

# SAYA DE MALHA DAILY

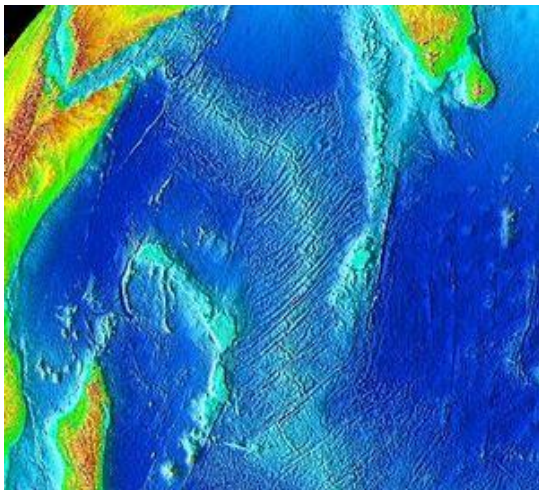
A Newsletter by Dominique and François



N°11, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022

## Where are we ?

East of Saya de Malha, Box 3  
10.43° South 62.12° East  
Overcast to Sunny Weather, Calm Seas,  
Wind 9.14 Knots  
Air Temperature 26°9  
Water Temperature 26°9



## Geology

The Saya de Malha Bank was formed 35 million years ago from the Réunion hotspot and is composed of basaltic basal rock overlaid with limestone. The limestone banks found on the plateau are the remnants of coral reefs. Millions of years ago, the Saya de Malha Bank was a mountainous volcanic island, similar to present-day Mauritius and Réunion, which subsequently was submerged. Some of the Bank may have been low-lying islands as recently as 18,000-6,000 years ago, when sea levels were 130 m (430 ft) lower during the most recent ice age.

## What's on ?

### The Sledge

The sledge is a sampling tool designed to slide on the seafloor. It is equipped with 2 fine mesh nets (500  $\mu$ ) which open automatically on touching the seafloor. The Sledge is dragged at 0.5 knots to allow eventual larger animals to escape. The Sledge collects animals from the supra-benthos, which live near but are not attached to the seafloor. They are mostly small crustaceans of the group Peracarids, an important food source for fish and other species. A feature of this group is that females possess a brood pouch, or marsupium because of similarity with marsupial pouch in which eggs develop to pre-juvenile stage and are then released from the pouch.





## The Portrait

### Mervyn Ravitchandirane, Marine Electrical Technician, IFREMER



Mervyn was born in 1998 and raised in Concarneau, Brittany. He grew up by the sea and got to go at sea often with his grandfather. He studies for a marine electronic technician qualification focused on fisheries. He joined the French Polar Institute as an instrument technician and spent a year in Antarctica doing field work with wildlife scientists. Following a short stint with industry underwater acoustic regulatory monitoring of marine mammals, he recently joined IFREMER in Reunion. He works with an AI specialist on a citizen project to map underwater habitats, using open-source low-cost technology, which they hope to deploy on the expedition, weather permits." what I like in this expedition if the range of expertise and diversity of people on board and sharing experiences".

## Life on Board

It is celebration time on deck 7 Lounge! Mervyn turns 24 today.

