



C A P E
Environment
 news about people caring for the Earth



EnviroKids

Kids Caring for the Earth

EnviroKids wins SAB Merit Award
 by Roberta Griffiths

The South African Breweries Environmentalist and Environmental Journalists awards of 2007 were held in Johannesburg, last October. EnviroKids, the junior magazine of the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa was one of five winners of a Merit Award in the Print and Internet category.

The citation reads as follows:

For nearly three decades *EnviroKids* (previously Toktokkie magazine) has strived to promote environmental awareness and education among children. It's published quarterly by the Wildlife and Environment Society of SA and plays a strong role in environmental education. It produces stimulating articles that are easily understood by first and second language readers. The magazine content is in demand by school text-book publishers and four themes have been reprinted at the request of government agencies for their own use.

Judges comments:

The judges regard the magazine as 'a real investment in the future' and believe that the presentation meets the needs of young people and is both informative and entertaining.

Acknowledgment:

The Editor, Roberta Griffiths, would like to acknowledge the dedication and support of all contributors to the magazine. This award affirms the quality of content produced by the authors, artists and photographers, as well as the production companies for layout, repro and print. My family, Alison Kelly, and the late Ginger Gray have been active supporters and contributors over the past 12 years and this is greatly appreciated.



Finally, a big thank you to all sponsors who assist us in 'promoting public participation in caring for the Earth.'

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**Newsletter of
 the Wildlife and
 Environment
 Society of
 South Africa
 (WESSA)
 Western Cape**

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Our Vision:

WESSA is a membership-based environmental organisation that promotes public participation in caring for the Earth. We embrace professionalism and sound corporate governance, fostering collaborative partnerships to succeed in our Mission. With enthusiasm and a spirit of unity, we work to achieve a South Africa that is wisely managed by all to ensure environmental sustainability.

Is this Green Leader's Brand clear?

by Steve du Toit

People who watch TV, read newspapers, have access to the internet, or listen to the radio are bombarded with vast volumes of information that, generally, has very little practical value in our lives. It is therefore increasingly important that a "brand" such as WESSA is crystal clear in terms of what we are about, so that when people hear "WESSA" their response is "hey, I need to be a part of that." Dr John Demartini notes that it is important to ensure that there is congruence and clarity in the brand, and not to sacrifice it for immediate needs.*

Renee Silverstone, C.E. of The Jupiter Drawing Room in Johannesburg states that "As for professional services firms, the critical aspect is reputation management.... Integrity is a critical value of any brand..." and that "Management is the custodian of the brand... while employees, especially customer-facing ones, own the brand experience."***

I once worked for an institution that did not have a clear vision, or brand. Management and workers alike were completely exposed to the winds of change. On joining WESSA, I was immediately "sold" on our Vision and Mission. A quick reminder (!) Our Mission is to promote public participation in caring for the Earth.

Demartini noted that one of the signs of a great leader is that they're clear about what they want to do, they are not distracted... they are focussed on the vision. This transforms the people around them and creates a great brand: "You have to have gratitude for what you're doing in your job, love what you're doing, be inspired by the vision, and have enthusiastic action if you want the company to grow." Demartini's advice to small companies is "to make sure that they communicate their vision to em-

ployees, as employees are not dedicated to companies, but to values."

WESSA, along with many membership-based NGOs has suffered from a large staff turnover and significant loss of members over the last 10 years. Some argue that society is changing, and that NGOs are no longer that important or relevant. Yet everywhere I go, people say to me well, WESSA will take up that challenge, won't it? Just as WESSA needs good leadership, so does society. WESSA must continually step up to the mark and say, "we are the leader."

Silverstone observes that a brand "is so important that all internal stakeholders (employees, management, members) and external partners (e.g. the Gouritz Initiative, CoastCare and C.A.P.E. [my examples]) have an important role to play and are custodians of different aspects to the brand."

The fundamental difference between WESSA and competing businesses is that financial gain is not our primary aim. We (employees, management and members) can strengthen the WESSA brand and thereby promote our vision and mission daily, without "competing" against other groups. In fact, only through working with like-minded organisations can we hope to make a tangible difference.

And after saying all that, I am really going to throw the cat among the pigeons and ask whether our mission is clear. Is there congruence and clarity in the WESSA brand? and What must we work on to improve the WESSA brand in the Western Cape?

(Comments from Business Times articles *8 July 2007 and **24 June 2007.)

Save energy, go black and white

Individuals at Google have seemingly calculated the energy footprint of a standard monitor displaying Google in Full Colour and have come up with a concept of saving energy. It's called Blackle. With Blackle, you can now do your searching in plain old black & white and help save energy and the planet.

By using Black & White only, Google have estimated a huge energy saving as a result, ultimately having a positive effect on our environment in terms of Carbon Emissions, etc. The colour (sorry, Black & White) setting also just so happens to be a high contrast white text on a black background, the preferred setting for many Low Vision users when reading text on screen.

