fish which are eaten fried.

- Tortoises are protected. The local name for this small turtle is angonoka. It reproduces quietly and it is quite easy to find it under the leaves.

- Sea turtles are numerous. We saw traces on the sand near Cape Andemby proving that they come to lay their eggs there.

-At the end of 2014 an Italian foundation opened a school and an orphanage in the buildings of the Capuchin monks. Danilo, a young Italian, devotes himself to this noble cause.

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-There is a diving center, "les Néréïdes". They organize diving cruises and welcome tourists in pretty bungalows (telephone 032 55 096 00, www.crusoe-dive-esem.com). This center closed in 2013.

2) On the Ambato peninsula.

-Every morning a bush taxi connects Ampasimena to Ambanja. It's always crowded. The journey is grueling. In the rainy season it is sometimes impossible to reach Ambanja....

-Anita's Gargote dominates the anchorage. It is pleasant to enjoy a cold beer while watching the canoes come and go across the narrows. (telephone 03 27 49 03 60). Other restaurants allow you to eat Malagasy dishes.

-About 4 kilometers you can walk to Bernard's who runs a small hotel in Ampasindava (literally the big beach). You can have lunch there. He is kind enough to come pick up his guests with his 4X4. His wife goes to Ambanja every week and can transport passengers more comfortably than the bush taxi. (telephone 03 20 45 13 19 or 03 31 42 54 74)

-just next to Bernard's lodge there is a pond with at certain times a lot of birds (Widowbird duck (No. 21 *Dendrocygna viduata*), Sultana hen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*) etc.

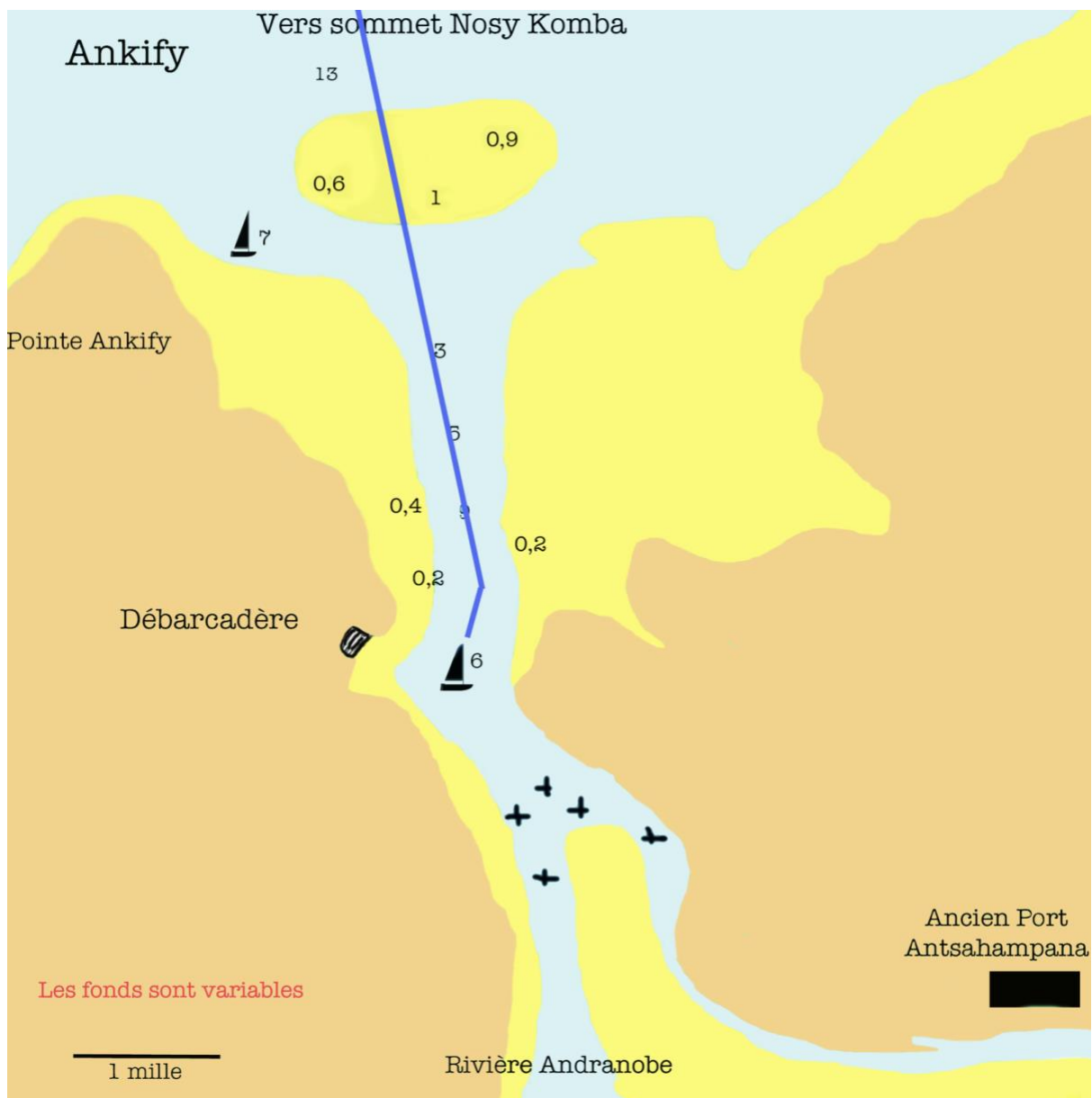
-there is also, very close by, a ravensara plantation intended to produce an essential oil and run by a vahaza.

The flora of the peninsula deserves a little attention. Baobabs are rare around Nosy Bé. At the northeastern end of the peninsula, several *Adansonia madagascariensis* can be seen. It flowers in March. The red and yellow flowers are beautiful (No. 117). Walking along the canal that separates Nosy Faly and Ambato, you can see many other interesting plants. The coconut palm (No. 103 *Cocos nucifera*) is essential to the Malagasy people. The copal tree (No. 105 *Hymenaea verrucosa*) once had great economic importance. The resin (copal) was exported because it provides incense. The spider plant ((N°122) *Tacca leonpetaloides*) is common here. Let us also mention *Majidea madagascariensis* with spectacular flowering and especially *Ledebouria nosibeensis* (No. 123). The latter is one of the rare endemic plants of the Nosy Bé region. The green leaves with darker spots and pink flowers make it easy to identify.

-a little further north of Ampasindava you can see, in a private home, crocodiles (No. 43 *Crocodilus niloticus*) locked in a cage as well as a large land turtle.

C) Resources. There are small grocery stores offering only basic foodstuffs. In Antafiabotry, a foreign foundation installed a water pump powered by solar panels. This water arrives through a pipe in the village.

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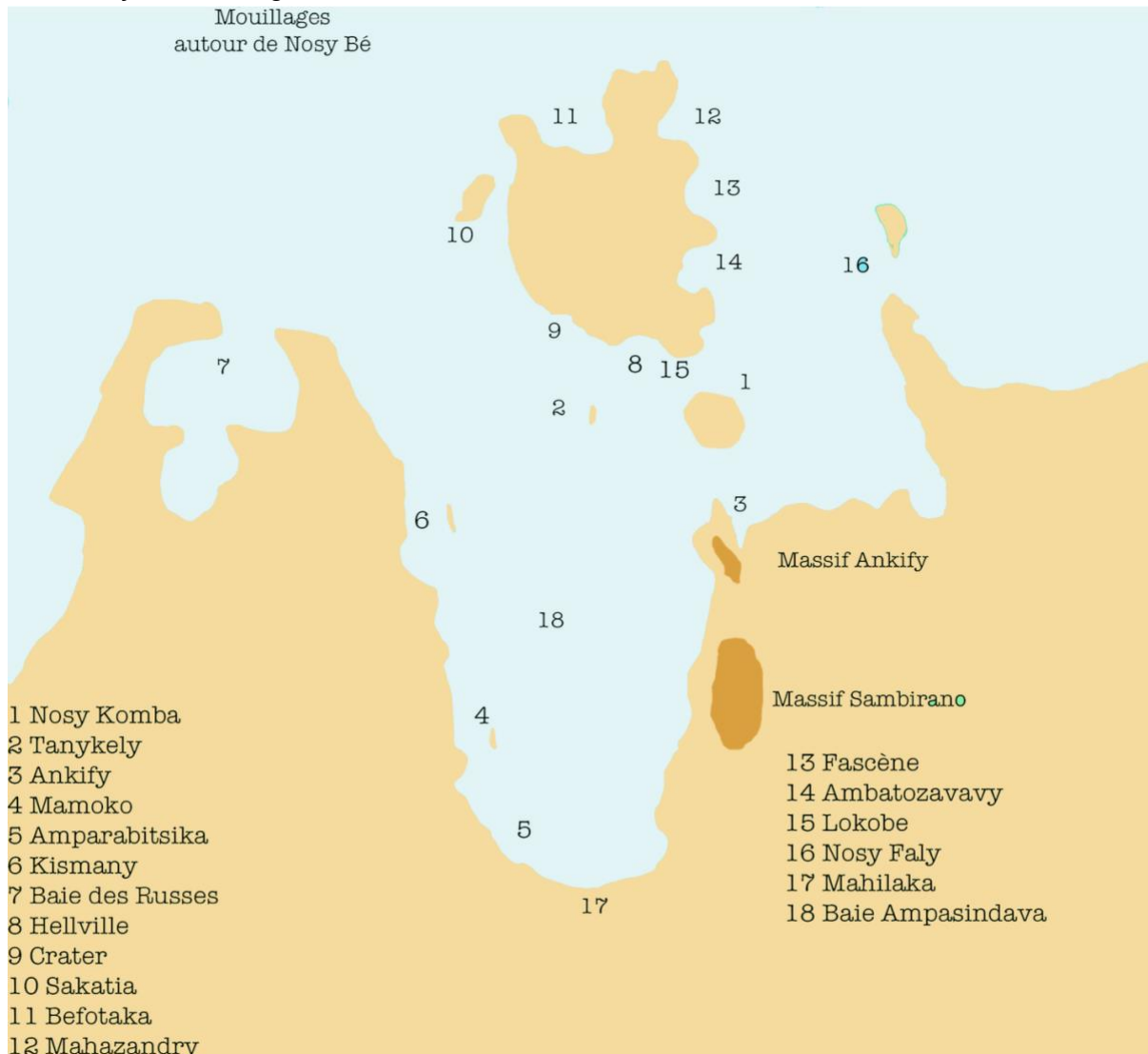
28

ANKIFY

We hesitated to include this anchorage. Its access is not easy. Certainly dozens of hulls and barges go there every day to connect Nosy Bé to Madagascar. But their draft is weak and their daily practice allows them to locate the channel. The reasons for the difficulty of the channel are: its narrowness, the turbidity of the water which does not allow obstacles to be seen, the presence of current, the absence of markings, old cartography, the variability of the seabed. There are other handicaps: the need to guard the boat during the day, the daytime noise and the passage of hulls nearby.

We decided to put it on the list thinking that in an emergency it could be useful. On the other hand, it is possible to anchor east of Ankify Point, without taking any risk.

Access by land is long because there is no road.



We know of a boat that entered the old bed of the Sambirano several times (with a keelboat and without a motor!). After the bar there are actually several meters of water at low tide. We cannot encourage such exploits...

c) In the southern part of the bay, one can visit the ruins of Mahilaka. This Swahili city is the oldest city in Madagascar. It was founded around 900 AD and prospered until around 1400. It had up to 3500 souls. It exported copal resin, chloritoschist (a soft stone used to make utensils), rice, turtle shells, quartz. It was supplanted by Vohémar on the east coast. The site was discovered by settlers at the beginning of the 20th century. Unfortunately the stones were largely used to build their houses. The mosque built in 1100 is reduced to a pile of stones.

On the other hand, we can still see part of the 80 centimeter thick surrounding wall which protected the city. The fortress measured 150 m long by 100 m wide. Several excavation campaigns have explored the site and uncovered numerous sherds including Chinese and Middle Eastern pottery. These excavations allow us to say that the city was contemporary with Dembeni (Mayotte) and the cities of the east coast of Africa. Those interested in the

subject will be pleased to read the article by Whright and colleagues published in issue 14/15 of Taloha and available online.

We went to the site by sea. We strongly advise against it. The mangrove extends far away, there is little depth. You have to anchor very far away, cross the mangrove and the forest. It is much easier to take a taxi in Ambanja and ask to go to the site of the ruins. They are not far from the road which goes towards Majunga after the village of Jangoa. In this village, at the fonkontany, you can see a few signs summarizing what is known. Near the entrance to the ruins, a small house must have housed the guard and the guides. We always found it closed...Between Ambanja and Jangoa, we see sapphire mines. These are veritable termite mounds where unfortunate people try to earn paltry sums. Many die due to landslides.

d) To the southwest of the bay, we see a small hill called Ambodimadiro. At the top the Sakalaves, then the Merina then the French had built fortifications. The fort was abandoned by the French army in 1895. You must take a guide to go up to the site. Itching hair (*Mucuna pruriens*) is abundant there. 100 meters west of the village are the graves of two French officers who died in combat.

-Easier is the exploration, in annex, of the Joja river. Old plantation buildings and a steam boiler are visible.

After this adventurous digression, we return to less difficult anchorages. They are sometimes full of unforeseen events as we will see with regard to the next anchorage.

AMPASIBITIKA ANCHORAGE (48° 12.5 E and 13° 47 S)

We can easily reach this anchorage. You must leave him before the talio rises.

We land on the beach. The village children immediately offer to guide you. - We can go to a large waterfall. It flows even in the dry season and is visible from the sea. You must start the walk before the sun gets too hot. The landscape is wonderful. There is only the sound of water, the singing of birds, various plants. The view is magnificent over Mamoko and Ampasindava Bay. You can go back down to the village, following the bed of the river, to the sea.

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- The other excursion is much more sporty (six hours of walking). We go to the village of Ankobabe via a path that climbs steeply. It then meanders across the plateau. We cross small rivers lined with bamboo. We pass near rice fields, rainfed rice fields. The village of Ankobabe is quiet. The small school is quite dilapidated. The children welcome us with a smile. They are happy in their campaign. The small houses are clean. We are photographing a house on stilts. At the top of each pillar, a wooden disc prevents rats from climbing.

- This enchanting landscape can disappear at any time. We had seen cement markers bearing inscriptions (Tand 214 for example). There are several hundred of them. They are scattered over 2,300 square kilometers (from Ambalya to Ambodimadiro).

The children explained that Vahazas had left these plaques. They showed the gray land that these white men were looking for. We went online to find explanations. We were horrified by what we discovered.

A German company (Tantalus Rare Earth) prospected the region for rare earths. An agreement was concluded between the companies Tantalus Rare Earth and Solvay (French subsidiary of the Solvay group) to exploit the deposit. It would be the largest in the world

outside China. China has put an embargo on certain rare earths essential to the electronics industry and the manufacturing of batteries for electric cars (4 kilograms are needed per car). These rare earths are toxic to humans. Some components are radioactive. Currently, no exploitation has started. But it is a bomb that risks exploding on this population which has not been informed of the issues.



AMBARIOTELO (MAMOKO)

Ambariotelo (The Three Parks) is one of our favorite anchorages (No. 151). It is sheltered from all winds. The village, steeped in history, is calm and peaceful. Despite daily contact with tourists, the population has kept its traditional way of life.

A) Access: You can reach the anchorage by passing north or south.

-From the north. We pass between Nosy Hely and Nosy Lolo on the starboard side and Nosy Mamoko on the port side. You have to sail closer to the starboard side because the corals largely overflow Mamoko. The heading at 210 takes you a little north to the western tip of Mamoko. Branches and even trees often float in this area. We must watch over them.

-From the south: Entry poses no difficulty, taking care to go well beyond the southwest tip of Mamoko.

B) Anchorages: You can anchor anywhere along the south coast, in 14 meters of water.

C) Points of interest:

- The history of the village is long. For centuries, sailboats have frequented the bay. The Antalaotras traded there (especially the slave trade). Fifteen years ago, several dhows preserved in the mud were found at the bottom of the water.

The archaeologist Pierre Vérin excavated the site in 1969. He describes in his thesis (pages 639 to 672) the previous excavations (Poirier, Decary, Grandidier) and his own research. He identified a mosque, a complex house, a still-functioning well and a two-room house. The buildings date from the 18th and 19th centuries. They were destroyed during the Sakalave expansion and it is likely that the occupants retreated to Ambanoro in Nosy Bé. However, the buildings were built on a much older site contemporary with the sites of the Comoros (14th/15th centuries). Islamic pottery has been discovered.

We deplore that no protection, no development of the site has been decided. These old stones have become silent and they will disappear in total indifference.

The Sakalava tradition is very much alive. We notice, very close to the beach, a lapa. It is a small shed open on 4 sides. It is a sacred place near which the elders live again in the form of tromba (rite of possession).

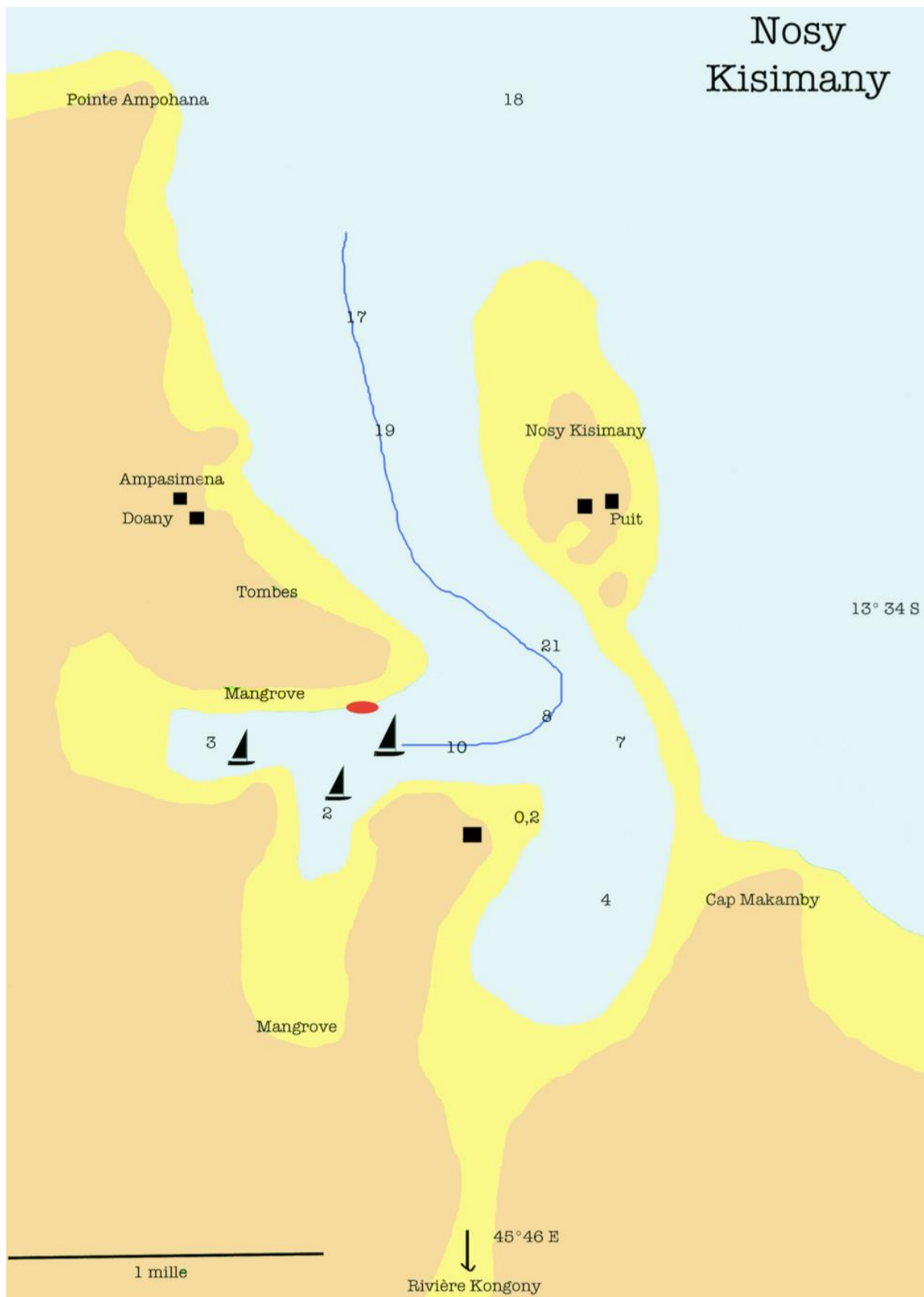
A royal tomb (mahabo) is hidden in the forest. He's fady. A queen lives in the village. The lemurs are numerous and know that tourists bring bananas. There are two land turtles well adapted to the Malagasy mora mora!

