



Friends of Bracken NATURE RESERVE

Newsletter / Nuusbrief

FoB SPRINGTIME MESSAGE

The Friends have all put in a lot of effort to make our annual Spring Event a success, so we hope it is enjoyable to everyone attending. We would love to have many more enthusiastic nature lovers to take ownership of this precious little bit of nature in our midst. By joining FoB our hands are strengthened to do so much more. If you are not yet a member, do make use of the application form attached to this newsletter. You will be most welcome! During the "dry months" when the flowers have finished, there are other outings and informative talks, and members are invited to make suggestions.

Thea Weyers

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Since the last newsletter was issued we have had quite a few more school groups visiting the reserve. At the end of April we had 11 Grade 8 boys from Brackenfell High School doing community service at the reserve. They spent two mornings clearing weeds and Port Jacksons and although it was not everyone's "cup of tea", they removed quite a lot of Port Jacksons and we really appreciated their help. The Hebron Christian School from Bellville visited us twice in May, once for a school picnic and again later with the Grade 3 group to learn about owls and the plants of the reserve.

From 19 to 23 May we celebrated **Biodiversity Week** with the City of Cape Town's Youth Environmental School (YES) programme. Unfortunately due to busy school programmes we only had one school visiting us that week. Another school had to postpone their visit due to rain. However, 51 scholars from Hebron Christian Academy Independent Christian School from Kuilsriver visited us on the Friday. They were a pleasure to have, and it makes it all worth it when you see how much the children enjoy the reserve. I especially want to thank Thea and Jo for helping with all the admin involved with the YES programme and the students for assisting me with the group.

In June we had a **Xhosa Morning** at the reserve. Jo arranged for bird guide, Mbewu, a qualified bird guide from Intaka Island Bird Sanctuary at Canal Walk, to visit our reserve and give a talk to 35 children of the Everite Hostel. We especially invited Mbewu because he could give his talk in Xhosa which made it easier for the children to understand. The children's ages ranged from 6 to 14 and he held their attention for an hour and answered many questions, after which a quiz was organised. The winner was presented with a copy of "Roberts' Birds of Southern Africa". After the slide show we went for a walk in the reserve where the kids completed a worksheet. They also got a light lunch sponsored by the Friends. Thank you to Jo for arranging for Mbewu to visit us, Lindie for organising the children and Thea for the lovely soup and hot dog rolls.



Xhosa Morning – a walk in Bracken NR

Laerskool Brackenfell se Landsdiens groep wat vroeër gekanseleer het a.g.v. reën het ons die 8ste Augustus besoek. Conette, die student, het die groep gelei en biodiversiteit met hulle behandel. Ons sien uit daarna om hulle weer gou by die reservaat te sien.

Elzette Krynauw

MATERIALS FOR EE CENTRE

Elzette has thanked the Friends for making money available to buy some scissors, crayons and glue for the EE Centre, and also for a railing and two more curtains, and she is appealing to everyone to let her have anything else which might be useful, including pictures, magazines etc. She says it helps a great deal to have stationery for the kids to use, especially paper, colour pencils, crayons etc., so please help if you can.

OPVOEDKUNDIGE TUIN

Elzette het begin om 'n tuin uit te lê naby die kantoor en Opvoedkundige sentrum, wat alreeds die voorkoms van die kantoor baie verbeter. Die doel is om groepe leerders meer te leer van inheemse plante. FoB het 'n skenking van R9 600 van die Rowland en Leta Hill Trust verkry om verdere plante te koop en ook 'n water element te laat bou. Die area is reeds met houtpaaltjies omhein.

BRACKEN'S PLANTS - STATUS ISN'T EVERYTHING!

As many of you are aware, we have been working hand in hand with the CREW team to monitor and update the plant species list at Perdekop Nature Reserve. The outings are mostly for the monitoring of rare and endangered plant species in order to ensure that the populations are not declining. Most importantly we aim to prevent species loss to extinction which has occurred in many parts of the City of Cape Town.

However, it sadly seems that we tend to lose interest in our other beautiful common plants because of becoming too focused on the threatened status of plants. I feel we should appreciate our natural biodiversity regardless of its status, because even the threatened plant species were once regarded as common. We can be proud our effective conservation management as reflected by the abundance of common endemic plant species in Perdekop, the "Jewel of Bracken".