Visit www.blackle.com

Staff Changes in the Region

2008 promises to be a year of change, and the year has begun with significant staff changes in the Western Cape Region. Some changes are sad and others happy, some changes are exciting and others challenging, but either way, we look forward to a constructive year. We wish everyone well in their new or revised posts.

Andy Gubb, Regional Manager for the past 17 years, has been transferred to a position with National Office. Andy will be assisting WESSA's Director of Conservation, Bryan Havemann, at a national level and will be working on conservation, legal and policy issues across WESSA's Regions. Andy will still be based in Cape Town.

Our Finance & Administration Manager, Wendy Vosloo, has resigned after 16 years at WESSA, to take up a more senior post with an international NGO, based at their Claremont head office.

Shaune Rogatschnig, our Communications Coordinator since 2006, has resigned her part-time post to be a full-time new mother for a while. Fortunately, Shaune has agreed to assist us on an out-sourced basis.



We wish Andy, Wendy and Shaune every success in their new roles, and thank them sincerely for their contributions, commitment and dedication to WESSA.

Our current staff, Patrick Dowling, Steve du Toit, Roshan Stanford, Alta Swanepoel, Maureen Ngubane and Charmaine Anderson, will be taking on new responsibilities as their posts are redefined. These changes will be reported in a future edition of Cape Environment.

Vacancies: We have new posts available for: Senior Environmentalist, Environmentalist, Education Officer, Head of Public Participation, Communications & Marketing and Regional Business Manager. In addition, we have two internships available in the conservation and education sections. Please contact Roshan at roshan@wessa.wcape.school.za for further details.

Our Patron Members and Sustainable Living

by Andy Gubb

WESSA Western Cape has two patron members Woolworths and the Rose Foundation. Both of these companies have leap-frogged ahead in the sustainability stakes to become leaders and trend-setters.

Woolworths: An impressive commitment to the environmental lies behind Woolworths' commitment to quality and customer satisfaction. Woolworths recycle their plastic hangers, their baskets and trolleys are made from recycled plastic as far as possible and they are continually researching new packaging options in order to reduce the environmental impact of packaging. Over the past two years, they have reduced electricity consumption in their stores by 10% and are continually striving to improve fuel-efficiency related to the delivery of merchandise to stores. Woolworths imposes stringent standards on its suppliers in order to minimise environmental impacts. For more information, go to www.woolworths.co.za and click on the link to "Environment".

The Rose Foundation: Rose stands for Recycling Oil Saves the Environment. Rose is a non-profit organisation that manages the environmentally acceptable collection, storage and recycling of used lubricating oil in South Africa. Rose was formed in 1994 in response to the government withdrawing its support for the oil re-refining industry. Their primary objective is to collect as much used lubricating oil as possible and to add as much value to this oil within the strictest environmental standards. By providing an option other than dumping or burning used oil, Rose is making a significant contribution to the environment. There are a number of used oil drop-off depots (garages and petrol stations) throughout the country. To locate one of these in your area, or to find out more about Rose, go to www.rosefoundation.org.za



South African Potato Farmers join Conservation Efforts in the Cape

Potato farmers in the Cape Floristic Region biodiversity hotspot recently announced an initiative that will enable responsible farming practices to help protect natural resources and dwindling water supplies.

Focussed on the sand flats, or Sandveld, region of South Africa, the program draws together Cape Nature's Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor Initiative and Potatoes South Africa, an organisation representing the industry, as well as other partners and stakeholders.

The Sandveld region forms part of the western lowland area of the corridor. However, plowing of the land for production of potatoes and rooibos tea has transformed this important coastal landscape into the second most highly threatened ecosystem in South Africa.

In October, the team published guidelines that will help the Sandveld's potato farmers ensure they better protect their land by keeping vegetation intact and incorporating ways to save water into their production plans.

"With the potato industry being the local economic driver, the largest transformer of natural veld, and the biggest user of water, the establishment and implementation of the guidelines are critical steps towards a sustainable solution," said Jaco Venter, technical advisor for CapeNature, the provincial conservation agency.

The manual, "Biodiversity Best Practice Guidelines for Potato Production in the Sandveld," is the result of a growing understanding that potato production systems in the region were becoming unsustainable. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) supported CapeNature's role in the initiative as part of a project to engage farmers in developing scientific agricultural principles.



Potato fields in the Sandveld like those pictured here produce approximately 22 million 10 kg

A team tasked with developing guidelines to improve potato production processes was created in 2006, bringing together farmers, retailers, and the conservation sector. The team approached a consortium of scientists to develop scientific agricultural principles that could be implemented in a biodiversity-rich yet agriculturally important area like the Sandveld.

Potato farming is just one of the industries that CapeNature aims to influence with this program; outreach is being made into the rooibos and 4x4 industries to find ways to better protect the corridor.