-Nosy lolo (Island of spirits) was also searched by Vérin. There are Muslim and Sakalave tombs on the western part. Shards of Chinese pottery have been unearthed.

-On our sketch, we have indicated the anchorage which is located to the west of Pointe Andranika. It is renowned as a cyclone shelter. In 2012 we went before Irina arrived. Our experience has not been encouraging. The winds came from the southwest and were channeled by the hills. We slipped. Fortunately we passed between the other sailboats.

Normally, it is a quiet place only disturbed by voracious mosquitoes. We can go, in annex, to Ambalya. At high tide, we follow a river between the mangrove trees. The big town is lively on Sundays because of the market. The visit is full of unexpected events: for example, we saw traditional medicines sold on displays that also included antibiotics!

-Further south, you can anchor (in the morning only) in front of a village. A path leads to a pretty waterfall. The women do their laundry (and their toilet). Other paths allow you to climb the hills or along the sea. Rainfed rice grows from December and April. You have to be careful not to trample it.



NOSY KISMANY

We often anchor at Kismany (Where there is a well in Swahili) (No. 150). Kismany has long been a port for the Antaalotras. A Sakalava queen resided here (Safy Mazongo, daughter of Andriantsoly).

A) Access to the anchorages is easy and is from the north. The northern tip of Kisimany is overflowing with rocks and corals. There is no crossing south of Kisimany.

B) Anchorages:

- Do not attempt to anchor in the circular bay near the village. There is little substance and it is poorly maintained.

- The usual anchorage is in the narrows in 10 meters of water. A rock overflows. You have to anchor far from the beach.

- In the event of a cyclone, you can take refuge in the two bays to the west and south. There is little water. The bottom is muddy. The mosquitoes are numerous and hungry!

C) Points of interest: -the visit to the village on the island is interesting, but the number of mosquitoes is dissuasive. Moussa, whose father was antalaotra, knows the history of his island well. He can show you the ruins of the mosque and the doany near the sea. They were built with stones and lime. They were destroyed by a cyclone around 1912.

- The small islet south of the large islet is uninhabited. There is a small cabin. The number of condom wrappers around seems to explain what the cabin is for! At low tide, the sandbanks are a resting place for seabirds, traveling terns (No. 17) in particular.

- A large part of the mangrove trees were cut down by an individual wishing to get rich with charcoal. He cut so much that the villagers got him put in prison!

- In the annex, you can go (in the morning and at high tide) to Ampasimena (Red sand). It is the doany of the Behimisatra rulers. Their story is detailed in the book *Sable Rouge* by M. Baré. Currently the site is very dilapidated: mosque, palace. The house of relics (tsizozoy) is the only one in good condition. Queen Binao stayed here from 1881 to 1921. Ahamada II was enthroned here in 2005.

We have a nautical chart from 1905! A military post is marked there on the hill overlooking the beach. A half hour walk takes you to the site. Piles of stones and pointed agaves are the only remains. The view of Ampasimena and the Baie des Russes is superb.

- There is another village north of Ampasimena. The fokontany Gervais resides there. He speaks French perfectly and knows a lot of things.

- South of Ampasimena two vahaza have built houses.

- With a good annex (15 horsepower engine) you can explore the Kongony River. You have to leave two hours before high tide to benefit from the flow and have enough water. We go back 5 miles. The first fork is an island. The second allows you to go to Bemanivika on the right and Kongony on the left. Large canoes go up these rivers. We see a lot of birds:

Cuvier's Rail (*Dryolimnas cuvieri*), Blue Pigeon (N°11 *Alectroenas madagascariensis*), Malagasy Bulbul (*Hypsipes madagascariensis*)...

If you are lucky, you will encounter a crocodile (No. 43 *Crocodilus niloticus*).

There is a dhow construction site in Kongony.

This walk lasts approximately 4 hours. It puts you in contact with the authentic life of Madagascar.

- Lucky friends admired a whale shark in front of the bay.

NOSY BE, PERFUME ISLAND



1) Hellville anchorage (Andoany)

Hellville has many faults: choppy afternoon water, poor water management, noise, need to guard the annex, difficulty in obtaining drinking water, plastic bags everywhere... However, Hellville is unavoidable: it is the only port of entry in the region allowing police and customs formalities to be completed. Banks, small supermarkets, some hardware stores, mechanics, a sailmaker, bars, restaurants, hotels are available.

The quay was rebuilt in 2014 by Colas.

A) Access: It is easy to access the anchorage during the day. There is an old alignment to enter. Few browsers use it. You must be careful of the shallows located to the south of the peninsula by heading at 35 and leaving the jetty largely to port. No fires work at night. You must not anchor on the route of the boats which make the connection between Nosy Komba and Ankify nor in the area where the sailboats are moored. The bottom is muddy, but does not hold well. When we go up the chain, we bring back sticky mud. We disembark near the pier. At certain times, there is a real rush with a traffic jam of cockles of all kinds, in a deafening din. Passengers board or disembark on a slippery inclined plane. In this context, it is preferable to leave the annex in the care of a young person (Romeo or one of his colleagues). For two euros a day, you are sure to find your annex. You can also leave the annex at the "Quai de Nosy Komba". It's dirtier, just as hectic, but the atmosphere is less tense.

Formalities: when you arrive from abroad, you must first go to the PAF container (just next to the inclined plane) with crew lists, clearance from the last port and documents for the people and the boat. The visa is free for the first month. Otherwise we pay 60 euros for three months (you have to go to the Main Revenue in town to get the tax stamp). In both cases, you must pay the "boarding" fees (50,000 ariary)

Then, we report to the customs port office near the PAF container.

Afterwards, you have to go to the Office of the Maritime and River Port Agency, headquarters of the harbor master's office (near the port entrance barrier). There you obtain a navigation permit (150,000 ariary for three months) and a traffic permit which mentions the anchorages where you plan to go (don't hesitate to include as many as possible). The area covered by the Hellville captaincy goes from Mitsio to Moramba Bay. In principle, if you want to go further south or to Diégo Suarez, you must notify the Harbor Office because the area then depends on Majunga or Diégo Suarez.

The next step is to go to the Customs office, behind the cathedral. 20,000 ariary is required to put the name of the sailboat in a notebook. Some bypass this step.

For the exit, the route is identical...

B) Points of interest:

- The Nosy-Bé Tourist Office office is located outside the town at the Bazard des Arts. The welcome is smiling and efficient. Maps and tourist leaflets are provided free of charge. You can also buy a superb map of Nosy Be (45,000 ariary) or photograph the one to the left of the entrance. www.nosybe-tourisme.com.

- During the colonial period (1845-1960) Hellville (the name comes from Admiral Hell) was an important port. The buildings from this period are, for the most part, very tired! Their architecture is particular with verandas (or verandas). They are mainly located along Cours Hell. The building which dominates the port is the former sub-prefecture which has become the district building. The most dilapidated is the prison (built in 1855), not far from the cathedral. Impressive cannons dot the city (in front of prison No. 79, above the port). There is also the old water tower (built in 1872) at the crossroads of the road to Fascène.

Stelae are scattered near Cours Hell. They pay tribute to Independence, Russian sailors, those who died in the unrest of 2002, women and even those who died for France.

- It is not possible to visit the Hellville cemetery. One of Jean Bart's descendants, Lieutenant Cotey killed in 1849 and several Russian sailors rest here.

- The port was, in the precolonial period, in Ambanoro Bay. At that time, the dhows ran aground on the beach. For centuries, these dhows have crisscrossed the Indian Ocean. Islamized traders (Antalaotra) did a lucrative trade (especially slaves). At the beginning of the 19th century, other traders from India replaced them. India but also East Africa were the commercial destinations. The town of Marodoka (where there are many shops) was created. From this period only a few large houses in the street remain.

The town of Marodoka (where there are many shops) was created. From this period only a few large ruined houses remain (No. 71). They are invaded by ficus trees. The pier which facilitated the unloading of goods is still visible. We can go to the Indian cemetery. The tombs are decorated and nestled in the vegetation (No. 72). Several mosques exist. The oldest has, unfortunately, been razed. The one on the bend dates from the 19th century. There is another one near the sea (No. 73) and another before the Indian cemetery (No. 73). Access to this bay, crowded with coral banks, is difficult by boat.

-A path runs along the bay to the east. You can access the buildings of an old soap factory at a place called Ampasindava. Queen Tsiomeko stayed here from 1837 to 1840. The soap factory was built in 1925. To visit the buildings, you must ask permission in town at the Hassanaly offices. A sign and a small house in the National Park, at the start of the path, indicate that we are in Lokobé Park. It opened in July 2014. The excursion called Mitsinjo is physically tough but beautiful.

- A very beautiful walk leaves Ambanoro towards Ambatozavavy. A track, impassable in the rainy season, runs along the Lokobé Reserve and cocoa plantations - On the way back to Hellville, after a bridge, you can visit Lémurialand (www.lemurialand.com). The perfume plant distillery is interesting to see. A guide shows some aspects of the fauna (N°36-N°42) and flora of Madagascar.

-Returning to Hellville, we pass next to the National Center for Oceanographic Research. In the past, you could visit a small museum.

- Andavatoko Bay is located west of Hellville. It dries up completely at low tide. This is the dhow port. We see the different types of canoes, dhows and schooners. A yellow building with one floor is located by the sea (No. 75). It is the doany, that is to say the royal palace of the Behimisatra (the descendants of Andriantsoly). This Royalty played an important role during colonization. The sovereigns obtained titles of Governors and land advantages. They greatly aided colonization. In the palace, you can see the royal filanjana (No. 76). This sedan chair (called fitakon by Europeans) was the means of transport for notables. In the past, slaves were the carriers (bourjanés among the Merina).

It is not easy to walk around the dhow port, as dirt is everywhere.

- You absolutely have to go up to Pointe de la Batterie. This hill dominates the southern part of Nosy Bé. The view extends from Lokobé to Crater Bay.

- The sacred tree (Espace Zeny) is located at the exit of Hellville at a place called Mahatsinjo. It is a large banyan tree (No. 80) which would have been planted when Tsiomeko arrived in Nosy Bé. We visit a museum and a park (www.arbresacre.com). To get there, turn left before the Ambonara market and follow the arrows.

- It is easy to rent a vehicle and go around Nosy Bé. You can admire superb landscapes, beautiful beaches, historical sites and vast ylang-ylang plantations (No. 100 to 102 Cananga odorata). This plant is native to the Philippines. The trees are recognizable by their tortured appearance. They are pruned to make picking flowers easier. In Nosy Komba you can see what happens to these trees if you let them grow naturally. The distillation of the flowers provides an essential oil. Distilleries can be visited in several places on the island (Lemurialand, Nosy Komba, Bemanondro, Domaine de Florette)

Nature lovers will appreciate this Domaine de Florette (www.domaine-florette.com), Nosy Bé Lodge (www.lokobe-lodge-nosybe.com) and the Pépinière Tropicale (telephone 032 04 871 41). We discover the variety of tropical flowers (N°107- N°121-N°130-N°133)

Those who like the unexpected will visit the “super workshop Bertrand” in Andilamavo.

Amidst the salvaged bric-a-brac, Mr. Bertrand (recently deceased) was an ignored environmentalist (No. 82). He showed his tools which all use human energy. Lathes, saws, lamps work with the remains of old bicycles. A phone charger uses a crank.

–“Le Village” is a shop that sells superb boat models. The store is located in the ARO building opposite Champion.

-Those who like to see the landscapes from above will climb Mont Passot and visit the sacred lakes (No. 77). Three walking trails are available. At sunset the view is superb.

- Every year in May, since 1994, the Donia is held. It's a big music festival. It lasts several days. The population and tourists get drunk on music... and beer.

C) Resources: It is easy to stock up on food in grocery stores, at the market and in the small Champion supermarket. Bread is found everywhere. To get fuel, you have to carry cans to gas stations. The tanks are sometimes dry. If they are full it is sometimes the power that is missing...

For quantities of several hundred liters, it is possible to arrange for a tanker truck by contacting the companies.

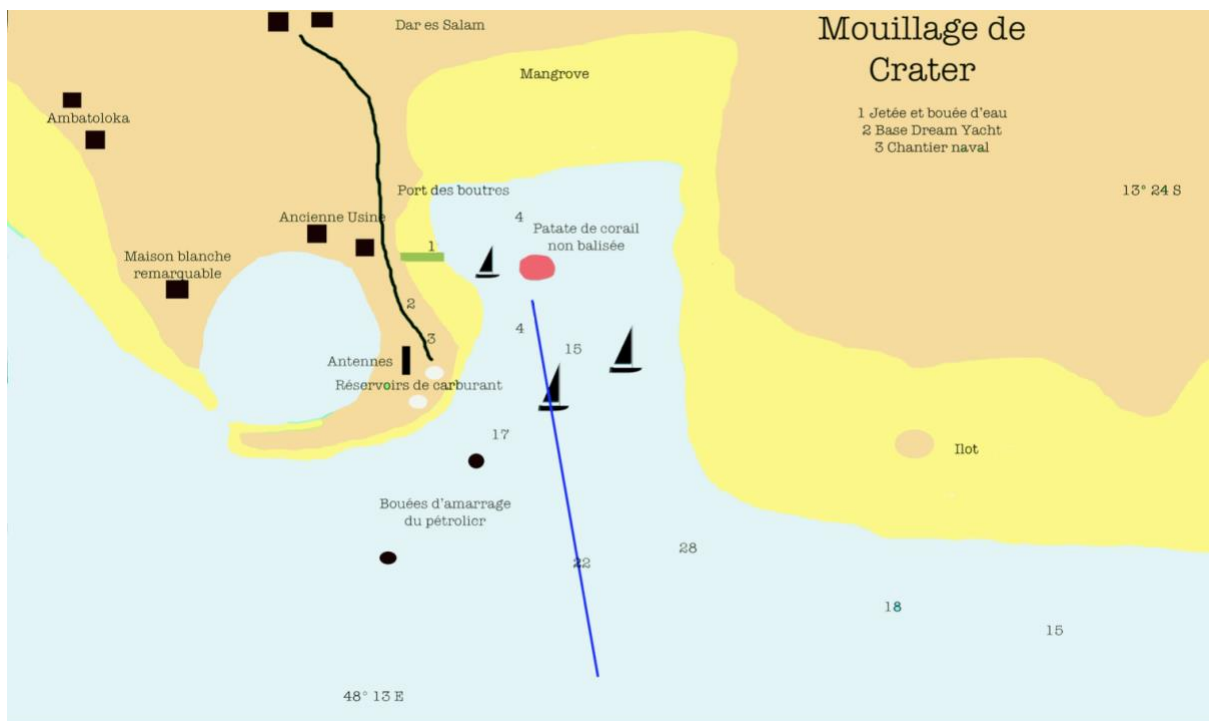
There is a water hydrant on the quay. You have to see the harbor master's office to obtain this water.

The sailmaker is located at the exit of Hellville in Ambonara Cité La Joie, after the Total service station. The Profil company can repair sails, make new ones at competitive prices, make awnings and hoods. She is a Profurl dealer and sells some hardware.

In the event of a mechanical problem, competent mechanics can be found, particularly Yoyo, near the port.

For the cold, the providential man is Eric. He can also find solutions to electronic problems (Telephone 032 04 73 001).

We had the rubber hub of a propeller repaired in front of Air Madagascar.



2) Crater anchorage (Amborinirona)

This is the basis of rental or charter companies. In addition to sailboats, the port is frequented by dhows which bring sand, charcoal, mangrove wood and plants to build houses. It is a fishing port with many canoes which leave early to look for something to survive...

Long ago, Crater was the port of the Dzamanzar (Sirama) sugar factory. Steam locomotives transported cane or sugar. Many vestiges remain from this period: hangars, steam crane, rails, locomotive (it regained its youth by becoming a pizza oven), wagons, boilers.

Several wrecks clutter the banks and the bottom of the water.

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The ruined jetty of the fuel depot, the noise of the generators of the Fisheries and the new JIRAMA power station, the broken road which leads to Dar es Salaam do not give a positive image to the anchorage.

To this grim observation must be added the thefts (of tender engines, ropes, etc.). It is wise not to leave your boat unattended at night. Charter sailboats all have a guard on board at night.

A) Access. When you come from the east, you have to go very south of the reef which extends far beyond. You should only head for the anchorage when you find it to the north. Coming from the south or west, there is no difficulty.

Free space is very limited. The dead bodies occupy the available part. Furthermore, an unmarked patch of coral is located practically in the middle of the anchorage. For a while there was a pole to point it out, but now there is nothing. As the water is cloudy, you should not expect to see this potato except during low tides.

For lack of anything better, boats can be anchored to the south in a depth of 12 meters or to the east in a depth of 6 meters. There are corals and wrecks. It is prudent to put a rope. The most practical is to take a free dead body. We then inquire about its availability with rental companies.

B) Points of interest:

- It is possible to fill up with water by mooring at the buoy located in front of the pontoon (2000 liters for 20,000 ariary). You must contact Madavoile and in high season make an appointment. Rudy and Geneviève (who manage Madavoile) have extensive sailing experience. They know the repair options. They always give good advice.

(www.madavoile.com, telephone 032 04 223 55)

Access to the pontoon requires a fee (80,000 ariary per month or 600,000 per year).

- Near the antique steam locomotive, there is a bar restaurant. Cold drinks, pizzas and Malagasy cuisine are available.

- Equivalent amenities can be found on the former Dream Yacht site.

- The Yard is a shipyard located south of the Dream Yacht base. They have a hydraulic trolley to remove boats weighing less than 15 tonnes and another on rail for boats weighing up to 50 tonnes (Telephone 032 04 509 81).

- Following the rutted track (about two kilometers), we arrive at Dar es Salaam. This village is lively. There is a market, a small supermarket (Big Bazard), several quad or motorcycle rental companies (Mada-Services Telephone 032 07 761 24 has good value for money), mechanics, a shipchandler (Pole Commercial opposite Big Bazard), an Orange store etc.

- Starting from Crater and heading towards Dar es Salaam but turning left at the top of the coast, (There is a sign indicating the Clair de Lune hotel) we take the direction

- Starting from Crater and heading towards Dar es Salaam but turning left at the top of the coast, (There is a sign indicating the Clair de Lune hotel) we take the direction of Ambatoloka. At about 1.5 kilometers, you can climb to the left to reach a white cross. If we continue climbing we arrive at the antennas. We have a splendid view of the anchorage.

- West of the anchorage is the crater. Its bay was once the port of trawlers which dredged shrimp and fish. The factory is at the bottom. It's closed. The site could be transformed into a marina... An alignment made it possible to cross a very narrow and unmarked pass. It is a

perfect cyclone shelter, but access is not permitted. The entire land area is surrounded by a fence in poor condition. To the west, on the hill overlooking Ambatoloka are the ruins of the "Portuguese fort". It is likely that these ruins are more recent. They are difficult to access because permission to enter must be requested from the owner of the fisheries.

- Ambatoloka and Madirokely are two nearby tourist areas. Hotels, nightclubs and restaurants welcome tourists. Some hotels struggle with reputation

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sulphurous of sex tourism. It is obvious that the law of supply and demand does not lead to the disappearance of prostitution. For many young Malagasy women, "winning a vahaza" is a form of social success... At night, the area is pedestrianized.

- A pretty waterfall is located about 3 kilometers from Dar-es-Salaam (N°78). There have been attacks on tourists in the past. The setting is truly superb. It is a sacred place where Malagasy people come to make offerings. Great caution is recommended (you should not go alone but in a group, only bring the essentials and remain vigilant).

- Further on, going towards Andilana, you can see the ruins of the Dzamanzar sugar factory. Another steam locomotive is parked near the entrance. You can visit these ruins. The factory was purchased second-hand in Venezuela. It was reassembled in 1923. It belonged to a private company before being nationalized and becoming Sirama. The site has not been rehabilitated and we believe that the tons of asbestos make it a risk area. When we came ten years ago sugar cane (*Saccharum officinarum*) was growing over vast areas. Since the factory closed, this culture has almost disappeared.

- Dzamanzar is a village by the sea. During low spring tides, women go looking for edible shellfish (especially arca).