Last but not least I would like to thank all the members of the Friends who joined us on our field trips with CREW. Thank you for all your support. Good news is that, as mentioned above, the Friends of Bracken recently obtained funding from the Rowland & Leta Hill Trust which will enable us to extend planting around the perimeter of the reserve and I would really like to thank them for their hard work in ensuring that the application was successful.

Tshepo Mamabolo, Reserve Manager

DERDE JAAR NATUURBEWARING

Ek is hierdie jaar die Natuurbewarings student by Bracken Natuur Reserwaat en wil net vir almal vertel van my ondervinding sover. As derdejaar student moet ek verskeie take voltooi vir my praktiese jaar. Die take word gebaseer op praktiese ondervinding wat ek in die werk situasie opgedoen het. Daar is ses take en elkeen handel oor 'n sekere aspek van natuurbewaring. Die ses take is: Navorsing, hulpbronbestuur, kommunikasie, bewaringswetsnakoming, algemene bestuur, en 'n ope projek. Die projekte handel oor die ondervinding, in elke kategorie, wat ek opgedoen het tydens die jaar.

Die mees belangrike projek is my navorsingsprojek. Die projek handel oor die monitor van die bewaringstatus van die Welgemoed dam in Tygerberg Natuur Reserwaat. Die navorsing word al gedoen van die begin van Junie en sal duur tot einde September. Ek het reeds 'n fauna en flora lys opgestel en die water kwaliteit geneem. Die bespreking, van die dam en sy omliggende gebied en die voorstelle oor hoe om die area te verbeter sal ook in die projek gesit word. Die projek sal aan Tygerberg Natuur Reserwaat se bestuurder oorhandig word sodat dit gebruik kan word vir bestuur doeleindes.

Dit is nou amper die einde van die jaar, so die meeste van my ondervinding is reeds opgedoen. As die volledige projek klaar is sal daar 'n kopie by die reserwaat gelos word. Die projek sal ook aanbevelings bevat vir die aspekte wat in die projekte bespreek is. Hierdie rekkommendasies kan gebruik word in toekomstige projekte en die bestuur van Bracken Natuur Reserwaat.

Conette Koorts

PERDEKOP FLOWER CALENDAR - 2009

This is an ambitious project for our small group, and we are indebted to Conette for all her work on the design and layout of this very attractive calendar. This is being sold for FoB funds, which will go towards the upkeep and development of Bracken, of course. Anonymous donors have contributed R1 000 for production costs, for which we are most grateful, and we are looking for more sponsors to help cover costs.

PERDEKOP FLOWER SHOW AND SPRING EVENT - 6 September 2008

This, the most important event of our year, may be over by the time you read this, but we would like to thank all those who have supported us. We thankfully acknowledge donations from **Schoongezicht Restaurant** for meal vouchers, **Fox Fitness and Leisure (Bellville)** for vouchers, **Mooiplaas Estate** and **Hazendal Estate** for wine, **Kalahari.net** for book prizes, and **SPAR (Protea Village)** for boerewors and rolls.

HACKING GROUP IN ACTION

And now we turn our attention from desirable plants to the undesirable ones – and there are many of those! FoB has formed a Hacking Group under the leadership of Edward Allen and additional volunteers will be most welcome. At present we have one Tree Popper which is a great help with our battle to uproot the Port Jacksons which re-emerge on a regular basis, and we hope to increase our anti-alien arsenal when funds permit. If you would like to join this group please contact Edward at 021 982 4548 (h) or cell 072 837 0886.

Putting the Tree Popper to good use: ►►►
Left to right: FoB members Len Daly, Eddie Allen, Thea Weyers



INTAKA ISLAND/MTN SCIENCE CENTRE VISIT

Our next activity will be a follow-up to our Xhosa Morning in June and this has been kindly arranged for us by bird guide Mbewu. This will take the form of an outing to Intaka Island Nature Reserve and the MTN Science Centre at Century City on Heritage Day, 24 September. Transport will be provided for 40 children and 10 adults and we are most grateful to the Intaka management and to MTN for sponsoring this and waiving entrance fees for the group. FoB's new Corporate Member, Shoprite-Checkers, has promised to donate T-shirts and to provide lunch packs for all those attending. We are grateful to them for their involvement with the education of these children from the Everite Hostel site. We are sure this will be a day to remember. And if you are wondering what to expect at Intaka Island, we recently received the following report from their enthusiastic bird guide:

WHAT'S UP AT INTAKA ISLAND TODAY?