For more information: Contact Jaco Venter jacov@gcbc.co.za or Project Manager Dawie Scholtz dawie-mail@telkomsa.net

Article extracted from CEPF newsletter



Choose your fish wisely. Make sure the fish you are eating is not endangered. SMS 079 499 8795 and you'll get an instant reply from SASSI. www.wwf.org.za/sassi

Friends Group Workshop held in the Second half of 2007

by Andy Gubb

This workshop was well attended, with almost 20 Friends Groups represented. It was a lively and edifying workshop.

Sandy Barnes gave intriguing input on Protected Natural Environments, a statutory category of conservation area falling under the Physical Planning Act and the National Environmental Management Protected Areas Act. Sandy pointed out that these areas were falling between the cracks in terms of management as no tier of government (Provincial, National, Local) was assuming management responsibility. Examples of such areas are the Rietvlei Wetlands, the Lourens River and areas at the base of the Peninsula Mountain Chain. The main thrust of Sandy's talk was that the legislation was good, but that it was not being implemented. Herein lies a challenge to environmentally concerned citizens.

After a lunch break, Peter Hendricks from the Non-Profit Consortium gave an interesting and valuable talk on legislation that affects how NGOs do their

business including managing finances, doing audits, registering members, keeping minutes of meetings, tax registration and registration as a Public Benefit Organisation. The legislative environment within which NGOs do their business has become much more complex. Peter did an admirable job of demystifying much of it and his talk elicited many questions and much discussion.

It was exciting to hear about the good work that is being done by Friends Groups. The workshop showed again how important it is for Friends Groups to get together to discuss issues of common concern and to feed off each other's experiences. It is one of the services that WESSA Western Cape offers its Friends Groups and a worthwhile one. In conclusion, a reminder to Friends Groups that they should take out WESSA membership. There is incredible strength and solidarity to be found when we all stand together as individuals and small parts of a much larger whole.

The next Friends Workshop will be in March 2008. Venue, time and speakers will be confirmed.

SOME THOUGHTS ON ESKOM AND THE RENEWABLE ENERGY DEBATE

What is the South African government's official target for renewable energy contribution to final energy consumption?

The White Paper on Renewable Energy (2003), which, was approved by the cabinet, sets a target of 10 000GWh of energy to be produced from renewable energy sources (mainly from biomass, wind, solar and small-scale hydro) by 2013.

How many coal fired power stations could renewable energy replace?

The Department of Minerals and Energy (DME) says that to put the 10 000GW (target into perspective) by 2013, this would be equivalent to electrifying approximately two million households or to about 5% of the present electricity generation in South Africa. This is equivalent to replacing two (2 x 660MW) units of Eskom's combined coal-fired power stations.

Further studies completed by the DME estimated that 23% of this target could be contributed by solar water heating if 1.5 million households were installed with solar water heaters. South Africa's 15 major cities have more than 5 million households according to Sustainable Energy Africa. If solar water heaters were installed in all of them then solar water heating alone would replace more than two of Eskom's 660 MW combined coal fired power stations.

In addition, if solar water heating was widely used in the commercial, industrial and agricultural sectors, at least another 2-3 coal fired power stations could also be replaced.

Now, that's a whole lot of saving of coal burning and a major positive impact on global warming, pollution, energy crises and a major cost saving too.

OUTSTANDING WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

Straight from London's Natural History Museum, the 2007 Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition, brought to you by NHU AFRICA, is being showcased at the Iziko South African Museum in Cape Town.

"Life is all about timing. Being in the right place at the right time can mean the difference between feeding and going hungry, finding a mate or missing out, even life or death. This exhibition of award-winning images captures these moments, due to the precise timing of the photographers that took them. A split second later, a minute too soon, and the moment would have been missed," said Debbie Sage, Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition Manager.

The competition, owned by the Natural History Museum of London and BBC Wildlife Magazine, has had its most successful year to date, since it was launched in 1964. It attracted an overwhelming 32, 000 entries from 78 countries both from amateur and professional photographers. The judging panel, made up of a team of wildlife and photography experts, had the difficult task of selecting the 105 winning shots, based on originality, impact and creativity, across the 17 categories.

The photographs are exceptional. Together they create a powerful window of life on Earth. From vivid, colourful landscapes, to intimate portraits of animal behaviour, this exhibition offers an extraordinary insight into the beauty, drama and diversity of the natural world.