Collectible shells are rarely collected around Nosy Bé. *Lyria delessertiana* is a volute endemic to the island (No. 9). We accompanied a lady who specialized in collecting it. His technique is special. She walks barefoot. When she smells a shell... she picks it up. In four hours of fishing, she put 5 shells in her basket.

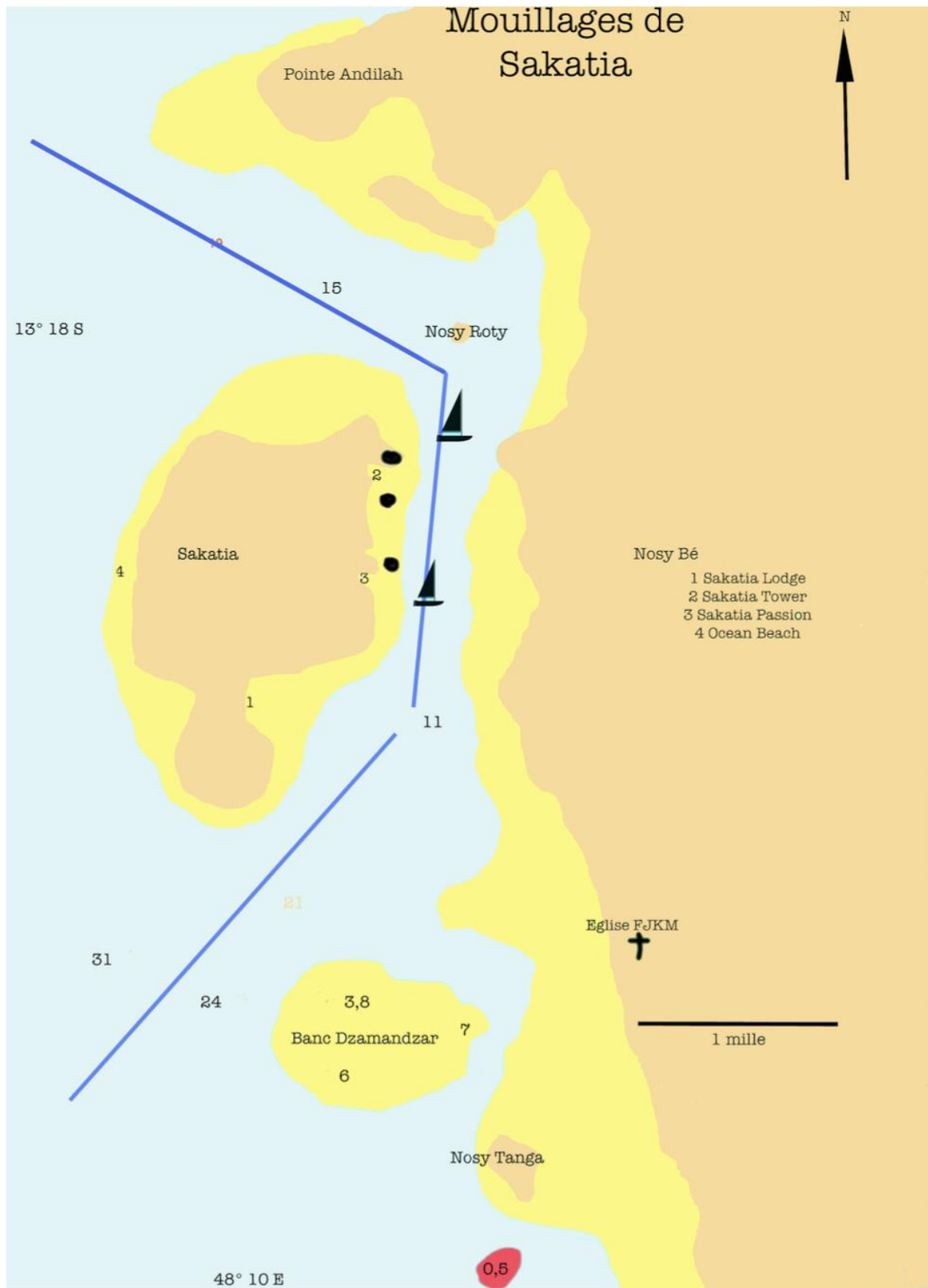
3) Ambatoloka and Madirokely anchorages

It is possible to anchor in front of the beach common to both villages. Charter boats have a dead body there. However, in the afternoon, the talio forms a chop or even swell which can be unpleasant.

It is the Alefa base which organizes dhow or canoe charters throughout the region (www.pirogue-madagascar.com). It's a fabulous experience to sail on boats that have been doing it for centuries.

The brother of the owner of Alefa runs a jewelry store specializing in star sapphires (Le Tamarin www.saphir-etoile.com). The shop is located very close to a large sacred tamarind. (Madiro is Tamarind in Malagasy). Frédéric will explain his passion for these stones to you.

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4) Sakatia anchorages

The island of Sakatia is located west of Nosy Bé. The anchorages are pleasant. They are well sheltered from the prevailing winds. The fast hulls which often pass very (too!) close to the sailboats are a real nuisance.

A) Access:

- Coming from the south: you must pass off Nosy Tanga then the Banc de Dzamandzar. You must then take a course at 40 to go towards the narrows which separate the north-eastern tip of Sakatia from Nosy Bé. Coral banks extend far beyond the west coast of Nosy Bé. The east coast of Sakatia is also overwhelmed by rocks. There are two small islets. You also have to be careful in the northern part because the corals extend widely.
- Coming from the north: Pointe Andilah is extended to the west by a coral bank. In the afternoon, the sea breaks over these dangerous shoals. They must be largely outflanked, especially since there is often current. A heading of 130 then aims to pass halfway between Sakatia and Nosy Roty. We then sail noticeably towards the south.

B) Anchorages:

- Opposite Sakatia Lodge: The bay is shallow. You have to anchor offshore. The swell is sometimes felt.
- Opposite Sakatia Passion: This is the best anchorage a little south of a small islet in 13 meters of water.
- Opposite Sakatia Tower. We anchor in the channel not far from a rounded peninsula

C) Points of interest: Here we find superb beaches, often clear water and wild orchids. Paths allow you to move around the island and come into contact with nature and the population. Unfortunately deforestation has taken its toll. It is increasing with the construction of private houses or hotel structures. We can measure this clearing by comparing the southern peninsula covered with forest (because its access is poor) and the rest of the island which is quite bare.

A guide is helpful. You can contact the Maison des Guides: (Telephones 032 27 483 06 and 033 80 651 35)

- A path leaves Sakatia Tower towards the west and leads to a superb deserted beach. The path is bordered by shrubs with white flowers and narrow leaves. These are *Grevillea banksii* planted to stabilize the land. In other areas of the island, we see *Eucalyptus* trees planted for the same purpose. Near the sea, you can admire the white flowers of a wild orchid *Vanilla decaryana* (No. 128). Near the anchorage, to the north of the peninsula there is another romantic beach.

John, the former owner of Sakatia Tower, organized a meal every Sunday for the passing crews. Jason is his successor. He has not yet taken over the activities of the previous owner. The mangrove wood path and the floating pontoon have disappeared. The Lodge has a well. The small circular bay almost completely fails. It is very sheltered and stranding is safe.

- A path leaves the southern village and leads to the new Océan Beach Hotel. The site is magnificent. Plantations of tropical flowers decorate the place. Land turtles live freely. A pond is home to fish.

-In front of the Sakatia Passion anchorage (currently closed) and opposite the small islet, a small river flows in the rainy season.

- Some deserted beaches are nesting places for sea turtles. Nesting takes place at night. The female digs a hole with her fins. She lays her eggs there then covers them with sand.

Exhausted, she returns to the sea. This spectacle must be respected: do not frighten the animal, do not take photos with a flash...

- Sakatia Lodge is a pleasant place to have a drink or lunch while admiring nature.

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- Nosy Roty is an islet topped by a plume of trees. It is fady because it is a cemetery. D)

Resources: There are pineapple plantations. To go shopping, you have to go to Nosy Bé, take a taxi and go to Hellville.

5) Befotaka anchorage: It is not easy to access this anchorage. It is reserved for boats with shallow draft.

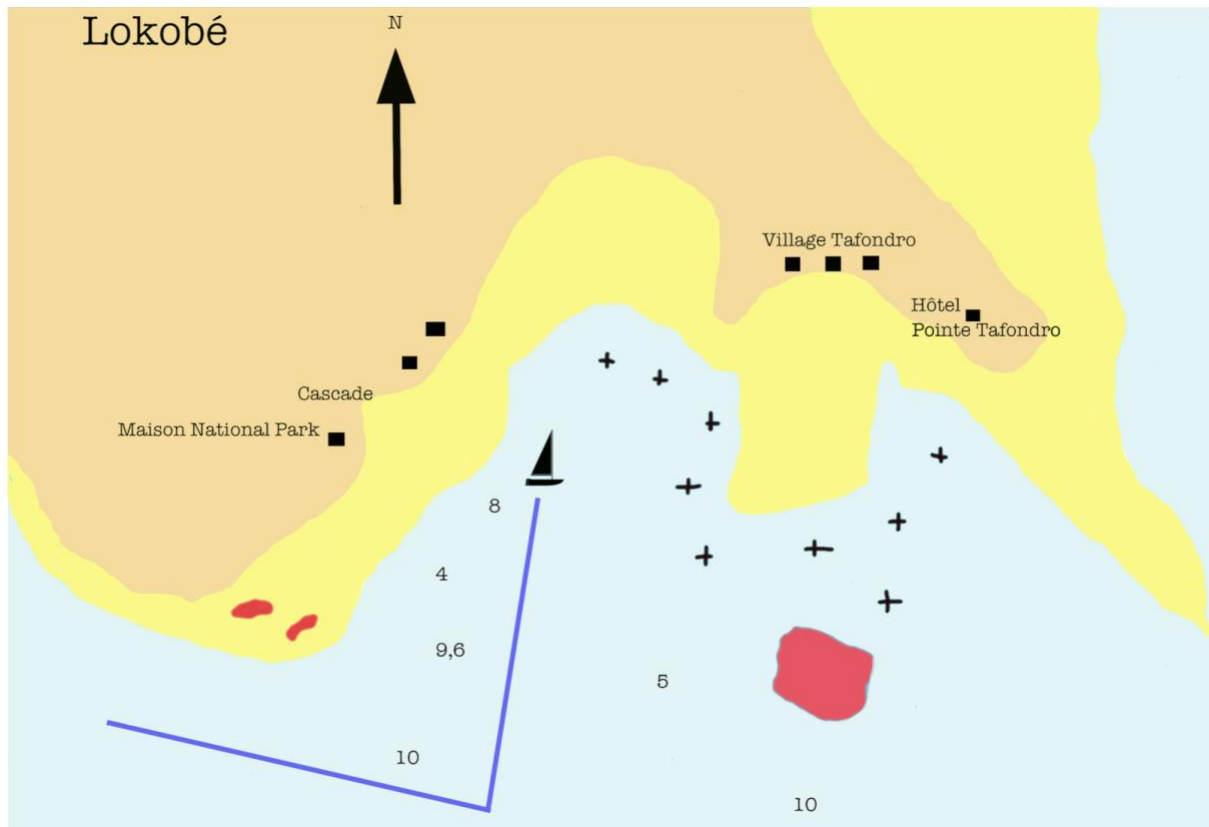
6) Nosy Fanihi anchorage: You can anchor to the south of the islet, paying attention to the corals which extend far away. The beach is superb. You can swim in clear water. We have a wonderful memory of a dive. Around 10 meters away, we heard the humpback whales singing. We had the impression that they were very close. Once out of the water, we could see that they were swimming three miles...

7) Mazandry anchorage: Seen from land, this bay is wonderfully beautiful. Unfortunately it is cluttered with rocks and corals and the swell comes in a lot from the north. Despite these difficulties, we anchored there to walk around the bay and on Ilot Tendraka. We cannot recommend following us.

8) Ambatozavavy anchorage: This bay is shallow and dries over a large part. You can anchor there for a few hours in the southern part. You have to be careful of the rock that overflows Pointe Ampassipoy.

- The village of Ambatozavavy (Roche des femmes) is located in the northwest. The area dries up at low tide. The village community manages tourist activities. Guides help you discover the mangrove, the Lokobé park, the fauna and flora. Part of the visit is done by canoe. (Telephones 032 28 974 93; 033 80 851 3; 034 85 673 76).

The Hotel School was a kilometer away on a hill. We could sleep or have lunch there. The view is splendid. The structure has closed but is expected to reopen in 2015.



9) Lokobé anchorage: 13° 25 S and 48° 20 E. We really like this anchorage. If the talio is strong, there may be choppy weather. Tranquility is guaranteed there because few sailboats go there. You must be careful not to anchor too close to the shore and only on sandy bottoms. There is a little current.

A small river flows in front of the anchorage. By walking up it for about ten meters, you reach a pretty waterfall. The water comes from Lokobé and is probably not polluted.

Theoretically, this area is a Complete Reserve (milestones mark the shore to delimit it). It is forbidden to enter there. A tolerance seems to apply for the waterfall. Just west of the river there is the National Park cottage but we never saw anyone there. In the east, individuals built houses.

- At sea, red buoys mark the Marine Reserve

- With the annex or on foot following the bank (allow two hours), you can access the village of Tafondro (where there is a cannon). The cannon is visible near the beach. It is the only vestige of the French fort which was located on the hill overlooking Pointe Tafondro. Near its location, a vahaza is building a hotel.

- The first establishment of the Jesuits in Nosy Bé was in Tafondro. Their story is detailed in the book by Adrien Boudou (The Jesuits in Madagascar in the 19th Century). Some are buried in a small cemetery near the village. We can see the grave of Brother Jouffre Félicien. On the cross is inserted a metal plaque: "Félicien Jouffre born September 11, 1812. Died March 3, 1850". A cyclone was the cause of his death and the destruction of the 1st Mission.

- Between the village and this point is the Hotel Le Domaine du Lokobé which burned down recently.

- The village's water comes from the Lokobé. It also supplies the hotel. This water is crystal clear and free!

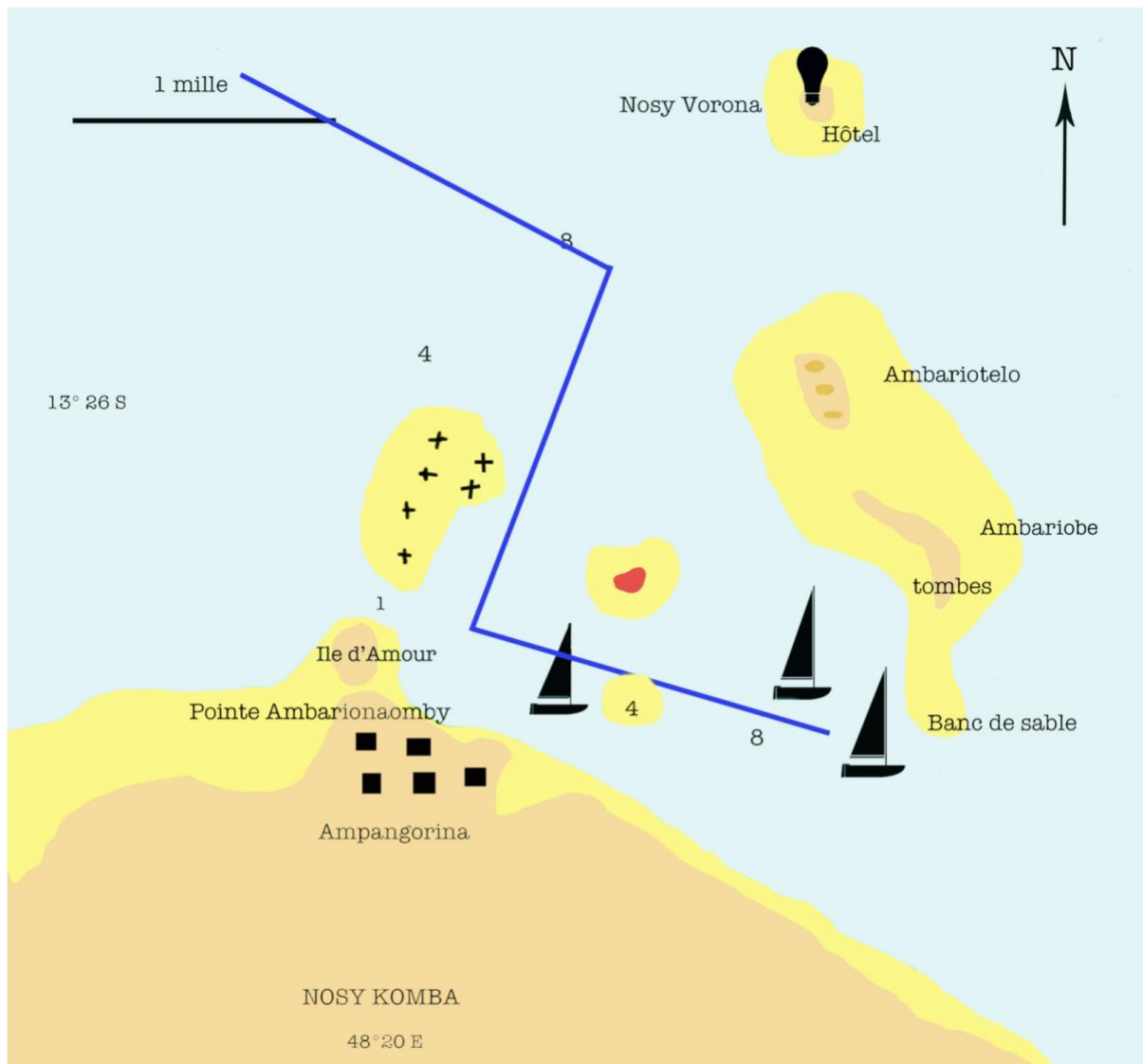
- Facing the beach, you can eat in the Soa restaurant.

- A sailboat is on mooring. It is difficult to anchor near him. The rocks are too close.

- Leaving the village, a path crosses the Tafondro peninsula. We arrive at the village located to the north. It's a pleasant walk. We see a wide variety of plants and chameleons (No. 44 to 46).

-Another path connects Tafondro to Ampassipoy near Ambatozavavy.

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NOSY KOMBA (AMBARIOVATO)

In recent years, various constructions (Hotels, private residences, Restaurants) have grown on the peaceful Island of Nosy Komba (Island of the Lemurs). The calm and beauty of the island contributed to this outbreak. The prospect of quick profits is also not unrelated to the phenomenon. Without becoming Bali or Saint Tropez, we observe a flowering of souvenir shops and bars. We like it or we don't like it...

A) Access: You have to go well off the northern tip which is overflowed by rocks. When Nosy Vorona (with its lighthouse) is raised to 36, we must head for Ampangorina. We pass between two rocky areas. We anchor in 10 meters of water. The background is in good condition. A slight current is felt. The anchorage is well sheltered from the talio. It can become very uncomfortable when the wind comes from the northeast. We can protect ourselves behind Ambariobe.

B) Anchorages: Ampangorina is the main anchorage. We can anchor in other places on the east coast taking into account the coral spots which overflow in certain places. Tintorona is the village located southeast of Ampangorina. This village is supplied with electricity and ice by a water turbine.

C) Points of interest: In the 19th century, missionaries (in particular the Spiritan Father Clément Rimbault) developed the cultivation of certain cash plants (coffee, vanilla, ylang ylang). The island has been extensively cleared not only for these crops but also for food plants. Slash-and-burn cultivation has only ceased 7 years ago (tavy). During colonization, a military hospital was built in 1895 near the summit. A motorable road allowed you to go up there. The building operated until 1920. Nothing remains of it and very little of the road. The cemetery is still visible. It is very moving.

