

5 From reef to forest

The more diverse the landscape is, the more varied species it supports. Ilot Maître is composed of a mosaic of habitats that are ideal for wildlife, each playing a particular ecological role.

A Reefs, an oasis of life

Built by living beings, polyps, coral reefs are the most productive and vulnerable living communities in the oceans. Along with tropical forests, they represent the most biodiverse ecosystems.

Shelter/habitat, food source, water oxygenation, coastal protection

- 1 Branching coral
- 2 Brain coral

B Seagrass beds, the green lungs of ocean

Real underwater meadows, seagrass beds are composed of delicate, slow-growing flowering plants.

Shelter/habitat, protection against coastal erosion, nursery, water oxygenation

- 3 Narrowleaf seagrass
- 4 Spoon seagrass

C The wrack line, a living environment

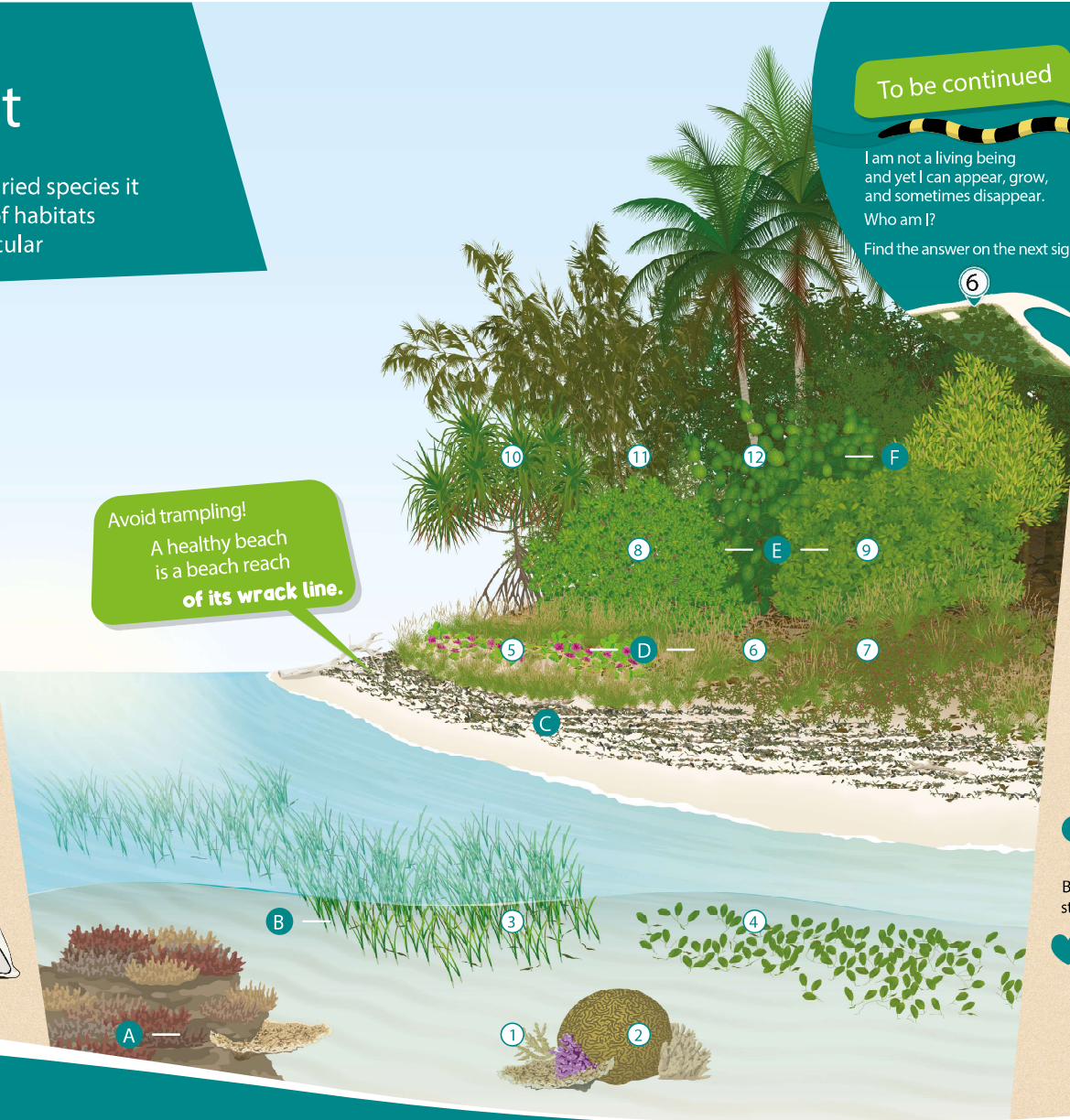
On the beach, you can observe seaweed and seagrass deposited by tide, mixed with remnants of dead animals, driftwood, shells, feathers ... and litter! These are called "wrack line".

They form an ecosystem whose ecological value has long been ignored.

Habitat, protective barrier, beach fertilization, soil stabilization



Avoid trampling!
A healthy beach is a beach reach of its wrack line.



To be continued

I am not a living being and yet I can appear, grow, and sometimes disappear. Who am I?
Find the answer on the next sign.

D Creeping coastal vegetation, a sediment trap.

The upper part of the beach is colonized by creeping vegetation exposed to sea spray and implanted in loose soil. Adapted to these constraints, the Sporobolus, the Bindweed and the Sea Purslane thrive and play multiple roles, particularly sand stabilization.

Shelter/habitat, beach stabilization, production of organic matter, sediment trap

- 5 Bindweed
- 6 Sporobolus
- 7 Sea Purslane

E Bushy coastal vegetation, a protective barrier.

These small ball-shaped shrubs create a protective barrier against sea spray and wind, allowing the establishment of plants more sensitive to these strong constraints. Growing under their shelter, these plants can become beautiful trees that constitute the heart of the islet.

Shelter/habitat, sand stabilization, production of organic matter, erosion control

- 8 Myoporum
- 9 Vepris lanceolata

F Coastal shrubs and trees, the heart of the islet

Behind the beach, sheltered from sea spray and on a more stable soil, a shrubby and arboreal vegetation settle.

Shelter / habitat, soil stabilization, production of organic matter, erosion control

- 10 Pandanus tree
- 11 Filao
- 12 Sea randa

A trail for all, under everyone's responsibility.



Illustration: © Florence Baret