The South African tour, sponsored by Animal Planet, runs from 12 December until 12 March 2008 at the Iziko South African museum, (next to the Planetarium). Opening hours are 10h00 – 17h00, seven days a week. Entrance fee is R10 per adult, R5 for students and pensioners, no charge on Saturdays. For more information telephone 481 3800, or visit www.nhuafrica.com

NEW BOOK ON GMOS IN AFRICA

The African Centre for Biosafety (ACB) has produced a new book called *GMOS in Africa: Food and Agriculture Status Report 2007*. The book provides an overview of the current situation of GMOS in Africa and their effect on food and agricultural systems, analysis of key trends, regional overviews and country status reports. The book may be bought from the ACB or a free PDF version may be downloaded from their website at http://www.biosafetyafrica.net/portal/images/ACB/gmos_in_africa.pdf The book was written by: Shenaz Moola and Victor Munnik and edited by Mariam Mayet and Rose Williams.

New Environmental Watchdog Group Formed

Environmentalists have set up a federation intended to take legal action against mining companies and South Africa's government with regard to a number of areas they claim have been badly damaged by pollution. "It's for us to establish legal precedence and hold mining companies responsible" says environmental justice activist Mariette Liefferink, adding that high profile lawyer George Bizos is part of the Federation's Steering Committee. The Federation already has a sizeable membership database comprised inter alia of NGO's, Environmental Groups, Environmental Lawyers, Conservancies, Journalists, Communities and Ordinary Citizens. To join the Federation mailing list please send your details to federation@environment.co.za

Recycle and Promote Wildlife

Kids love posters, and what better way to promote caring for wildlife than by recycling your out-of-date photo calendars into laminated posters for EnviroKids readers. Drop your calendars at the WESSA Western Cape Tokai offices and they will be used for a good cause. A big thank you to all those who have already supported this initiative. The posters are very popular! Roberta Griffiths, EnviroKids Editor, Tel. 021-6718344.

What's happening in WESSA Western Cape branches

WESSA Western Cape George / Sedgefield Branch

by Henk Altkin

On Saturday 17 November 2007 our Branch hosted a lecture by Professor Curtis Marean of Arizona State University about his discoveries at the caves at Pinnacle Point Golf Estate, Mossel Bay, titled Modern human origins and the significance of the Fynbos Biome and coastal resources.

We had joined forces with U3A George for this lecture and in addition we had advertised the talk widely, resulting in a massive attendance, for George, of just over 200 people. Prof. Marean's style is very down to earth and he kept the audience spellbound.

Modern humans arose in Africa sometime between 200,000 and 100,000 years ago, likely during a glacial period when Africa was arid and the environment harsh. The diverse coastal and vegetation resources found in South Africa likely presented these early humans with a critical source of food, and may have been the location of the progenitor population for all modern humans. The astonishingly rich archaeological and geological record at Pinnacle Point provides evidence for this population and their environmental context.

A lively discussion arose at the end of the lecture and it

turned out there were quite a few amateur archeologists in the audience.

Prof Marean briefly mentioned the problems the Pinnacle Point developers are causing by watering the greens above the caves, resulting in seepage and algae and it was good to note the role WESSA is playing in trying to halt this.

Curtis W. Marean (Ph.D. University of California at Berkeley 1990; Professor of School of Human Evolution and Social Change, Arizona State University and member of the Institute of Human Origins) has research interests on the origins of modern humans, the prehistory of Africa, paleoclimates and paleoenvironments, and the study of animal bones from archaeological sites. He is particularly interested in human occupation of grassland and coastal ecosystems. He has conducted research in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Somalia, and since 1991 has been conducting field research in coastal South Africa. He is the principal investigator for the South African Coast Paleoclimate, Paleoenvironment, Paleoecology and Paleoanthropology (SACP4) project.

Obituaries:

Lynette Croudace, a longstanding WESSA member and supporter, passed away on 5 November 2007. Lynette was one of the main contributors to the Income Stabilisation Fund when it was established.

Jean Jones, a volunteer of the "Lick n Stick" team, who ensures that the Cape Environment newsletter reaches our members, passed away on 25 October 2007. Jean was a member and loyal supporter of WESSA.

At work: Shut down. Enable the power saving mode on your computer and reduce its electricity consumption by 40% and let it shut down automatically

Out and about: Go green and buy a Wild Card. Support our own protected areas, while getting free access to many sites. Visit www.capenature.co.za or www.sanparks.org

Networking

FRIENDS OF RIETVLEI

Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve (CWCBR)

The CWCBR is a unique "estuary to estuary" biosphere along our West Coast. The Milnerton Lagoon forms the southern boundary. The northern boundary is formed by the Berg River estuary. A stakeholder consultation process to prepare a Spatial Development Plan is underway. A Background Information Document and a Status Quo Report are available for viewing at Milnerton and Atlantis libraries. You can also contact Dudley Janeke on 021 851 0900 for more information. An informative CWCBR newsletter has just been mailed out and we urge you to have a look at the website: www.capebiosphere.co.za

Water Quality in Rietvlei Niel van Wyk

Water quality has been monitored in Rietvlei on a regular basis since 2002. A large number of determinants are monitored, but most of the results do not make much sense. To try and understand what is happening in the system, we have looked at some of the more critical indicators and transferred the data to graphs so that one can visualise the situation. These are available on the website:

www.friendsofrietvlei.co.za, go to Water Quality on the menu under Rietvlei.