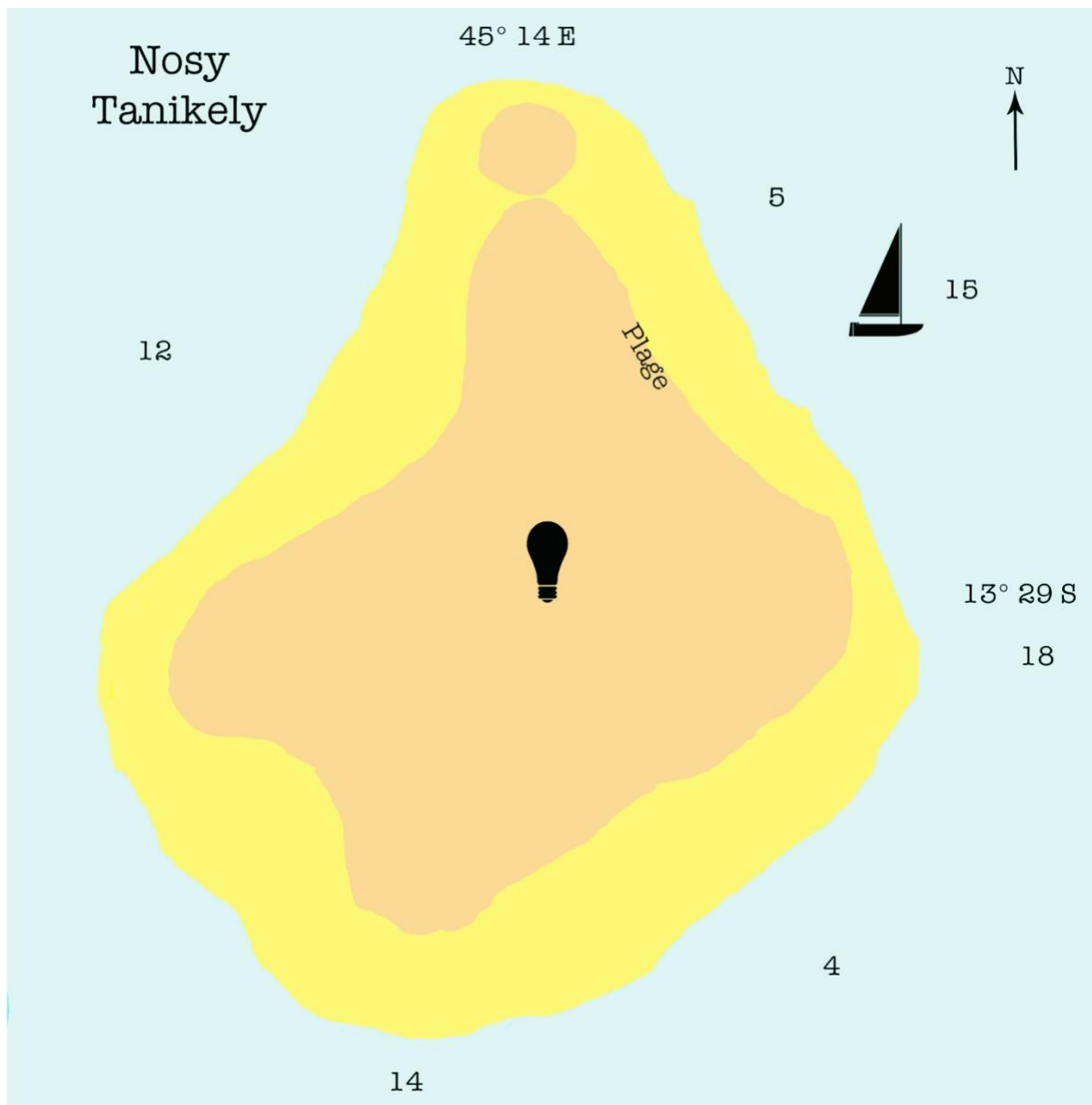
The Catholic presence is old and important. There is a seminar on heights. We have a superb view of the surroundings.

- Near Ampangorina, you can access a small tourist park for a modest fee. A guide shows you certain plants, snakes, and especially tame lemurs (No. 34 & 35 Lemur macaco) which, attracted by a banana, will come to your shoulder. Females are brown, males black.
- You can see wilder nature by visiting the heights with a guide. Yvonne is 73 years old and still goes up every day to guide the vazaha. Her granddaughter Hermine has already taken over.

The excursion allows you to see the workshops that transform old springs into coupe coupes with artisanal forges. In areas untouched by humans, we can see giant beans (*Entada rheedii*), river caps (*Barringtonia racemosa*) and many other tropical plants.

- You can have a drink on the terrace of the Maki Lodge which overlooks the anchorage.
- Nosy Komba has granite quarries. The work is done entirely by hand.
- Ambariobé is a cemetery island. It's fun to get there. On the other hand, you can walk on the sandbank to the south. On Nosy Komba, there are other prohibited areas, for example north of Lodge Les Florales. At the west end of the village there is a doany photography is prohibited. In the village we see a tognny dedicated to the worship of ancestors. - Nosy Vorona is tiny. There is, however, a hotel.

D) Resources: You can get quality water from the various taps in Ampangorina. In the dry season, the flow is sometimes low. There are so many leaks in the pipes! Embroideries are beautiful gifts for friends.



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NOSY TANIKELY (TANYHELY)

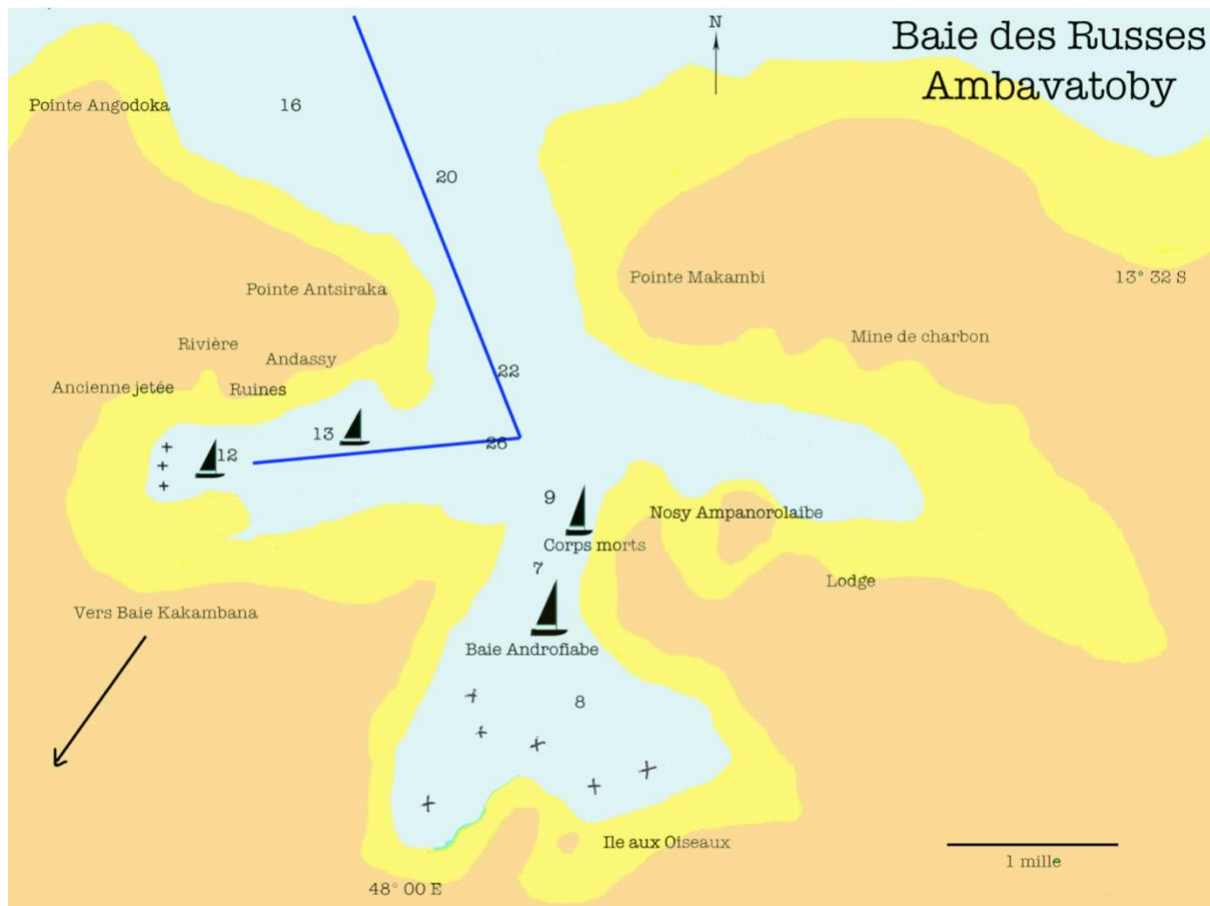
The area is a Natural Park managed by the municipality (N°70). Access is paid (10,000 ariary per person). Scuba diving allows you to see a variety of wildlife in a protected environment.

Dead bodies are available to the northeast of the islet on a sandy bottom. It is a daytime anchorage only. It is forbidden to use the anchor.

The place is very popular and boats bring tourists every day. They spend the day there. The lemurs are almost tame and come to steal food from the tables. They belong to the species *Eulemur fulvus* or brown lemur.

Going up to the lighthouse (built in 1908 and no longer functioning), you have a beautiful view of the anchorage, its turquoise waters and the surrounding area.

The caretaker's accommodation has been transformed into an Interpretation Center.



RUSSIAN BAY (AMBAVATOBY or BAVATOBE)

Charter sailboats stay here for a short time. The Radama are their main destination. However, we can stay for days and not see the time passing. The bay has perfectly sheltered anchorages. Some are considered cyclone shelters.

The historical past is often sad. We will tell the main episodes.

-In 1853, the capital of several settlers from Nosy Bé, Menon and Lambert aimed to exploit a coal mine. The management is entrusted to the former French consul in Port-Louis Jean-Marie Eugène Darbois. Ambavatoby is then in Merina territory. The mine starts with three Europeans, a Mauritian, 67 Malagasy and 107 "hired" from Mozambique. A fort (with two cannons) is built. The French flag is raised. It was too much for Queen Ranavalona who took over the place on October 19, 1855. Darbois was killed by a bullet to the head. A third of workers survive. Only one European escapes the massacre. He is taken captive to Antananarivo. The other workers are massacred. -Two Russian squadrons regroup in the harbor opposite Hellville to resupply between December 24, 1904 and March 16, 1905. The 35 ships (with 10,000 sailors) are on their way to confront the Japanese. The stopover is prolonged due to difficulties in obtaining coal. Hellville turns into a vast brothel. It's better to enjoy the present! The sailors know that they will face a better armed, better trained opponent. A weak

part of these sailors deserts and goes to hide in Ambavatoby. They do not bond with the population. They are decimated by malaria. The last one died in 1936. Graves are visible. There are also some ruins of their houses left. Legends speak of a wreck. Their companions

will lose the war against the Japanese. The Russian fleet was annihilated on May 27, 1905 at Tsushima. 5000 sailors die. The others go into captivity.

-A factory manufacturing varnish from mangrove trees operated from 1870 to 1914 (Oswald House) in the bay. Basins, a few stones and a cast iron tank are the only remains. -More recently a vast hotel project was envisaged in the northwest of the bay. We were thinking of building a large hotel, an airstrip, a port. We can see what remains of the project.

A) Access: Coming from the east, you must be very careful of the corals which extend far to the northwest from Pointe Makambi. Then we head true south. The pass is wide.

To get to the Andassy anchorage, you have to go around a sandbank to the south.

B) Anchorages:

-The most popular is located in front of Andassy in 13 meters of water, sandy bottom. We prefer the one further west.

-At the level of the narrows which leads to Androfiabe Bay, there were dead bodies. You need to find out if they are still in place.

Some nautical guides indicate an anchorage south of Makambi Point. There are numerous coral spots and in the afternoon the chop is really unpleasant.

C): Points of interest:

- A small shop/bar recently opened in Andassy. It is run by an Austrian, Andréa.

- There are many beaches. You must protect yourself from mochafoys with coconut oil or repellents.

- Boats that run aground without problem can careen on the sandbanks.

- The coal mine hole is located near the sea. You can climb the hill where the fort was built. A post may be a remains of the fort. A zebu park is located nearby.

- There are numerous ruins of the past near Andassy. It is only of interest to archeology enthusiasts.

- At high tide, you can go to a river located at the bottom of the mangrove. By going there, you can see the devastation suffered by this mangrove, which is vital to the survival of fish. The river has a variable flow depending on the seasons. The setting is always superb. To the east of the river, we see stone enclosures. We do not know their nature.

- On land, the possibilities for walks are endless: A track has recently been built. The starting point is near the village well. The climb is steep but steps have been taken. Arriving on Crete, the view of the bays is splendid. You can then either go down to the north coast of the peninsula and a small village. You can also go back down to Andassy. Other trails lead towards the west coast of the peninsula. One of the tracks starts from the old pier.

Another goes towards Kakambana Bay. With a guide (for example Paul telephone 032 47 309 17 in the evening), you will see birds, plants and magnificent landscapes. Bush hogs (*Potamocheirus larvatus* No. 41) are numerous in the area. We keep the memory of a beach plowed by these wild pigs.

On a botanical level, we meet interesting people. *Raphia farinifera* is quite widespread. The name of this palm has passed into the French language. The fibers are used to make fabrics and hats. The fruit is edible. Another plant is very common by the sea: *Caesalpinia bonduc* (Canique in French) forms thorny pods. They contain hard seeds used for the game of katra. A wooden board with 32 cavities is used for the progression of seeds. The game resembles African awalé.

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100 meters east of Andréa's house, we can see the stones of a cemetery. Near the graves, *Unkarina ankaranaensis* grows. The flower is yellow. The seed is spectacular. Green, it forms

clublike extensions. When dry, these rough edges turn into formidable harpoons that are difficult to remove if you have the misfortune of encountering them. The Malagasy use it to capture rats.

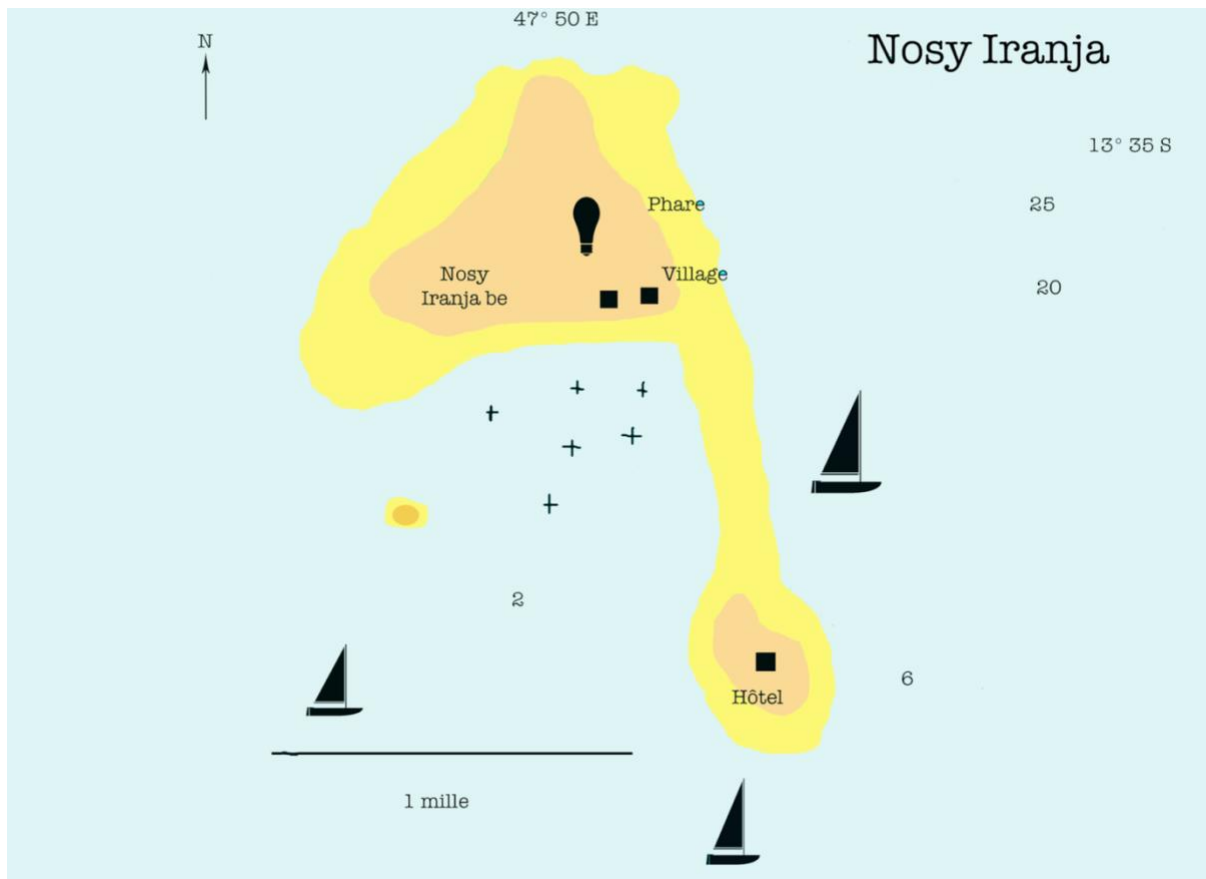
The travelers' tree (*Ravenala madagascariensis*) resists fire quite well. It is common.

-Remoras are numerous in the bay. You may also have the opportunity to admire a school of silver fish. This is *Monodactylus argenteus* of the Monodactylidae family.

- A few bungalows, with rudimentary comfort, exist to the east of the Ampanorolaibe islet. They are nestled in wild nature.

-The reefs, which extend beyond Makambi Point, are full of fish. Diving and hunting are interesting. You must choose the flow period to benefit from clear water.

having to dive to free the chain... You can also dive into this clear water for fun.
A hotel was built near the beach. During our last visit it was closed.



NOSY IRANJA 13° 36 S 47° 49.79 E

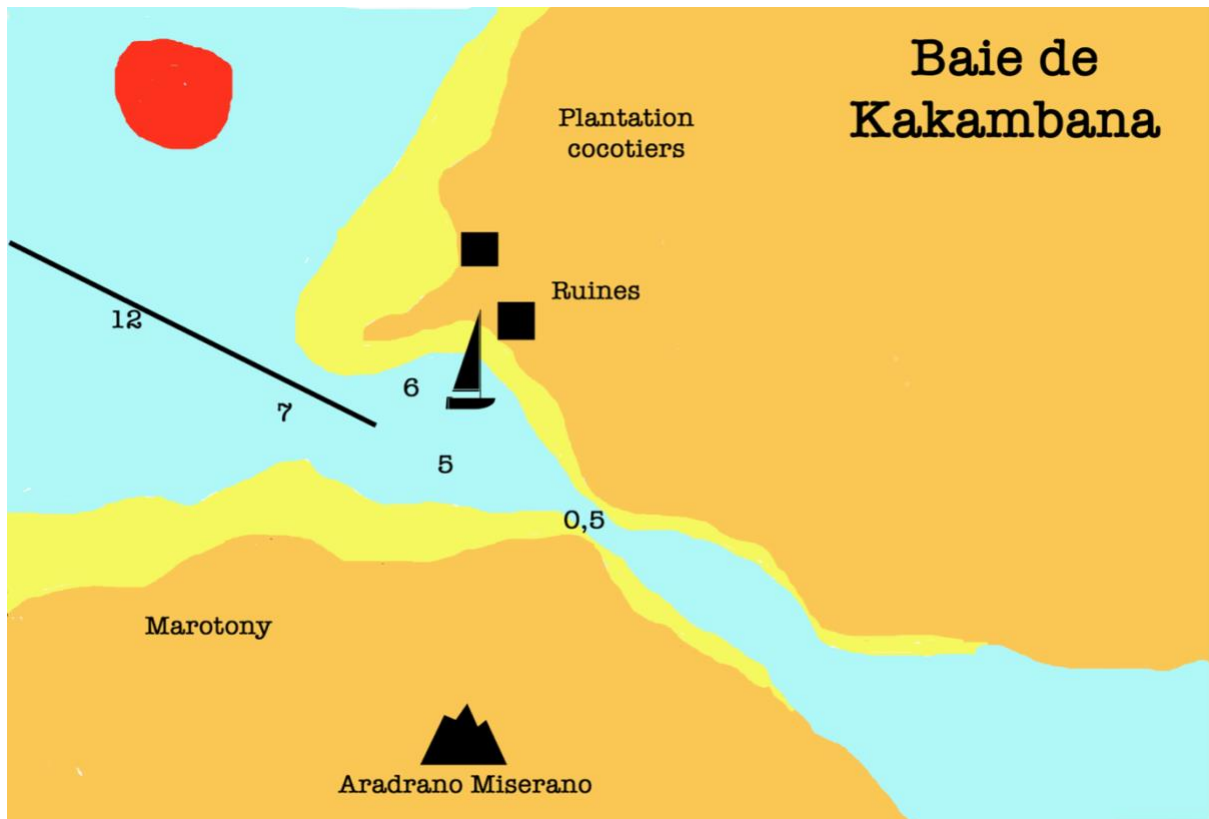
Nosy Iranja is not a good anchorage because the swell comes in. We stay there for a walk on land. It is best to sleep in Baramahamai. There are two islands connected by a sand spit. Access is not a problem.