FRIENDS OF THE TYGERBERG HILLS

Bracken Landfill site

The rehabilitation of the Bracken Landfill site, now part of the Bracken Nature Reserve is still ongoing. Due to heavy rains, large areas of the landfill site experienced erosion and as a result capping of the landfill site had to be revisited. The proposed plant list to be used as a guideline for plants for the rehabilitation of the landfill site needed also to be revised as the contractors only managed to cap the landfill site with 200mm of top soil instead of the 500 mm requested by Dr. Pat Holmes, the City Biophysical Specialist. The deeper soil would have enabled us to rehabilitate the site with a much wider variety of indigenous vegetation.

TYGERBERG CREW

Our plant press worked overtime (READ: we need another press!) with all our trips and we certainly have contributed to the piles of specimens finding their way to the CREW office and ultimately to the Compton Herbarium and the Tygerberg Herbarium. We found some real beauties, making it difficult to decide which find was the most exciting. Surely one



Babiana secunda

of the favourites must have been finding *Babiana secunda*. Although we did not find it at a previously recorded site in our area, we found two new localities for this amazing late-flowering little *Babiana* in one season! (Maybe I should mention that one of these populations is unfortunately in a Renosterveld remnant on a golf course in an area where they want to build an irrigation dam!!!)

We have also had a very successful *Lampranthus* season. *Lampranthus peacockiae*, *L. filicaulis*, *L. glaucus*, *L. reptans*, *L. leptaleon*, *L. dilutus*, *L. debilis*, *L. scaber*, *L. explanatus*... some of which we have recorded before, but many were firsts for us! Another highlight was recording *Podalyria microphylla*, also listed as CR at three localities in our area. The most spectacular (in looks!!) special this season must have been *Cliffortia acockii*. If you are interested in helping us, please contact Karen Marais at Tel: 021 945 2855 or via e-mail at bkrj@telkomsa.net for further information.

FRIENDS OF LIESBEEK

The Liesbeek Maintenance Project is into its fourth year and we look forward to continuing the partnerships this year with the City and our sponsors. We appreciate the support SA Breweries, Tuffy Brands and all the other sponsors have given over the last three years. You really have made a difference not only to the Liesbeek but also to people's lives. Thank you.

Anyone wishing to help us grow the project is asked to contact Liz Wheeler on 021-671-4553 or Alta Swanepoel at WESSA Western Cape on 021-701-1397.

We welcome Malibongwe Mzananda who has joined the River Team in place of Siyanda who happily has been able to find full time employment. Spring has kept the team busy with planting and weeding, besides the major task of litter removal. Thanks to Wetland Solutions we have for the first time planted out numerous restios. Several big trees or parts thereof have been blown down in the recent strong winds and have had to be cut up and removed.

Councilors Ian Iversen and Owen Kinahan are also thanked for making money available in their ward budgets for the Liesbeek environs. The Liesbeek Trail has at last been re-surfaced in several sections in Rondebosch and lights installed on the Newlands section behind the swimming pool. Dead poplars and morning glory have been removed on the Mowbray reach and the entrance to Rosebank across the footbridge re-designed. The poop and scoop signs and bins have also been a great idea!

Province has also built a cycle track along the Liesbeek from Alma Road, Rondebosch to Durban Road, Mowbray. The Friends support the promotion of non-motorised transport and hope that with public consultation we will see the extension of the cyclepath network particularly to the City and the Rondebosch CBD.

The Bishopscourt Village riverine park is proving very popular for river walkers and picnickers. The giant salvia (*brillantaisia*) lives up to its name with a glorious display. Mathews has been assisted by his brother Francis Mangwakwe these last three months. His salary has been paid for by the local residents whilst ERA Steer Constantiaberg continue to pay Mathews. We salute this civic minded community led by Joan Parker.

We enjoyed once again hosting Friends of Lion's Head on a river walk in November. Do check our website www.fol.org.za for future walks or phone 021-671-4553.

NEWS FROM DURBANVILLE NATURE RESERVE

The year started off with horticulture student, Michelle Steenkamp being based at the reserve for 6 months. During this period she made a tremendous contribution to the Nature Reserve by assisting with the upgrade and development of the plant propagation site (the nursery). She researched methods to propagate fynbos species, she maintained a 1000 plants for use at Bracken Nature Reserve and she presented talks to various interest and school groups on indigenous gardening.

Preparation for the controlled burn that is to take

place early this year was done. This included clearing and maintaining firebreaks (thanks to Jacques Küyler and his team for clearing those firebreaks!) and obtaining the expertise of our Biophysical Specialist Dr Pat Holmes and the protea expert, Dr Tony Rebelo on the control of the introduced protea species before and after the fire. This fire is necessary as the vegetation is too old and it is safer to have a controlled fire during the fire season.

I found a new species of plant on the Reserve known as *Gladiolus recurvus*. It is endangered and was also found by Karen Marais at Uitkamp Wetlands. Thanks to Karen for confirming its identification. I'm sure we will find many more "new" species after the fire.

Cape for Kids starts their programme for pre-schoolers

A small company known as "Cape for Kids" has started running an Environmental Education Programme at the Durbanville Nature Reserve for pre-schoolers and grades 1-3. They are well-known in the southern suburbs where they run programmes at Rondevlei Nature Reserve, Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, Boulders and the Waterfront. Their programme has a conservation message and includes a puppet show based on the Nature Reserve's animals and an outdoor activity. This is a huge contribution to environmental education which is a high priority in the field of nature conservation. The Durbanville Nature Reserve is featured as a venue on their website so they are also assisting us to promote the Reserve. If you know of any pre-schools or Primary Schools that might want to book for this fun programme, please contact "Cape for Kids" on 021 790 6067 or visit their website at www.capeforkids.com

FRIENDS OF DIE OOG

The Friends of Die Oog had a very successful year in 2007, including the rehabilitation of the seasonal wetland and the opening of a viewing platform over the wetland on 13 September 2007. The City of Cape Town made a special grant of R30 000 for the platform which provides views over the wetland to the Constantiaberg. The Friends of Die Oog raised R5 000 to provide a bench and signage. In December the Friends of Die Oog launched a website www.dieoog.org.za with the assistance of the Bergvliet Lions Club and any comments or suggestions would be very much appreciated.

Die Oog has recovered from the devastating outbreak of avian botulism in January 2007 when 28 out of 30 ducks died. The one surviving pair of yellowbilled ducks has recently produced 10 ducklings.

A pair of moorhen and a pair of red knobbed coots have each produced four offspring. In December however the dam suddenly became more or less completely covered with duckweed (*Lemna gibba*) and the Friends of Die Oog are attempting to remove at least some of the weed.

The future of Die Oog remains uncertain. The Friends have been responsible for the rehabilitation and the maintenance of Die Oog for the past 5 years. The Friends however will not have sufficient funds to continue to maintain Die Oog beyond 30 June 2008. An application has been submitted to the City of Cape Town for Die Oog to be designated a Local Nature Reserve under the Department of Nature Conservation and it is very much hoped that it will be officially proclaimed early in 2008.

BOTFRIENDS

Arabella Phase II: The final go ahead has been granted by DEAD&P. One wonders at the huge costs involved with the almost 3-year delay. An Environmental Monitoring Committee should be formed, and as agreed, include Botfriends.

Rooisand: Whilst Arabella have thankfully continued clearing the area of alien vegetation, they did not wish to start development of the area until such time as Phase II was approved in order to coordinate building operations. The Rooisand Advisory Committee, consisting of the Kleinmond Conservation Society, Kobio, OSM, CapeNature, Arabella and Botfriends met again recently where proposals were revisited and it will be our job to monitor and advise on progress and report back to our constituencies. A representative from the newly-formed trust foundation will be appointed.

An Operational Environmental Management Plan has been compiled. It is planned to establish an Environmental Center making use of sustainable heating and cooling methods as well as eco-type toilets. It is not envisaged that conventional electricity or water is provided but that methods are used to harvest these on site. Security of the development will be a challenge and building height above the floodline has been identified. We invite you to contact us if you have any concerns.

Ingrid Horwood, Tel/Fax: 028 315 1305

FRIENDS OF NEWLANDS FOREST

The Littlewort Education Trail

The Littlewort Trail has been designed to serve as an introduction to Afro - Montane Forest Ecology. It

is adapted to the needs of school groups, conservation students and special interest groups and of course, it is also suitable for persons wishing to learn about our ancient forest. The emphasis is on forest nutrition and the role played by the lesser biota of the forest floor i.e. the ferns, lichens, mosses, liverworts and fungi. The trail passes through geomorphologically unstable terrain and rocks from the Pakhuis Series, Table Mountain Series, Graafwater Series and the bedrock of Malmesbury Shale. During winter the flash flood streams reach super critical flow resulting in Hydraulic Jumps (standing waves). Evidence of this occurs abundantly along the trail.

Various tree species dominate the canopy. In the riparian zones *Ilex mitis* (Cape Holly or Without) and *Braejum stellatifolium* (Wild almond) dominate. In the Renosterveld Afro Montane interface, *Olinia ventosa* (Hard Pear) forms forest pockets giving protection to shade loving species. Higher up growing in heavy clay derived from Malmesbury Shale, *Olea macrocarpa* (Iron wood) reaches up to 35 meters. These trees are hundreds of years old. No similar climax forest has been reported elsewhere from summer stress areas, so our precious patch may well be unique.