We anchor to the east of the sandbar in 8 meters of water. The bottom is sandy with coral. You can also anchor south of small Iranja (Iranja hely).

Points of interest: - The village is located on the big island (Iranja be). He lives from tourist activity because every day tourists come to visit the place. You have to take the shaded path that goes up to the lighthouse to access a panoramic view. We can climb into the lighthouse. The guards' house was transformed into a school (Ecole Espérance, a whole program). A hotel has just opened near the village.

- At low tide, you can walk on the sandbank to Petit Iranja. Tourists plant their parasols on the white sand before diving into the clear water.

- Petit Iranja is a hotel which was closed in 2014. The setting is enchanting. We liked to have a caipirina or a pina-colada in the rotunda which overlooks the beach.



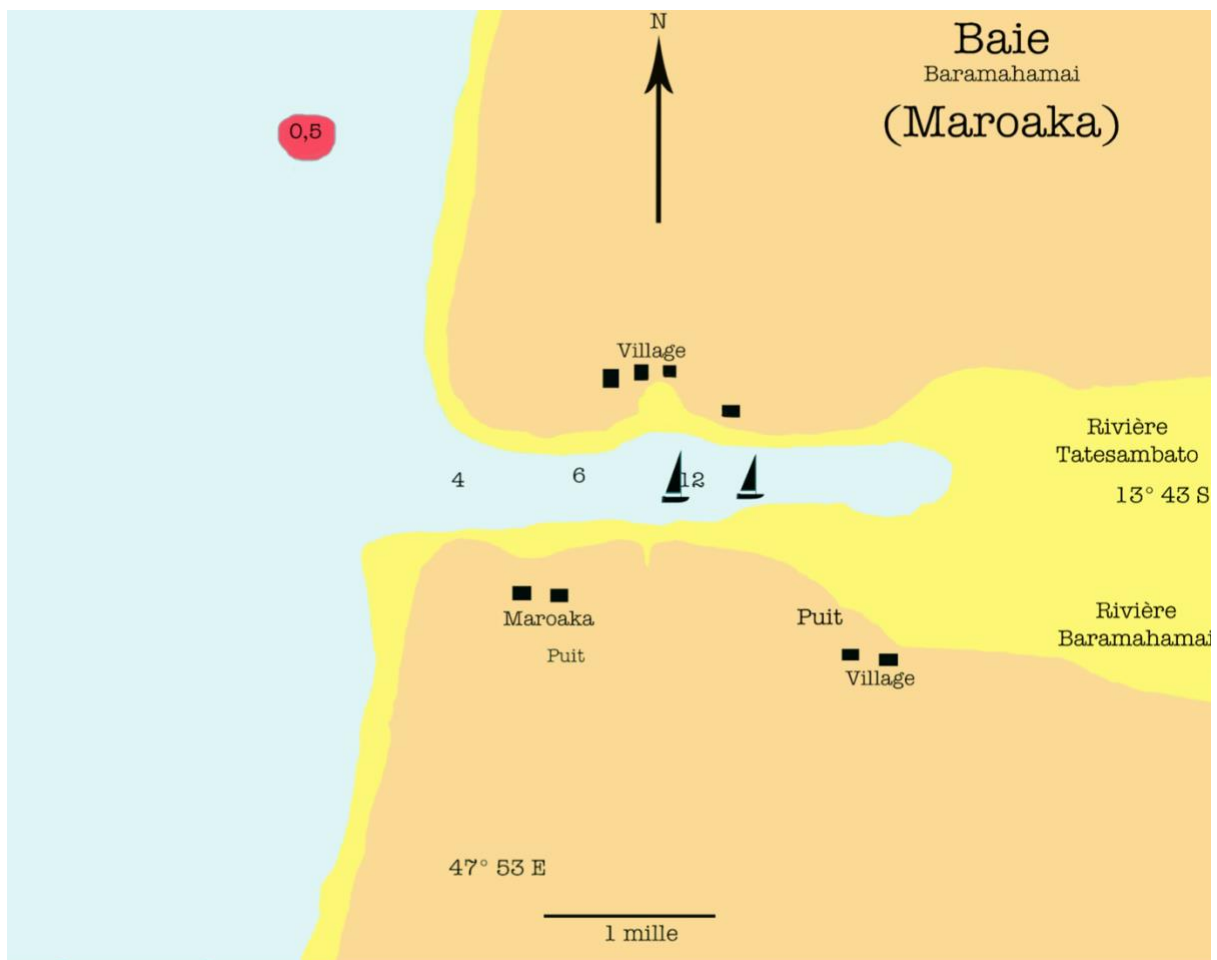
KAKAMBANA BAY

This vast bay is located between Nosy Antsoho and Pointe Antangena. It is possible to anchor south of the northeast point and explore the river in an annex.

To the north of the anchorage we see the ruins of the village, destroyed by a cyclone. This is the property of Hassan Ali. The coconut grove was also ravaged by the same cyclone. It is being replanted.

A pretty beach is close to the caretakers' house.

South of the anchorage, you can visit the village of Marotony



BARAMAHAMAI (MAROAKA) 13° 42.7 S 47° 54 E

Baramahamai is located at the mouth of two rivers. It is a well sheltered anchorage.

A) Access: Sand and coral banks extend beyond the southern tip. We follow a heading of 110°, passing halfway between the north and south banks. There are, at least, 4 meters of water on the bar.

B) Anchorages: We anchor in front of the northern village or in front of the southern one, being closer to the northern bank (by 8 to 12 meters). The bottoms are muddy but in good condition.

C) Points of interest:

- You can buy very good wild honey (1.5 liters costs 10,000 Ariary), fish and land crabs. We could formerly taste them in the “Au bon crabe” restaurant but the export of crabs to China is making the resource scarce (1400 tonnes in 1 semester!).

- You can get chickens or ducks. It is prudent to only pay after delivery of the bird...

- The Tatesambato River is navigable (attached) for several miles. Friends saw crocodiles. We weren't so lucky.

- A Merina fort was located on the banks of this Tatesambato river. The stones were used to build a distillery. To get to the site, it takes an hour with a quick annex. After a mile of the two rivers divide, take a right for 1.5 miles. The GPS coordinates are 13° 41 846 S and 47° 56 435 E.

- That of Baramahamai is over a shorter distance.
 - The village of Maroaka has few houses. It was formerly inhabited by Antalaotra.
- Andriantsoly left this village on April 2, 1826 for his exile in Mayotte. The mihrab and the

lower part of the mosque (abandoned today) dates from this period. The ruins of a tomb exist not far from the mosque. In 2014, the village had a drinking water tap. A path leads to a muddy well. It is possible to go further into the vegetation to see endemic plants such as *Voacanga thouarsii*, *Urena lobata*, *Pedaliium murex* and many others.

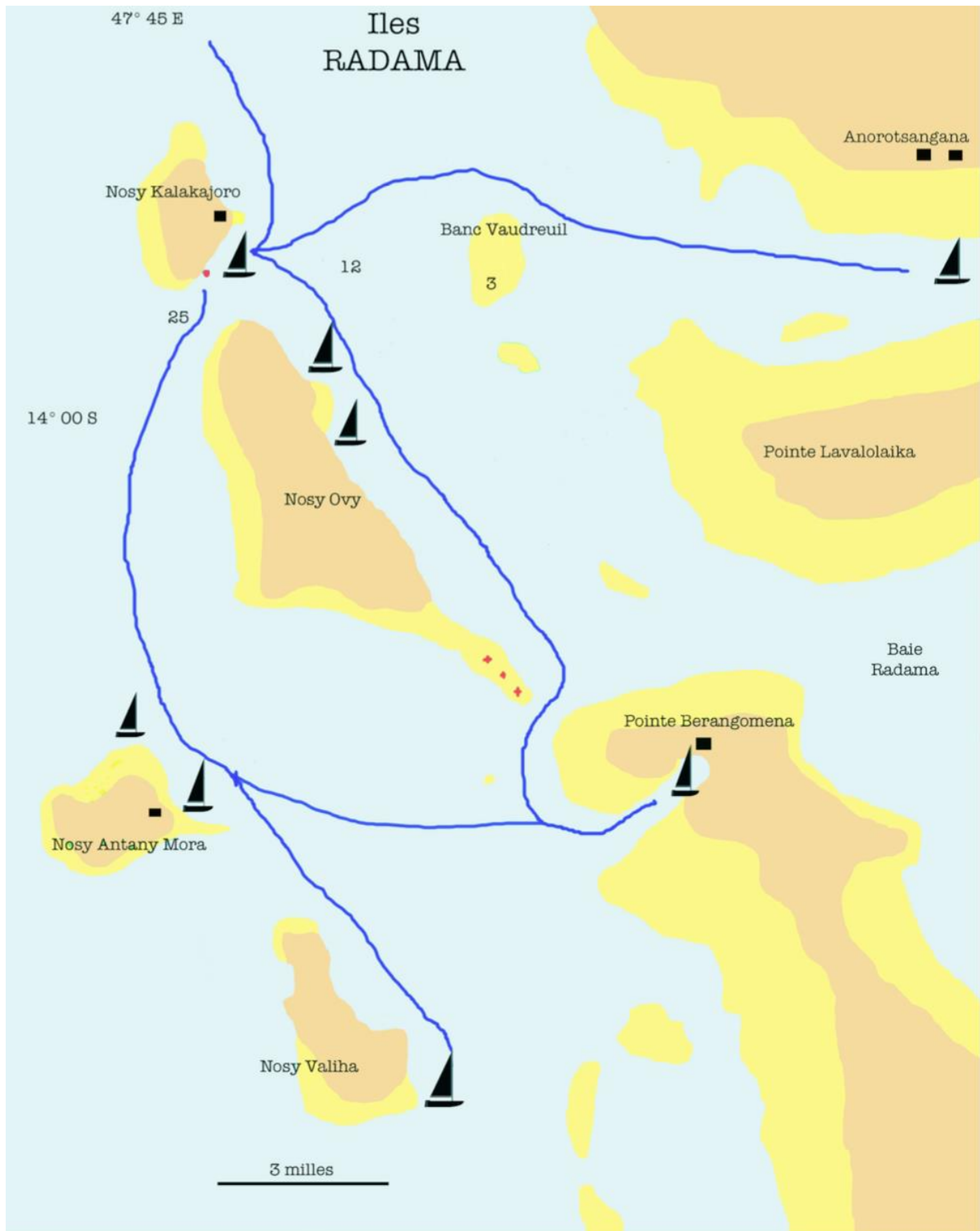
-A little further west, Alefa built a plant hut near a kind of lagoon, on the beach. The setting is enchanting. By climbing the rocks, you can reach the top of the hill and overlook the river.

-Further east, a well provides water of fair quality. At high tide you can approach it, in an annex, about ten meters away.

-On the south bank, 15 meter dhows are built entirely by hand.

- The beaches are numerous and encourage relaxation.

-In front of the village on the north shore, the dhow "port" is busy. A well is located behind the houses. Its water is very cloudy. A water supply network was installed in 2014. A tap provides quality water. A path allows you to climb the hill. This hill dominates the village and the view is superb. At this level we access the GSM telephone network.



RADAMA ARCHIPELAGO

We spoke, in the historical introduction, of the Sakalava raids which left from this island to plunder the Comoros and Africa.

We came for the first time ten years ago. There were no hotels and no tourists. There were numerous canoes in front of the village. Currently, two hotels accommodate vahazas seeking calm or wishing to catch big fish. Charter boats have replaced canoes. Access to Kalakajoro is easy. We anchor, south of the sand overhang, in 12 meters of water. If we get closer to the bank, the funds decrease quickly. Diving near the southern tip is interesting. It is not easy to explore the interior. The thorn trees are numerous, the vegetation is dense and the scratching hair (*Mucuna pruriens*) is very annoying. There are a few river beds (without water in the dry season). They allow you to explore part of the island. It is easier to walk along the bank. Leaving the village, a steep path provides access to the plateau. Large rocks dominate the anchorage. The view is splendid. It rewards the efforts made. Fishing for sea cucumbers (Holothurians No. 48) is one of the village's activities. The Malagasy word is dinga dinga. Some species sell very expensively on Asian markets. The risks taken by divers are enormous. Their equipment is old. They often go very far from anchorages. They dive deep. Recently we picked up two divers 8 miles from land that their boat could not find. They had been waiting in the water for 3 hours! The construction of dhows is another activity of the villagers. We can see a wide variety of plants here (N°104-N°135).

2) Nosy Ovy or Nosy Berafia

Nosy Ovy (Island of Tubers) is long (10 kilometers) and bare. Deforestation has stripped the earth bare. There are two possible anchorages on the east coast. We anchor north or south of a promontory. These anchorages are not recommended in case of strong trade winds. We can then anchor in the northwest bay.

The largest village is located to the west. We can anchor there in the morning. Here we used ylang-ylang, pepper and vanilla. The premises belong to Hassanaly et Fils and a colonial house and plantations bear witness to a more active past.

In other parts of the island coffee trees grow.

There is a mahabo perched on a hill.

You can admire several quartz mines on the northern part of Nosy Ovy. There is a diversity of coloring and rock crystal.

The southeastern tip of Nosy Ovy extends for 2.5 miles. The passage, between Nosy Ovy and Pointe Berangomena, is narrow. The water is cloudy. You have to guide yourself with the depth sounder. There are more than thirty meters of water in the pass. It seems easier to get around Nosy Ovy from the west.

3) Nosy Antany Mora

The anchorage is located to the east of the island. To the north, a coral and sand bank extends far away. To the southeast, a strip of sand heads east. On land, we see in this area, many uprooted trees as if the sea had invaded the land. The village lives from fishing and particularly from collecting dinga dinga. There is also a fishing camp run by a vahaza.

The drop-off is only 5 miles from the anchorage. You can go diving in the morning and return before the solar wind rises. Gregg Wall (14°09.474S; 47°38.912E) is a popular dive. The slope of the drop-off is full of gorgonians. The fish are numerous, large and even very large. You can enter a cave.

There is plenty of other underwater exploration to do.

Between the drop-off and Antany Mora trolling is particularly favorable.

4) Nosy Valiha

Valiha is bamboo in Malagasy. A musical instrument bears this name. We anchor in the southeast of the island. The bottom is sand. The depth is 6 to 15 meters. The beach is beautiful.

5) Anorotsangana. Rafalahy Bay

This city was formerly called Sada (Fortress in Swahili). It was an important scale of the Antalaotra. It was pillaged and burned in 1506 by the Portuguese squadron of Tristan de Cunha. The city does not seem to have risen from its ashes. It should be noted that there is Pointe Sada in Baly Bay and a town of the same name in Mayotte. In 1825, Andriantsoly, the last Sakalava king took refuge here. With the help of the Antalaotra, he rebuilt his forces and won a battle. But in 1826 he was defeated again and the village burned. In 1850 the Merina built a fort which would have sheltered up to 1500 men. It was a strategic point for access to the north. Archaeological excavations have not found the ancient city of Sada. It is likely that the ruins are, today, at the bottom of the sands of the bay. The sea is gaining on the land. 20 years ago the shops of a karana and a mosque were visible at the water's edge. Nothing remains of it. During our last visit we were looking for pottery shards. The children brought us several buckets of recent pieces of plates, bowls, pottery and porcelain.

A) Access: From Kakakajoro, you have to go around the Vaudreuil bank from the north. The water is often cloudy and the school is barely visible. It is renowned for its richness in lobsters. You must stay away from the north bank. Sand banks overflow widely (No. 138).

B) Anchorage. We anchor in 8 meters of water. We are therefore more than a mile from the coast. We can only stay in the morning because the bay is rough with the talio. At low tide, you have to walk a long way to reach the village. It is best to wait for high tide to go in the annex.

C) Points of interest: -The village is threatened by the sea and by rainwater which can flood it. Houses line the single sandy street. Moraingy (Malagasy boxing) shows are often organized.

- The ancient Merina Fort was located on a 139 meter hill which is marked on maps. A path provides access to the hill.

BERANGOMENA POINT

This bay is well sheltered. There is a small village.

A) Access: You must enter when the sun is high in the sky. There are corals southwest of Point Berangomena and on either side of the channel. You should favor the northwest bank (No. 129).

B) We anchor before the village in 10 meters of water. The bottom is muddy and in good condition.

PORT RADAMA

The bay is 15 miles long. It is cluttered with rocks and sandbanks. Since we have an adventurous spirit (and a dinghy), we explored this bay.

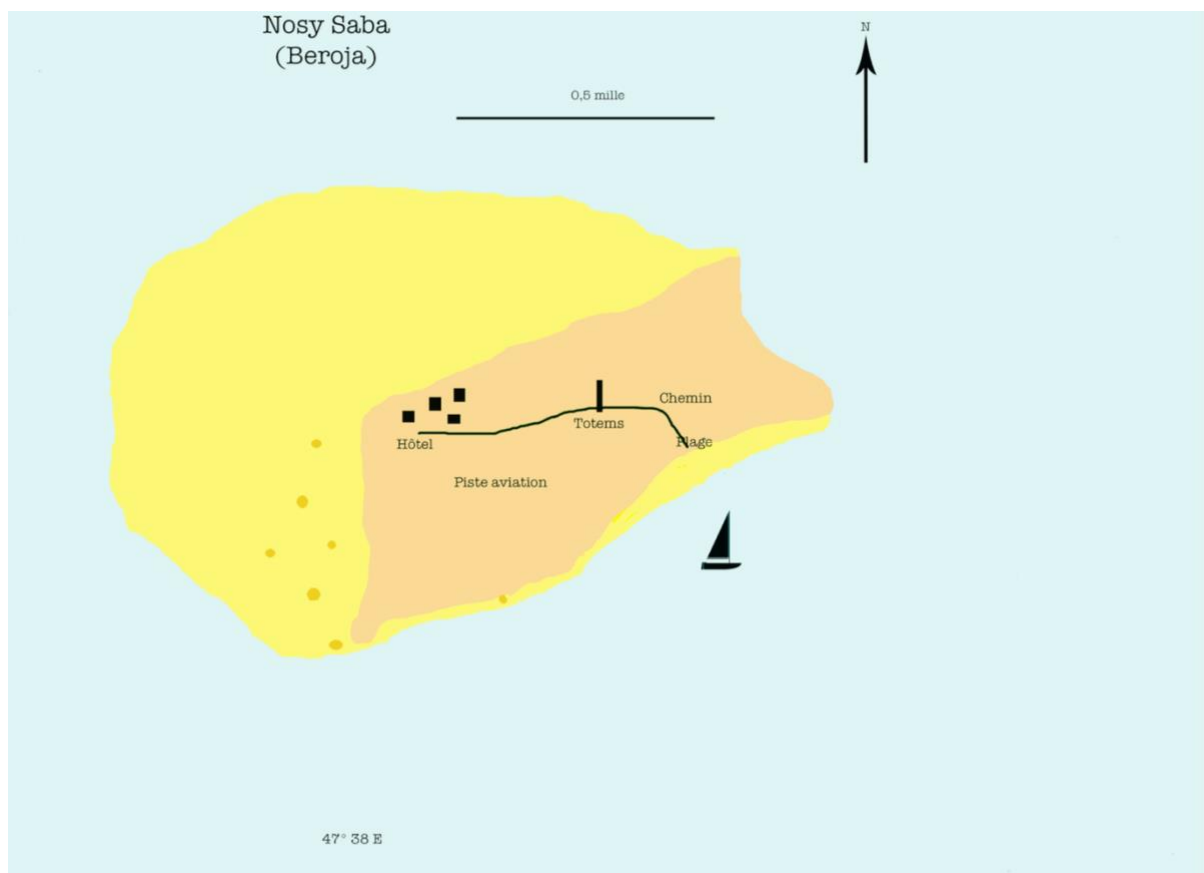
- North of the Radama peninsula (Several Merina kings who bore this name) there is a bay surrounded by mangrove (No. 142) We entered at high tide. There is a bar. Once you cross the narrows, you find 10 meters of water. The current is strong. The bay is vast. It dries up largely at low tide. The Anjoro village is located on the eastern tip. You can go up on a hill and have a nice view of the surroundings.

At high tide, we walk in a tender in the bay. The birds are numerous.

To the east of the entrance, we see a large fish park. The Malagasy name is valakira. It forms a vast funnel in which the fish are trapped. This traditional fishing requires the cooperation of the entire village for construction and maintenance.