Along the trail we see sieve deposits brought down by mud slides many thousands of years ago. These sieve deposits are possible sites where Gondwanaland arthropods, extinct elsewhere, could be found.

A brochure, which explains what you will see on the trail, is now available. Copies for school groups may be obtained from Table Mountain National Park, Westlake (021 701 8692). For tertiary institutions, from the Forest Ranger at Mountain Pleasant (021 689 4441), from the Friends of Newlands Forest or from AMIF (021 686 3964) for special interest groups. Although the brochure acts as a self-guided tour, guides can be arranged through the People & Conservation Officer at 021 689 4441. After 500 children have had fun and education, the Newlands Trail is now open and ready for other NGOs.

MONTAGU NATURE GARDEN

To all the Friends Groups we wish a good 2008 with lots of successful projects.

Montagu, as with the rest of the country has had good rains during spring and summer and the Nature Garden has benefited a great deal. Newly planted shrubs, vygies and other indigenous plants are doing well and we expect a good showing this year. The garden is becoming increasingly popular with tourists and the fundraising tea garden on Tuesday mornings had bumper attendance during the latter part of the year.

Various successful fundraising activities were arranged for the off-season, one of which was a well-supported visit by our members to the garden of our Chairman, Christopher Powell, who is an experienced horticulturalist.

Vandalism had become a problem in the garden during the past year, but our police department have come up trumps in handling the problem and we thank

them for their co-operation.

Projects for 2008

Raise the dam wall by half a meter
Clear the thorn trees
Replant certain sections of the garden
Start a nursery
Clear the paths

Diary

Friends of the Cape of Good Hope

All walks start at the Pay Gate of the Cape of Good Hope at 9.00am prompt.

Slow Ambles - 2nd Thursday of the month.
Tel 021 782 4070

March 13th, April 10th, May 8th, June 12th,
July 10th

Nature Walks - 3rd Sunday of the month.
Info Tel 021 785 3928

February 17th, March 16th, April 20th, May
18th, June 15th July 20th

Botfriends - AGM

Join the Friends on Saturday
26 April 2008 for their AGM.

This year also marks the
Group's 15th anniversary. For
more information contact

Ingrid Horwood on
028 315 1305

Cape Bird Club

In the Cape Bird Club's 60th Anniversary year local bird expert John Graham will divulge his 60 best birds in our area with superb photos, ID and location tips. Saturday 12 April 2008, 09.00-13.00 at UCT, cost (non-members) R150, students R60.

Outing to Kirstenbosch on the Sunday, BotSoc membership card or R30 entrance. Plus a celebration prize for one lucky person. Enquiries phone Judith Crosswell 0216711787 (after 6pm) or email judith@kingsley.co.za

FRIENDS OF SIMONSTOWN FLORA CONSERVATION GROUP

Hacks:

SATURDAY:

February 02
March 01
April 05

Venue: Elsie's Peak. Meet at the top of Golconda Road, Glencairn Heights
14:30-17:30

TUESDAY:

February 19
March 18
April 15

Venue: Dorries Drive. Meet at far end of Dorries Drive, Froggy Pond
09:30-12:00

SUNDAY:

February 17
March 16
April 20

Venue: Redhill. Meet at Pinehaven on Redhill
09:30-12:00

SPECIAL HACKS:

February 09
February 23
March 08
March 22
April 12
April 26

Venue: Woodlands. Meet in Dido Valley Road, opposite Woodlands 09:30-12:00

**CONVENOR FOR ALL HACKS : PETER SALTER -
TEL: 021 786 1620**

FOR THOSE INTERESTED, THERE IS A HACK ON ELSIES PEAK EVERY MON, WED AND FRI AFTERNOON. FOR DETAILS CONTACT: ILUSKA ALLAN ON TEL: 021 782 2736

Friends of Liesbeek

Hacking and Weeding: First Wednesday of each month. Meet at 9am at Protea, Winchester Avenue, Bishopscourt.

Committee Meetings: All welcome. Last Wednesday of the month. Meet at 8pm in the Environment Centre, Valkenberg. Please confirm. Tel: 021-671-4553

Water Week: Monday 17 to 22 March. Watch the press for details or go to www.fol.org.za

River Walks: by arrangement. Tel: 021-671-4553

Friends of the Tygerberg Hills AGM

Join the Friends at the Kristo Pienaar Environmental Education Centre, Tygerberg Nature Reserve
on

1st April 2008. Time: 19:00 for 19:30. All welcome.