-We entered the Bérandra river (No. 148). At high tide, on the bar, there is 3 meters of water. After the narrows, the depths exceed ten meters. We are sheltered from all the winds. You can go up (in annex) the Berandra River for more than 5 miles. Large crocodiles (No. 43) live here. Few people live near the river. We don't know if the two things are related! Going up the delta, we saw a wharf. A vahaza lived here, was attacked and seriously injured... There are sapphire mines and cannabis plantations. We are far from everything. Nature is intact. We didn't disembark but we saw flowers, birds, reptiles.

NOSY SABA



Nosy Saba is a Hotel Island (No. 147). The setting is enchanting: airstrip, swimming pool, white sand beaches, turquoise waters, spacious bungalows, SPA... The 4 columns decorated with a zebu can be seen from afar.

The hotel is operating again in 2014.

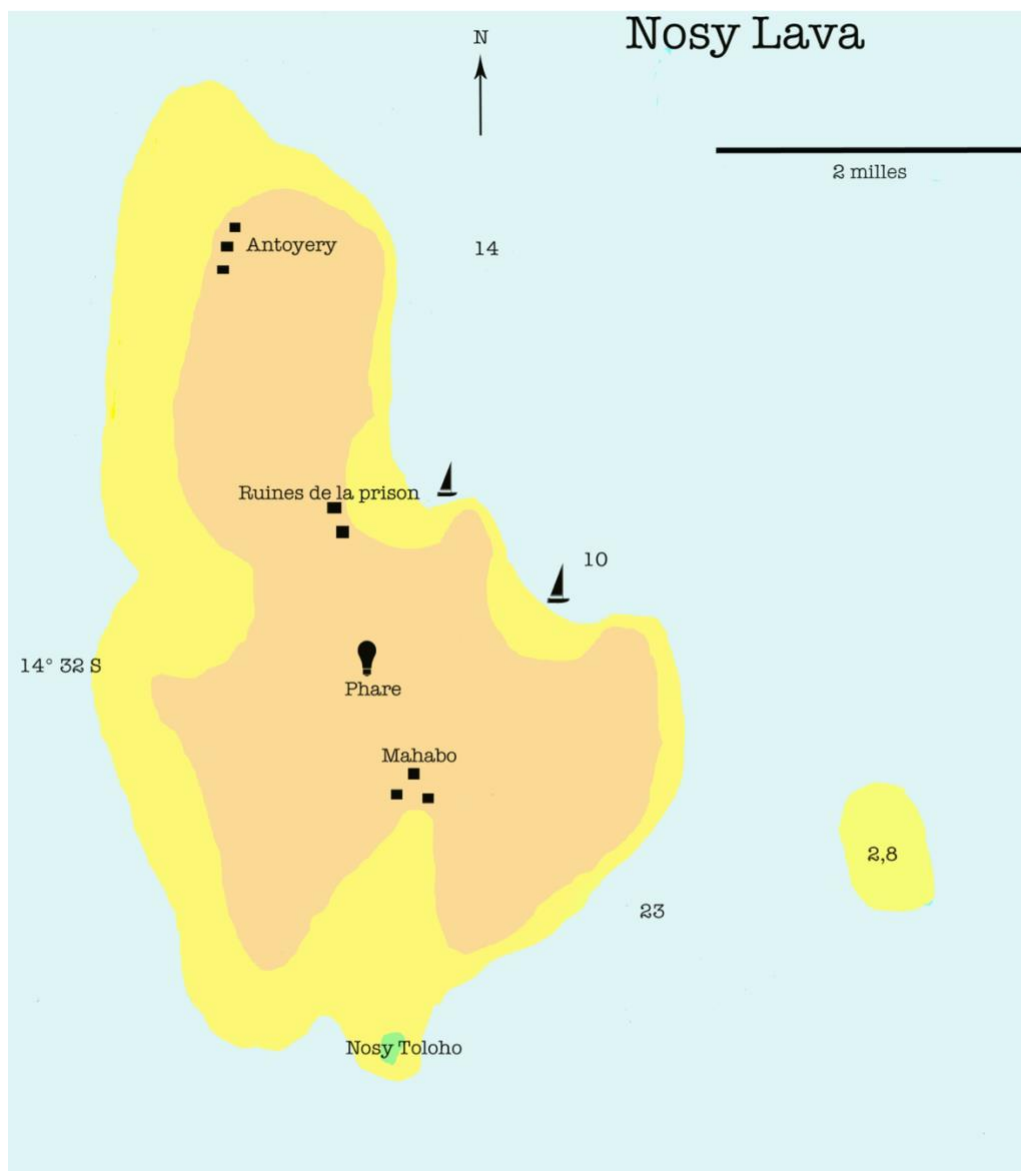
Access is easy. Fossil coral mushrooms emerge to the west and northwest. We anchor in front of the beach to the southeast. The funds are going down quickly. Shelter is not good with certain winds.

From the beach, you follow a path which takes you to the columns and then to the hotel buildings. We go along a pond. Guinea fowl wander in the countryside. We were made very welcome by the staff.

The funds to the south are absolutely beautiful with clear water. Spearfishing and diving are famous.

Nosy Saba is arid. But we can see some pretty plants. We admired an orchid (*Cynorchis fastigiata*), sisals (*Agava sisalana*) and other flowers.

The rocks along the beach sparkle like gold. Several sailors thought they were getting rich!



NOSY LAVA (N°146)

During colonization and after independence, Nosy Lava was a high security prison. After the 1947 rebellion, it housed elected representatives of the Assembly of Deputies. After the student revolt of 1972, it was academics and artists who were incarcerated. Old nautical guides speak of sailboats attacked by prisoners wishing to escape.

The prison has been closed for ten years. You can anchor and walk around without risk. You can anchor in two locations: in front of the ruins of the prison or further south in the shelter of the eastern point.

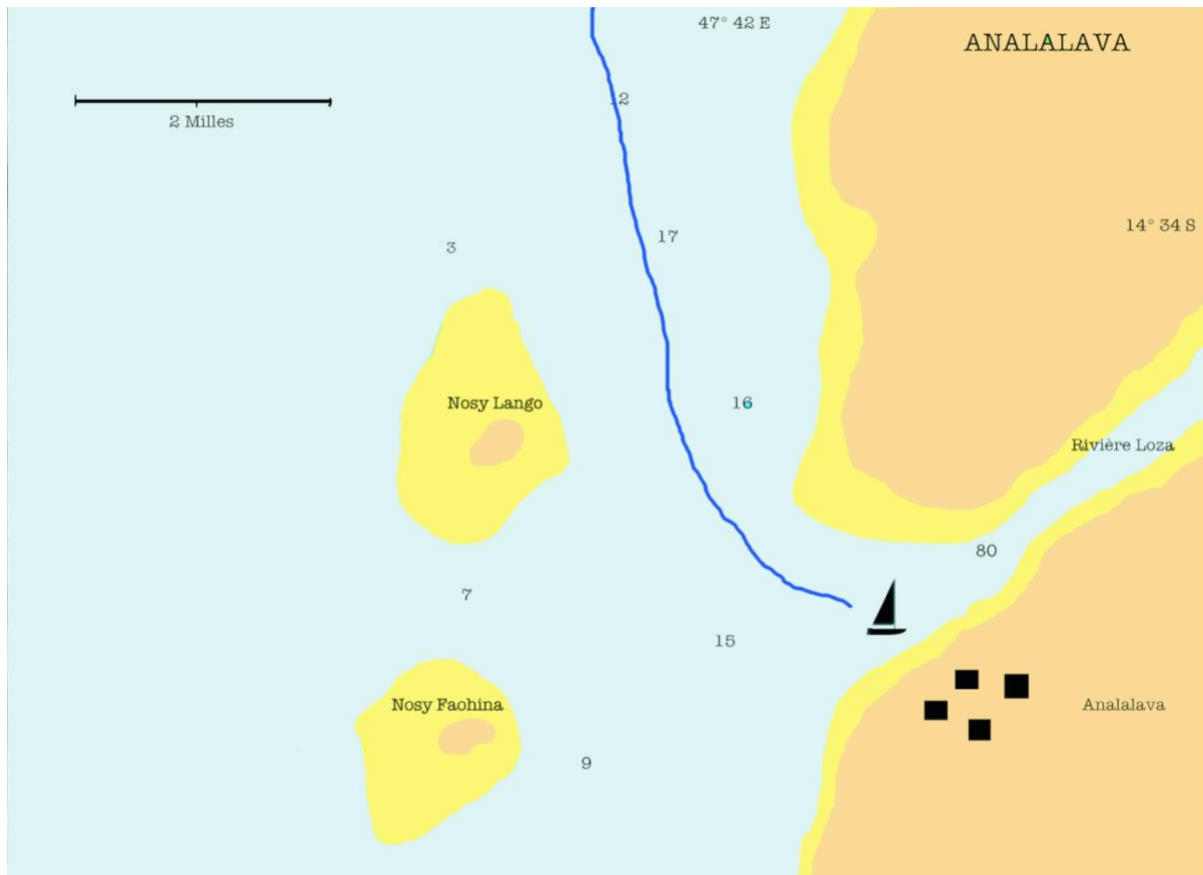
The trade winds (varatraza) can blow very strongly (40 knots). The southeast anchorage is then the least turbulent. He is also the only one possible! The bay in front of the prison is partly drying up. You have to anchor far away and the shelter is poor in strong winds.

We sought to protect ourselves in front of the northwest village. The anchorage is too far from the coast to be calm.

Points of interest:

- The ruins of the penal colony are impressive. The registry offices are well preserved. Living conditions, in the stifling heat, must have been terrible. Prisoners died there and there is a cemetery. It was desecrated in 2013 by skeleton thieves. Recently the roof of some buildings collapsed and masses of administrative papers flew away (marital status of certain prisoners for example!).
- Vegetation is rare. Only the southern end is fertile. You can see rice fields, fields of food crops and zebus there.
- You absolutely must visit the lighthouse. It was trashed. In 2014 the lower sheets were dismantled. But we have a superb view of the surroundings. The guard buildings still exist. We can see the cistern which provided a water reserve.
- From the lighthouse we saw a deep bay on the west coast. It is worth a walking tour.
- From the southern anchorage, you can take a path that goes to the village at the southern tip. It takes a good two hours of walking. The village is located at the bottom of a bay surrounded by mangroves. There is a mahabo (royal tomb). On certain occasions, tromba come together and take care of the maintenance of the tomb. It's party time in the village. As always, you must respect the fady: you must remove your shoes. Men must wear a lamba. You have to urinate outside the village. Photos of the mahabo are prohibited. We enter the village with our right foot first. You should not point with your index finger at a person, an object or the mahabo.

You can anchor the boat near Nosy Toloho and go to this village as an annex.



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ANALALAVA

Ananalava is located at the mouth of the Loza River.

- A) Access: Coming from the north we prefer to pass between the land and Nosy Lango. Some pass between Nosy Faohina and Nosy Lango, being careful because the pass is not very wide and is not marked.
- B): We anchor 500 meters from the bank. If the wind is strong, an unpleasant chop appears.
- C): Points of interest: -The village is small. Grocery stores only provide the essentials. A market allows you to buy vegetables and fruits. There is a butcher's shop.
- Analalava was once very frequented by schooners going up the Loza to arrive at Antsohihy. Competition from the road has made this traffic rarer and the port of Antsohihy is now completely asleep.
 - You can go up the river to Antsohihy, with a non-keelboat sailboat.
 - A nature reserve is located not far from the village.

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Diving near the southern tip is interesting.

It is not easy to explore the interior. The thorn trees are numerous, the vegetation is dense and the scratching hair (*Mucuna pruriens*) is very annoying. There are a few river beds (without water in the dry season). They allow you to explore part of the island. It is easier to walk along the bank.

Leaving the village, a steep path provides access to the plateau. Large rocks dominate the anchorage. The view is splendid. It rewards the efforts made.

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59

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Valiha is bamboo in Malagasy. A musical instrument bears this name. We anchor in the southeast of the island. The bottom is sand. The depth is 6 to 15 meters. The beach is beautiful.

5) Anorotsangana. Rafalahy Bay

This city was formerly called Sada (Fortress in Swahili). It was an important scale of the Antalaotra. It was pillaged and burned in 1506 by the Portuguese squadron of Tristan de Cunha. The city does not seem to have risen from its ashes. It should be noted that there is Pointe Sada in Baly Bay and a town of the same name in Mayotte. In 1825, Andriantsoly, the last Sakalava king took refuge here. With the help of the Antalaotra, he rebuilt his forces and won a battle. But in 1826 he was defeated again and the village burned. In 1850 the Merina built a fort which would have sheltered up to 1500 men. It was a strategic point for access to the north. Archaeological excavations have not found the ancient city of Sada. It is likely that the ruins are, today, at the bottom of the sands of the bay. The sea is gaining on the land. 20 years ago the shops of a karana and a mosque were visible at the water's edge. Nothing remains of it. During our last visit we were looking for pottery shards. The children brought us several buckets of recent pieces of plates, bowls, pottery and porcelain.

A) Access: From Kakakajoro, you have to go around the Vaudreuil bank from the north. The water is often cloudy and the school is barely visible. It is renowned for its richness in lobsters. You must stay away from the north bank. Sand banks overflow widely (No. 138).

B) Anchorage. We anchor in 8 meters of water. We are therefore more than a mile from the coast. We can only stay in the morning because the bay is rough with the talio. At low tide, you have to walk a long way to reach the village. It is best to wait for high tide to go in the annex.

C) Points of interest: -The village is threatened by the sea and by rainwater which can flood it. Houses line the single sandy street. Moraingy (Malagasy boxing) shows are often organized.

- The ancient Merina Fort was located on a 139 meter hill which is marked on maps. A path provides access to the hill.

BERANGOMENA POINT

This bay is well sheltered. There is a small village.

A) Access: You must enter when the sun is high in the sky. There are corals southwest of Point Berangomena and on either side of the channel. You should favor the northwest bank (No. 129).

B) We anchor before the village in 10 meters of water. The bottom is muddy and in good condition.

PORT RADAMA

The bay is 15 miles long. It is cluttered with rocks and sandbanks. Since we have an adventurous spirit (and a dinghy), we explored this bay.

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- North of the Radama peninsula (Several Merina kings who bore this name) there is a bay surrounded by mangrove (No. 142) We entered at high tide. There is a bar. Once you cross the narrows, you find 10 meters of water. The current is strong. The bay is vast. It dries up largely at low tide. The Anjoro village is located on the eastern tip. You can go up on a hill and have a nice view of the surroundings.

At high tide, we walk in a tender in the bay. The birds are numerous.

To the east of the entrance, we see a large fish park. The Malagasy name is valakira. It forms a vast funnel in which the fish are trapped. This traditional fishing requires the cooperation of the entire village for construction and maintenance.

-We entered the Bérandra river (No. 148). At high tide, on the bar, there is 3 meters of water. After the narrows, the depths exceed ten meters. We are sheltered from all the winds. You can go up (in annex) the Berandra River for more than 5 miles. Large crocodiles (No. 43) live here. Few people live near the river. We don't know if the two things are related! Going up the delta, we saw a wharf. A vahaza lived here, was attacked and seriously injured...There are sapphire mines and cannabis plantations. We are far from everything. Nature is intact. We didn't disembark but we saw flowers, birds, reptiles.

NOSY SABA

Nosy Saba is a Hotel Island (No. 147). The setting is enchanting: airstrip, swimming pool, white sand beaches, turquoise waters, spacious bungalows, SPA... The 4 columns decorated with a zebu can be seen from afar.

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The hotel is operating again in 2014.

Access is easy. Fossil coral mushrooms emerge to the west and northwest. We anchor in front of the beach to the southeast. The funds are going down quickly. Shelter is not good with certain winds.

From the beach, you follow a path which takes you to the columns and then to the hotel buildings. We go along a pond. Guinea fowl wander in the countryside. We were made very welcome by the staff.

The funds to the south are absolutely beautiful with clear water. Spearfishing and diving are famous.

Nosy Saba is arid. But we can see some pretty plants. We admired an orchid (*Cynorchis fastigiata*), sisals (*Agava sisalana*) and other flowers.

The rocks along the beach sparkle like gold. Several sailors thought they were getting rich!

NOSY LAVA (N°146)

During colonization and after independence, Nosy Lava was a high security prison. After the 1947 rebellion, it housed elected representatives of the Assembly of Deputies. After the student revolt of 1972, it was academics and artists who were incarcerated. Old nautical guides speak of sailboats attacked by prisoners wishing to escape.

The prison has been closed for ten years. You can anchor and walk around without risk. You can anchor in two locations: in front of the ruins of the prison or further south in the shelter of the eastern point.

The trade winds (varatraza) can blow very strongly (40 knots). The southeast anchorage is then the least turbulent. He is also the only one possible! The bay in front of the prison is partly drying up. You have to anchor far away and the shelter is poor in strong winds.

We sought to protect ourselves in front of the northwest village. The anchorage is too far from the coast to be calm.

Points of interest:

- The ruins of the penal colony are impressive. The registry offices are well preserved. Living conditions, in the stifling heat, must have been terrible. Prisoners died there and there is a cemetery. It was desecrated in 2013 by skeleton thieves. Recently the roof of some buildings collapsed and masses of administrative papers flew away (marital status of certain prisoners for example!).

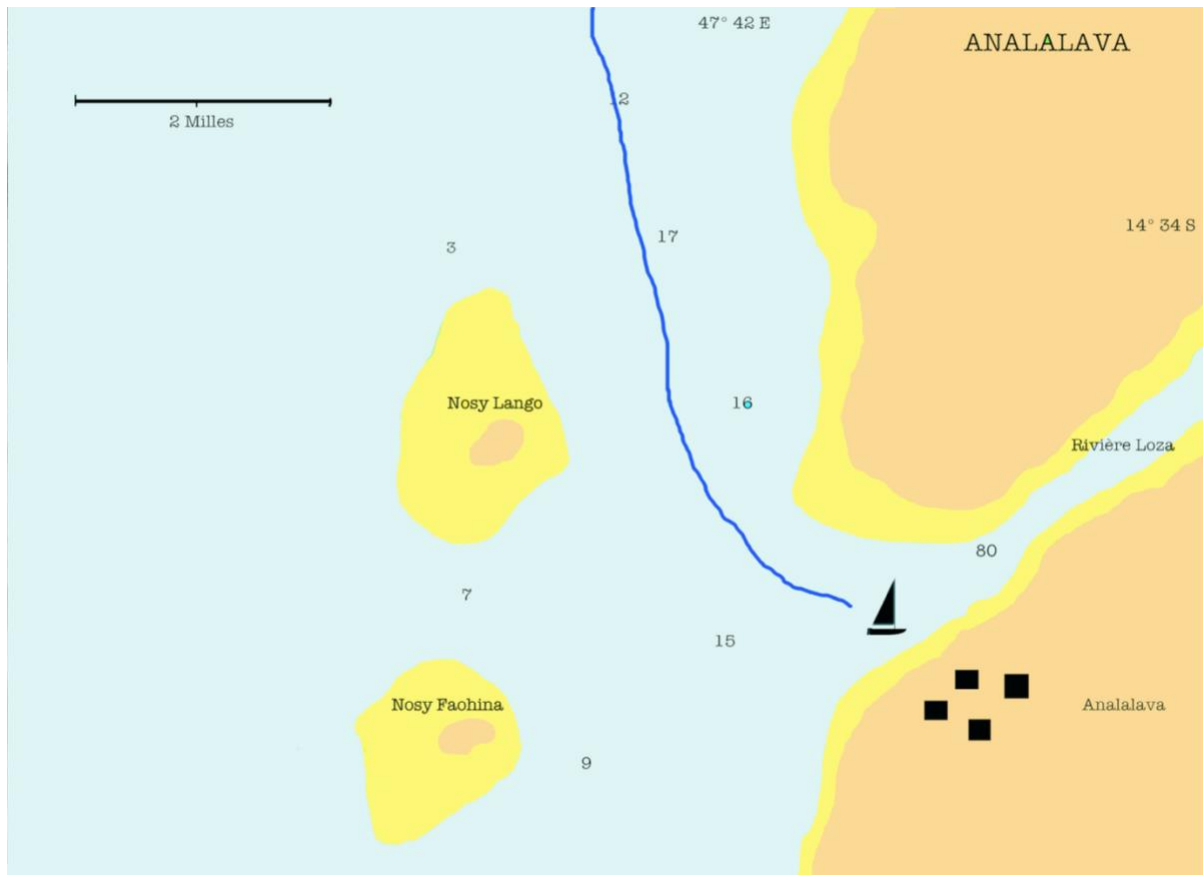
- Vegetation is rare. Only the southern end is fertile. You can see rice fields, fields of food crops and zebus there.

- You absolutely must visit the lighthouse. It was trashed. In 2014 the lower sheets were dismantled. But we have a superb view of the surroundings. The guard buildings still exist. We can see the cistern which provided a water reserve.

- From the lighthouse we saw a deep bay on the west coast. It is worth a walking tour.

- From the southern anchorage, you can take a path that goes to the village at the southern tip. It takes a good two hours of walking. The village is located at the bottom of a bay surrounded by mangroves. There is a mahabo (royal tomb). On certain occasions, tromba come together and take care of the maintenance of the tomb. It's party time in the village. As always, you must respect the fady: you must remove your shoes. Men must wear a lamba. You have to urinate outside the village. Photos of the mahabo are prohibited. We enter the village with our right foot first. You should not point with your index finger at a person, an object or the mahabo.

You can anchor the boat near Nosy Toloho and go to this village as an annex.



ANALALAVA

Ananalava is located at the mouth of the Loza River.

A) Access: Coming from the north we prefer to pass between the land and Nosy Lango.

Some pass between Nosy Faohina and Nosy Lango, being careful because the pass is not very wide and is not marked.

B): We anchor 500 meters from the bank. If the wind is strong, an unpleasant chop appears.

C): Points of interest: -The village is small. Grocery stores only provide the essentials. A market allows you to buy vegetables and fruits. There is a butcher's shop.

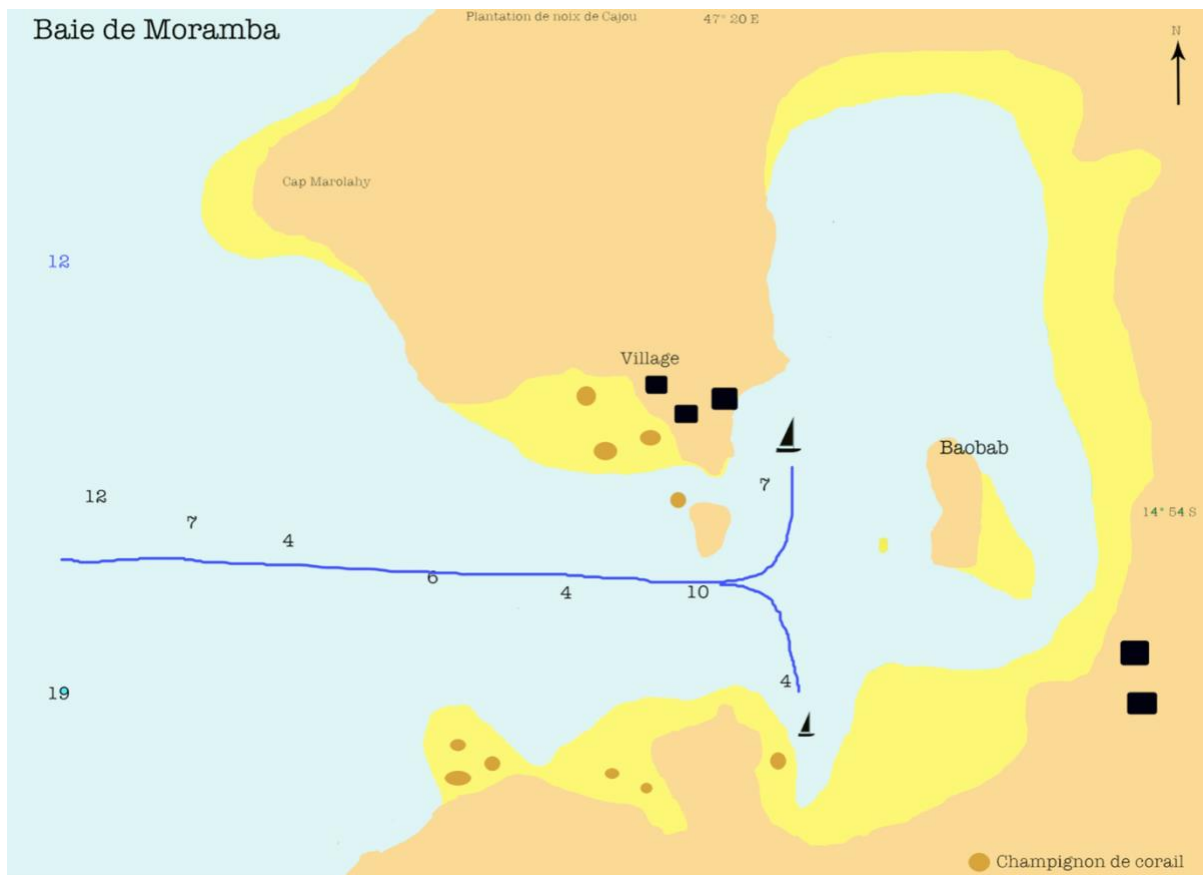
- Ananalava was once very frequented by schooners going up the Loza to arrive at Antsohihy. Competition from the road has made this traffic rarer and the port of Antsohihy is now completely asleep.

- You can go up the river to Antsohihy, with a non-keelboat sailboat.

-A nature reserve is located not far from the village.

NARINDRY BAY

We have never sailed in this bay. When the east wind blows, the venturi effect reinforces it all the way (it is 35 miles long). We indicate two shelters: south of Pointe Maromony and north of Pointe Vatomby.



MORAMBA BAY

We believe that it is the most beautiful site between Cap d'Ambre and Cap Saint André (No. 145). The varatraza can be strong, but the shelters are good. The large baobabs and coral mushrooms (No. 84) form a magnificent setting. The white sand beaches are well sheltered (N°85). The fauna and flora are rich.

A) Access: You must pass halfway between the north and south banks. There is at least 3.5 meters of water. The current is sometimes sensitive. The water is cloudy.

B) Anchorages:

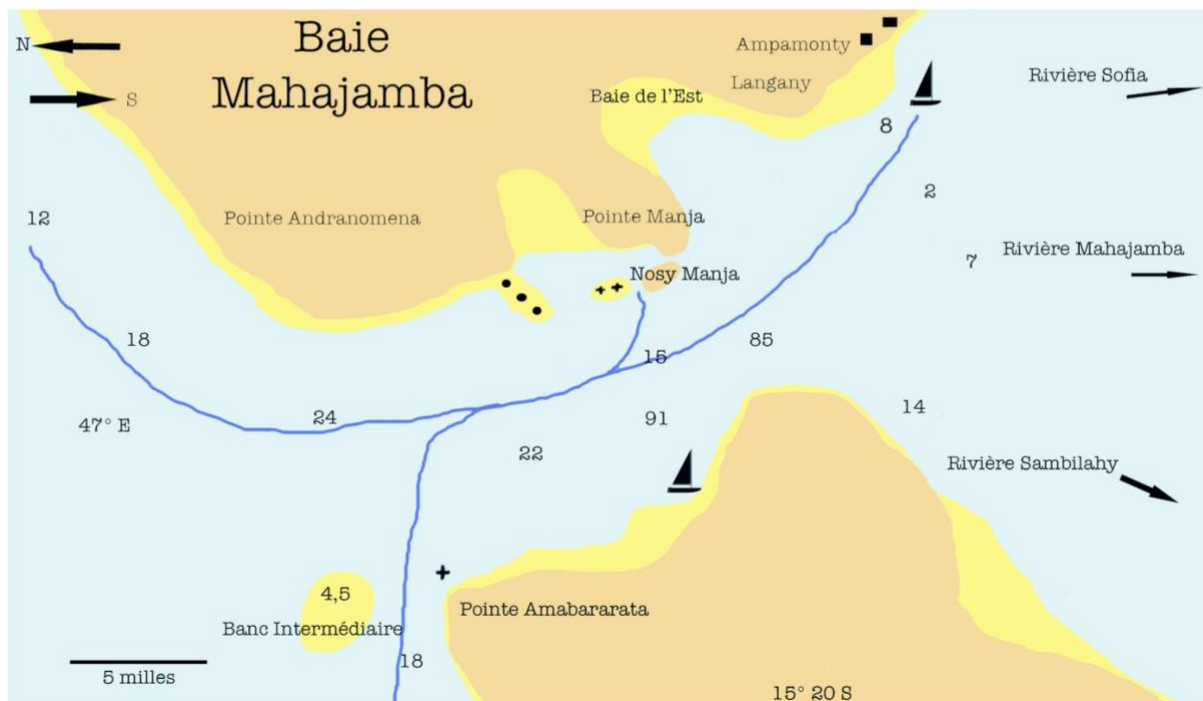
- The busiest is to the north with six meters of water.
- Shallow draft boats anchor between the islet and the north shore. Space is really limited.
- We like the one in the south. The background is not holding up well.

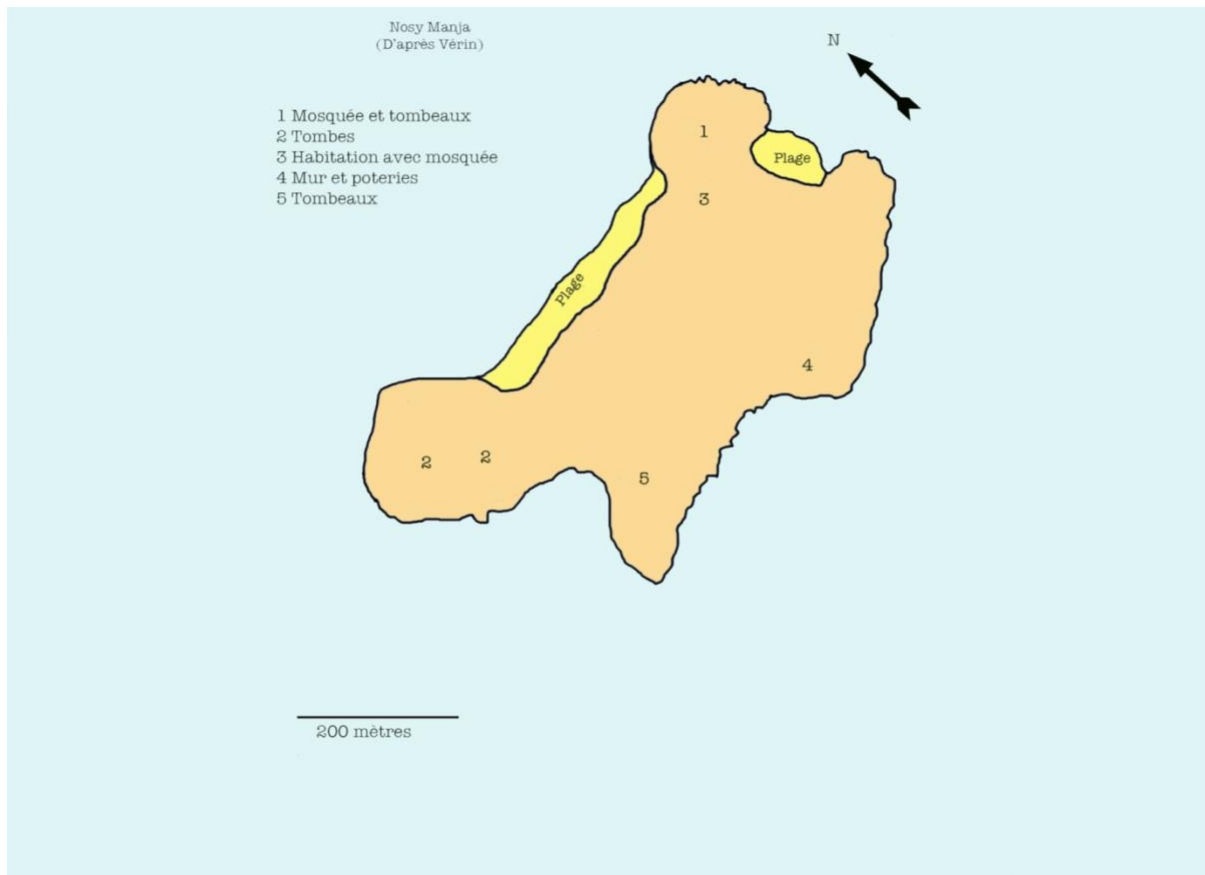
C) Points of interest:

- The fauna is varied. Lemurs (No. 33 *Propithecus verreauxii*) are numerous. Their white and brown coat is beautiful. They are not very shy. Their acrobatics are fascinating. The avian fauna is varied: parrot (N°12 *Coracopsis vaza*), ankoay fishing eagle in Madagascar (N°10 *Haliocerus vociferoides*), heron (*Ardea cinerea*), coucal (N°32 *Centropus toulou*), sunbird (*Nectarinia notata*), Artamia de Chabert (No. 23 *Leptopterus chaberti*) etc.
- The flora is diverse. The baobabs are the most spectacular. They are everywhere, majestic, enigmatic. On the islet located to the east of the bay, you can see an astonishing

specimen. A horizontal branch has a phallic appearance (No. 83). At its foot, we saw offerings (probably from sterile women or men!). This baobab died of drought in 2013

- We cannot list the dozens of plant species that are visible. Examples include *Amorphophallus taurostigma*, *Crinum firmifolium*, *Marsdenia verrucosa*, *Ochna ciliata*, *Rhodocolea nobilis*, *Sclerocarya birrea*, *Unkarina ankaranensis* etc.
- A shrimp hatchery is located south of Cape Marolahy. There is an airstrip. Any visit is prohibited.
- There is a large cashew nut plantation (*Anacardium ouest*) to the north of the village.
- This village does not offer any resources. On the other hand, near the northern anchorage, Brigitte is trying to open a lodge. We saw several ancient burials on the fossil coral islets.
- On the south shore, there are several hotels. Their fast hulls bring tourists to visit the bay. There is even an airstrip.
- A primary forest is located on the isthmus which separates Narindri Bay from Moramba Bay.





MAHAJAMBA BAY (N°143)

From 1400 until around 1800, the bay experienced great nautical and commercial activity. Old maps called it Old Masselage. Langany and Nosy Manja were the main towns. Relations were with the African coast, the Comoros and India. Rice, cattle, copal, mangrove wood and slaves were the export products. Luxury objects were imported (Chinese pottery, fabrics, perfume).

In 1506, a Portuguese fleet sacked Nosy Manja.

It will recover from its ruins but the arrival of the Europeans disrupted trade in the Indian Ocean.

In the 18th century, the Antalaotras suffered the invasion of the Sakalaves. Once again the cities are pillaged. Trade picks up for a while. The Antalaotra became the obligatory intermediaries between the Sakalave Kings and the Europeans. But the area was finally abandoned in favor of the Nouveau Masselage (Boina Bay). Nosy Manja becomes Doany Manja and Sakalave warriors are buried near Muslim tombs. Today, the site remains sacred.

A): Access: Coming from the north, it is easy to enter the Bay which is wide and deep. We saw whales there. On the north coast, we see three clearly identifiable islets. Old hands report them as remarkable bitters. On the other hand, our electronic card has them forget. During periods of high water and heavy rain, a strong current is felt and the water becomes muddy.

Coming from the south, you can pass between Pointe Ambararata and the Intermediate Bank. You must take care to pass well past the rocks which overflow the Pointe.

B): -We generally anchor in front of the village of Ampamonty. You should not anchor too close to the shore.

-In calm weather, during the day and in low coefficients, you can anchor to the west of Nosy Manja, opposite the beach (No. 89). Corals exist nearby to the west. As ships did in the past, you can anchor to the south of the islet. The current is strong. The bottom is rocky. It is prudent to put a rope.

We land on the pretty beach.

- Once we anchored northeast of Nosy Manja. The bottoms are rocky and in poor condition.

- C) Points of interest: - History lovers will enjoy visiting Nosy Manja. Before the visit, it is best to contact the Ampamonty fonkontany. He served as our guide. The islet is uninhabited. Pierre Vérin excavated the site which is of great archaeological wealth. Unfortunately no preservation or enhancement work has been undertaken. The ruins are inexorably deteriorating. The most accessible are at the northern tip. The ruins of the mosque are at the edge. The mihrab is no longer visible. The locations of Chinese pottery are easily seen (No. 88). The niches where the Korans or lamps must have been located are recognizable. A little further south, we see the ruins of what was the sultan's palace (N°87). There are numerous tombs in the South and East.

Sakalava tombs are located along the southern coast.

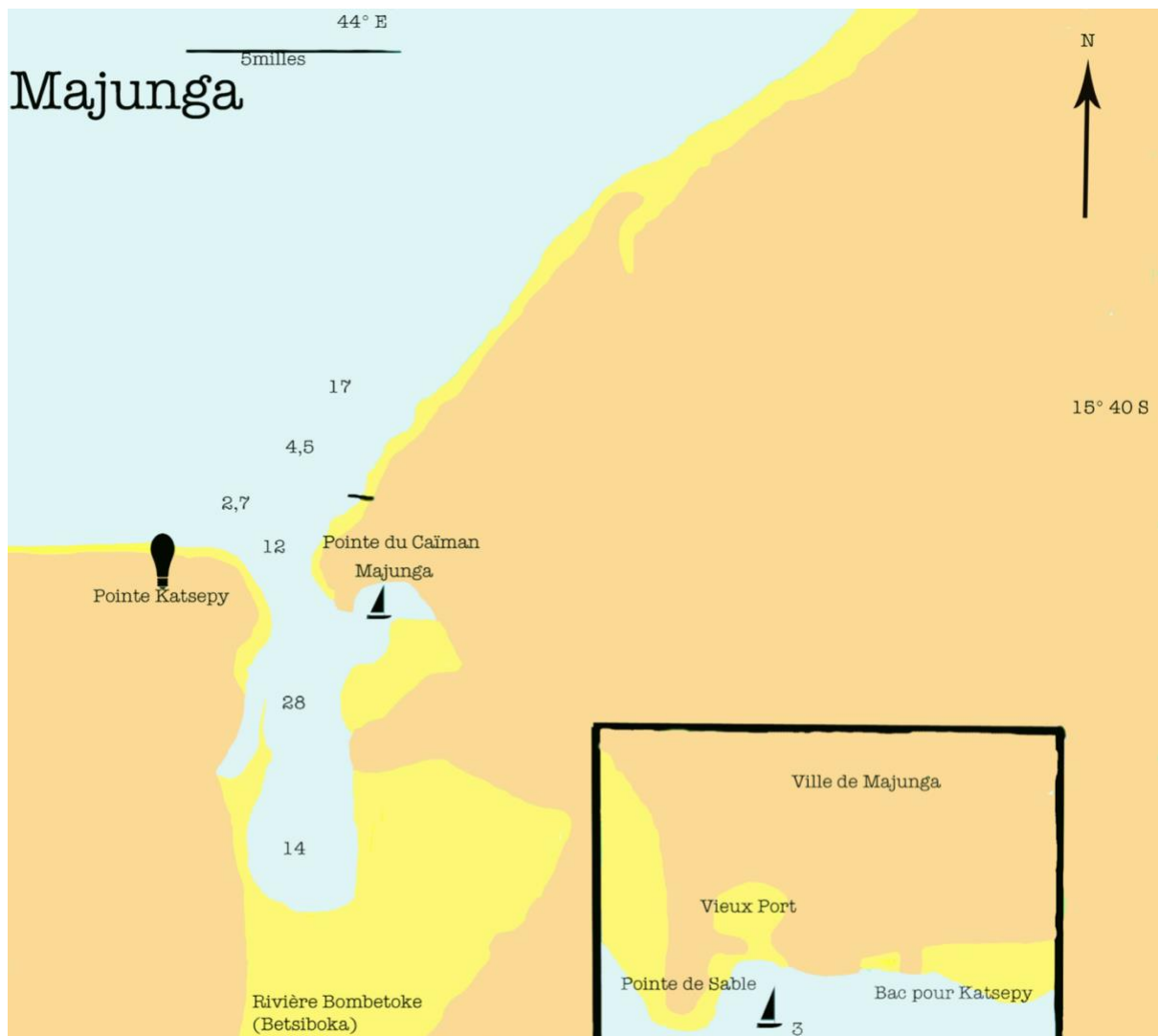
These ruins are contemporary with Kilwa. They don't have the magnificence. They are what remains of the brilliant Swahili civilization. The language is still spoken across much of Africa. The languages of the Comoros are its heirs.

- To visit the Langany site, you must take a guide. The annex goes up a river bordered by mangroves. The ruins are less spectacular than at Nosy Manja (No. 86).