Contact Jürg Zimmerman on 083 701 8496 or jurgz@mweb.co.za for more information

FRIENDS OF LION'S HEAD Walks

FEBRUARY 2008

SATURDAY 23rd - Caroline Swift Tel.084-303-6777, Start time: 16:00 - 18:30, Around Lion's Head, Visitors: Donation

MARCH

SATURDAY 8th - Sidney Schlomowitz Tel. 021/439-1812, Start time: 08:30 - 12:30, Table Mountain contour, Visitors: Donation

SATURDAY 29th - Annabel Kyriazis Tel. 021/439-7786 after 7pm, Start time: 09:00 - 13:00, Contour below 12 Apostles - above Camps Bay, Visitors: Donation

APRIL

SATURDAY 12th - Caroline Swift Tel. 084-303-6777, Start time: 15:30 - 17:30, Lion's Head / Signal Hill, Visitors; Donation

SATURDAY 26th - Sidney Schlomowitz tel. 021/439-1812 Start time: 09:00 - 12:30 appr. Kloofnek/ Table Mountain, Visitors: Donation

SATURDAY 15th MARCH

Litter clean-up from Avenue St.Leon - Nettleton Road. Will also cut down or pull out some aliens if there is time. Phone Annabel Kyriazis at 021/439-7786 Time: 09:00 - 10:30 appr.

Hottentots Holland Branch

Meetings take place in the Somerset West Library Hall at 20:00 on the third Wednesday of the month. Bookings are essential for outings and usually takes place on the first Sunday of every second month.

20 February 2008 Meeting

A talk on Genetically Modified Food by Glen Ashton.

19 March 2008 Meeting

'Indo-Quena Temples in the Moordenaar-skaroo' by Dr Cyril Hromnik.

6 April 2006 Outing

We visit the Cape Town Observatory to learn more about the stars and planets above us.

16 April 2008 - Meeting

Dr Allie Leslie from the University of Stellenbosch will give a presentation on Crocodiles.

Contact Cecilia Wolmarans on 021 854 8011 or 082 3689 515

Friends of the Tygerberg Hills

February 16: Hack Above Kanonberg at 9h00

February 16: Walk in reserve at 16h00

March 01: Walk in reserve at 07h00.

March 04: Talk by Cliff Dorse

March 15: Walk in reserve at 16h00

March 29: Walk in reserve at 7h00

April 01: AGM and talk TBA

April 12: Walk in reserve at 15h00

All Walks start at the Welgemoed entrance to the reserve. Please be at the gate 10 minutes before the starting time! Bring along a snack and plenty to drink and wear appropriate walking / hiking shoes!

For general information on the walks, please contact Jürg on 083 701 8496

Weekend hacks take place once a month on a Saturday (see above).

Mid-week hacks take place on an ad hoc basis. Wear old clothes; bring gloves, saws, loppers and plenty of water/cool drink and a snack. For details or to be placed on our hackers' list contact Neville at 021 671 2766.

NB Dates to Remember Feb, Mar, April, May

2 Feb: World Wetlands Day

21 Mar: Human Rights Day (SA)

17-22 Mar: National Water Week

22 Mar: World Water Day

24 Mar: World Meteorological Day

7 April: World Health Day

22 April: Earth Day

5-11 May: National Bird Week (SA)

Chairperson: Sharon Bosma
Vice-chairperson: Rudy Schats
Treasurer: Graham Lovely
Environmentalists: Patrick Dowling & Steve du Toit
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- Mr Les McEwan who maintains the Region's beautiful fynbos garden.
- Forms Media Independent for printing this newsletter at a very reduced rate.

ALL THOSE WHO HAVE DONATED GENEROUSLY TO THE REGION, INCLUDING:-

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- Bishop Preparatory School
- D Jooste
- E/L HHB Cleenwerck

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- Pfizer Laboratories (Pty) Ltd
- ROSE Foundation
- Syntell (Pty) Ltd
- Tellumat (Pty) Ltd
- SA Breweries
- Tuffy Brands (Pty) Ltd

WESSA Western Cape would like to acknowledge our corporate members. They are as follows:

- BP Southern Africa
- Caltex Oil S.A (Pty) Ltd
- Old Mutual

WESSA Western Cape would like to acknowledge our patron members. They are as follows:

- Rose Foundation
- Woolworths

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WESSA Annual Membership Fee

• Regional (Cape Environment)	R80
• EnviroKids & Regional newsletter	R160
• African Wildlife & Regional newsletter	R240
• (for over 65s/ under 25s)	R140
• EnviroKids & African Wildlife & Regional newsletter	R300
• Clubs/Education	R200
• Affiliates (Friends & Institutions)	R420
• Small business	R1600
• Corporate	R7000
• Patron	R16000

Note: All categories of membership can be mailed anywhere in the world. Please contact Nina at the WESSA Membership Office on (033) 330 3931 or wessamembers@icon.co.za for postage rates.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS AND MEMBERSHIP FORMS PLEASE CONTACT MAUREEN ON 021 701 1397 OR maureen@wessa.wcape.school.za OR GO TO www.wessa.org.za/organisationmember.htm