- Three large rivers flow to the east of Mahajamba Bay (Sofia, Mahajamba, Sambilahy).

Huge shrimp breeding ponds are located at the mouth of the Mahajamba. Having to transport a seriously burned little girl, we went up the river. It is perfectly navigable and a large barge connects with Majunga. Alas, visitors are unwelcome....

In 2014 the company was closed due to shrimp disease



MAJUNGA BAY

We do not recommend anchoring at Majunga due to the insecurity currently reigning there. However, the city and its region are interesting to visit.

The Malagasy name is Mahajanga (which is healthy and robust). The origin of the word is complex. In Arabic M'jiongaya means city of flowers. Moudjiwa angaya means city of flowers in Swahili. The city is located at the mouth of the Betsiboka, a powerful river. It once went up to Marovoay.

The city was founded by the Sakalaves and the Antalaotra. For sailors it was Bombetoka.

The harbor was easier to access than Boina Bay. By 1750 the town had surpassed in importance the town of Marovay (where there are many crocodiles), the transitional capital of the Sakalaves. She also welcomed refugees from Nosy Antsoheribory.

The city was conquered by the Merina in 1831.

In 1895 the French made it the disembarkation port for troops who invaded Madagascar to colonize it.

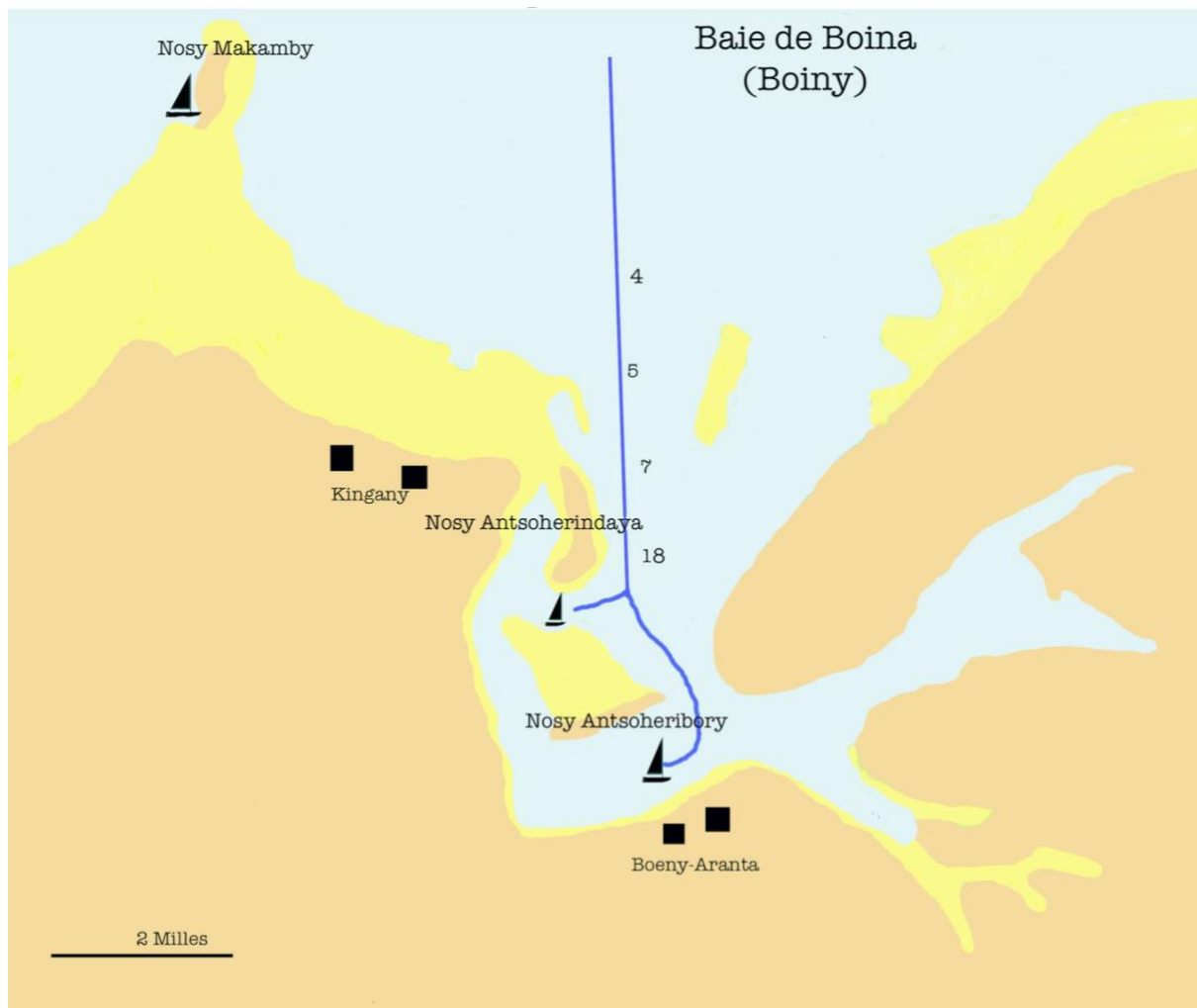
In 1942, the English bombed and occupied Majunga

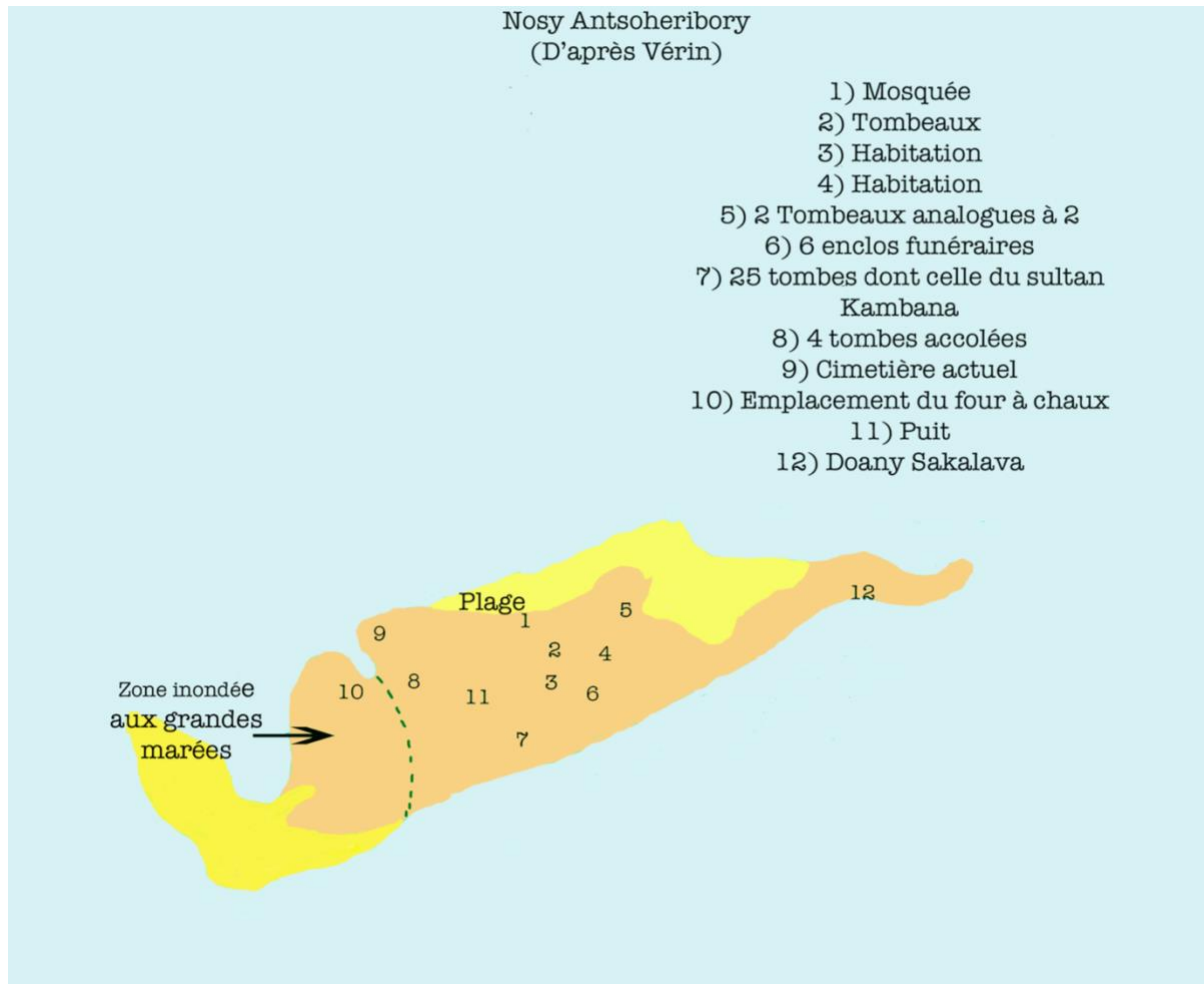
In 1976 riots between the Comorians and the Malagasy caused a thousand deaths and required the evacuation of the Comorians (Sabena).

Centers of interest:

- Majunga is a port of entry. You can therefore complete Customs and Police formalities there. - Majunga is the seaside town of Antananarivo.
- It is a very active port. In the dhow port we see multicolored schooners (N°94). The commercial port welcomes trawlers, cargo ships, barges, the ferry which goes to Katsepy - Near the Jirama factory, iron from cargo ships is recovered using antediluvian means! -The rickshaws (No. 92) are a convenient and picturesque means of transport.
- The Red Circus, to the north of the city, is a geological curiosity with rocks of different colors (N°90).
- The giant baobab is spectacular ((N°93).
- The visit to the Mozéa Akiba Museum is very enriching.
- You can go up to the old Merina fort which overlooks the bay.
- Lovers of Sakalava civilization can go see the doany.
- The choice of cafes and restaurants is vast. The market is lively (N°91).
- Marovoay retains (for a short time) vestiges of its past. Sculpted doors like those of Zanzibar bear witness to Swahili influence
- Ankarafantsika National Park is not far away.

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BOINA BAY (BOENY)

A visit to this bay will interest history and archeology lovers. Ella has long been known as Nouveau Masselage. Vérin explored the ruins. He reconstructed its history.

The antalaotra had established a powerful ladder in this bay. The island of Antsoheribory seemed easy to defend. The bay was well sheltered. The villages around the bay made it possible to trade with the Malagasy people. A lookout post monitored the surroundings at Nosy Makamby. Several thousand people lived in the area at the height of its power. There are several written accounts describing life in Boina Bay. The Portuguese Jesuit Mariano gives valuable information on the diversity of populations, on trade...

As in Nosy Manja, the Sakalava expansion will profoundly modify the nature of the relationships between the Islamists and the new victors. Andriamandisoarivo imposed its suzerainty on the city in 1680.

The slave trade will become predominant. Visits from European ships are becoming more and more numerous. It is a source of historical information.

The bay gradually lost its importance in the 18th century in favor of Majunga Bay. The reasons are diverse: better accessibility for deep draft vessels, proximity to the Sakalava capital at Marovoay...

The town was deserted in 1750.

A) Access: The bay is shallow. Coral and sand banks clutter it because the Androhibe river flows into it (No. 141).

You must present yourself at point 15° 43.00 S; 45° 59. 500 E., midday. We head for the south-eastern end of Nosy Antsoherindaya. There is at least 4 meters of water.

B) Anchorages: - you can anchor between Nosy Antsoherindaya and the sandbanks located to the northwest of Nosy Antsoheribory.

- the other possibility is south of Nosy Antsoheribory.

C) Points of interest: - Nosy Antsoheribory measures 2.5 kilometers long and 500 meters wide. It is low. Vegetation is rare. We can see the ruins of a mosque, two notable houses and 45 tombs. Some are very large (N°97-N°98). One of them had a dome.

The inhabitants' houses were mainly built of plants. For the Malagasy, the stone has long been dedicated to the dead.

We have reproduced the location of the ruins on a sketch (provided by Vérin).

Mosquitoes are very numerous and constitute a serious nuisance. You must protect yourself as best as possible (clothing, repellent).

We were disturbed by the luxury of these burials. They bear witness to the power of those who ordered them, of those who are buried there. We know the names of certain sultans.

We also thought of the thousands of slaves who passed through, who suffered and who built the tombs.

The eastern point is fady. It is a sakalava doany which is located near large baobab trees.

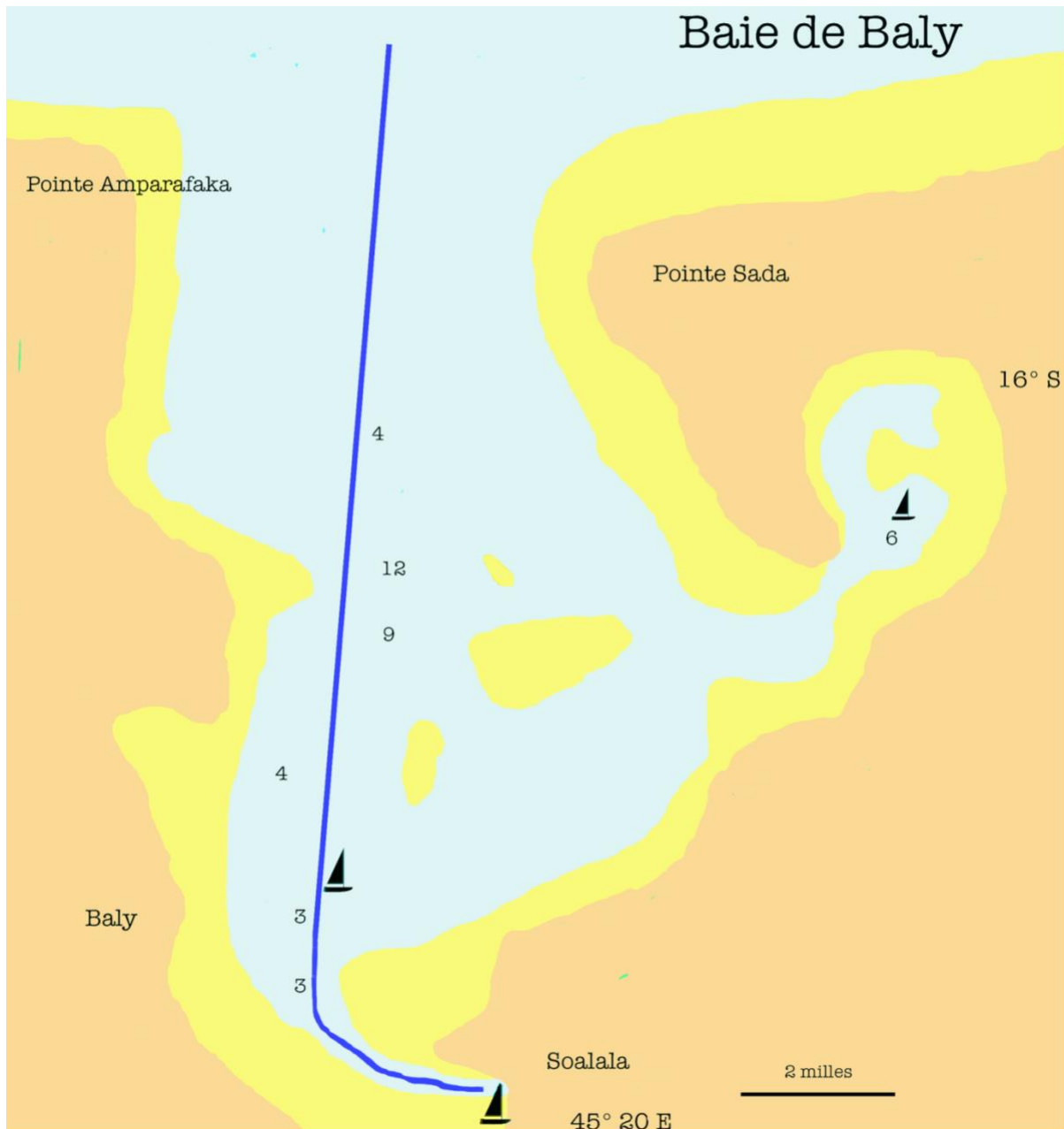
- Nosy Antsoherindaya is uninhabited because it is a vast Islamic and sakalava cemetery.

- In the west of the bay, we see the ruins of modern buildings. These are the remains of the homes of the workers of a SIRAMA factory which exploited sugar cane.

- The fishing village of Boeny Aranta is located south of Nosy Antsoheribory. It keeps the Islamic imprint.

- Visiting the ruins of Kingany requires almost a day. At high tide you can pass, in annex, between Nosy Antsoherindaya and the land. You then have to walk along the beach. The ruins extend over a large area, in a wooded area. A guide is essential. There are tombs with Islamic wings (No. 95), mosques. A tomb is unique in Madagascar: it houses the remains of a sultan and is decorated with an octagonal pillar identical to those of tombs on the east coast of Africa. Pottery shards abound as in Nosy Antsoheribory.

- You can anchor during the day to the west of Nosy Makamby. At the top of the hill there are the ruins of a house with several openings. It was used to monitor the surroundings. The excavations revealed other witnesses of the human presence. Nowadays, it is reduced to a fishing camp. A well provides muddy water. The island also interests other scientists. It arose from the sea a long time ago, pushed by tectonic forces. The animals that inhabited the bottom have become fossils and visible in the open air. They are interesting to study. It should be noted that dinosaur fossils have been found near Majunga. We find in Madagascar what are called subfossils. These animals disappeared shortly after the arrival of man (Aepyornyx, Dwarf Hippopotamus for example).



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BALY BAY

In 1853 a Catholic mission was established in the bay. The instigators believe that the protection of King Sakalava Raboky and the naval forces of Mayotte is sufficient. This Mission had a difficult life and was abandoned in 1859.

The bay had become a recruiting port for "indentured labor" for Nosy Bé and Réunion. Several revolts took place on ships.

The battles between the Merina and Sakalava troops were violent. Today's peaceful bay was once the scene of very bloody events.

As we left the bay, we saw a tornado a few miles away (No. 99). Our photos are spectacular!

A) Access: Entry is direct and easy to the anchorage opposite the village of Baly.

B) Anchorages: The bay is vast and very open to the north. With the solar breezes, the anchorage in the village of Baly is untenable in the afternoon. In addition, the distance to get to Soalala is long.

-For those who can fail, the best solution is to enter the river. We enter at high tide. We saw a large barge stranded in front of Soalala.

- Access to the third anchorage is difficult. All the maps are fake (including our sketch!). The funds are constantly changing. With our sailboat (which is a dinghy) we tried the experiment. We passed on the left part of the gully. Once crossed, we find at least 6 meters of water. The bay largely dries up at low tide (No. 140).

C) Points of interest:

- Baly Bay is a National Park. You should inquire in Soalala to organize a visit to this little-used park. It is home to the ploughshare tortoises, an endangered species. -The circular bay, located to the east (No. 140) is a paradise for bird lovers. We saw Widow Ducks (No. 21 *Dendrocygna viduata*), Dimorphic Egrets (*Egretta dimorpha*), Black Herons (*Egretta ardesiaca*), Gray Herons (*Ardea cinerea*), Melanocephalic Herons (*Ardea melanocephala*), Ardeole Dromes (N °19 *Dromas ardeola*), collared plovers (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), spoonbills (*Spatalea alba*).

- There is a shrimp hatchery. We mistook the building for a hotel. We were kindly but firmly kicked out...

CONCLUSION

We arrive at the end of our walk. It is not easy to cross Cap Saint André. The water is murky. The area is shallow and poorly mapped. There is current. The wind is strong. To go further south, it is better to go very offshore.

We had a lot of fun writing this guide. This work brought back many memories, many moments of joy, and some struggles too. We wish our readers happy sailing and worry-free vacations. We hope this guide will help a little.

Before closing, we would like to mention two people who described the same navigation area.

The first is the Jesuit Mariano, a Portuguese. He recounted in detail the exploration of the west coast of Madagascar in 1610. This account can be read in the works of Grandidier Père et Fils (COACM).

The other was written by Mr. Barat de la Jesse in 1943. This gentleman first modernized a dhow which had made the India Nosy Bé connection (for example by equipping it with gaff rigging). He then traveled the Mozambique Channel. This book is full of humor.

We are sailing in the wake of thousands of other boats. We benefit from the experience of our elders and we must never forget it.

Finally, let us cite one of the thousands of Malagasy proverbs: *Fitia mifamaly mahatsara ny fihavanana* (Reciprocal friendship develops harmony).

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