The rejuvenation of Intaka Island Nature Reserve after the rehabilitation process is yielding positive results. Oh, what beautiful scenery to be seen while monitoring the water birds collecting nesting material for their nests! The breeding season has started for them so there is a lot of activity, especially in the heronry. Oh, don't forget the seasonal pans which are starting to fill up following the winter rains. We are hoping that flamingoes and pelicans will come back again as they did last year. The revamping of pathways has also been done with success and has created a new look for the Island.

S'Khumbuzo Mbewu

REDUCE, RE-USE, RECYCLE!

Another new project in which everyone can take part: In order to save our landfill sites (such as Bracken used to be before rehabilitation!), as well as saving the Earth from having to produce much more than what is sustainable in terms of trees, oil, energy, minerals etc., FoB has initiated a recycling programme. **Everybody is encouraged to recycle any possible items, such as paper, magazines, cardboard, glass (all colours), metal and plastic.** We will also take used light bulbs and batteries, but do not mix with the other items, please! (Please never put the latter two into your waste bins either.)

Every household is encouraged to be serious about this. **Please bring these items to the Reserve office in Reservoir Road.** Please rinse out any food left in cans or milk bottles, as it does help keep vermin away. We do not collect money for it, but the bags are taken to Belhar to provide work for the jobless (who sort the items for recycling), as well as to fund a soup kitchen.

PAST EVENTS

In the winter months of June and July we had two successful "Soup & Rolls" evening meetings. At the first of these Elzette Krynauw gave us an illustrated talk on Spiders, of which Bracken has quite a variety, judging from the specimens she has already photographed and collected. There's no doubt we are all looking at spiders with much greater interest and respect than before!

The second presentation was by Sarah Atmore on Galaxia, a very small indigenous freshwater fish whose survival is threatened by the presence of alien fish species. This brought home the unforeseen consequences which such introductions can have.

Then in August we were privileged to host a WESSA Workshop at our own EE Centre. Philippa Huntly provided useful information for Friends groups on EIA's, and Patrick Dowling spoke on Water – a precious commodity. It was good, as always, to meet members of other Friends groups and exchange news and experiences.



*A Banded Garden Spider
(Argiope trifasciata)*

LOOKING AHEAD

On Saturday, 20 September we are planning a visit to Clara Anna Fontein, and on Saturday 4 October we shall be going to the Blaauwberg Conservation Area. Regular hacks and walks in Bracken Nature Reserve will also continue as before – watch the *Tygerburger* for details. Our 2008 year will wind up on Monday evening, 17 November, with a Sundowner Picnic in the reserve. Next year we plan more evening meetings with interesting speakers and look forward to hearing Tielman Roos of Mooiplaas Estate, who will tell us about the important Biodiversity & Wine Initiative of which Mooiplaas was the first member as long ago as 1995.

LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS!

We are grateful to still have SA Shade as a Corporate Member and hope to have many more in future. And of course we need many more Ordinary Members to support us. The fees are very reasonable and we all want to make Bracken a reserve we can be proud of. Please use the application form below.

AN APPLICATION FORM FOR NEW MEMBERS:

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Friends of Bracken Nature Reserve (FoB)

(NPO 058-903)

Who are the Friends?

FoB was established to assist management of Bracken Nature Reserve in promoting awareness and assist in attaining their goals of conservation in the Reserve. We are affiliated to WESSA.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Full name: Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms

Address (physical): Code:

Address (postal - if different) Code:

Telephone (home): (work): (cell):

Fax: E-mail:

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY (please tick):

- Individual – R30 p.a. Family – R50 p.a. Student/Pensioner – R15 p.a.
 Corporate – R350 p.a. I also enclose a donation: R.....

My interests are in: Plant propagation / environmental education / walks / clearing alien vegetation / other practical assistance (please specify)

I have expertise/knowledge in the following fields: Botany / education / natural history / marketing / public relations / computer skills / artwork and design / other areas

Waiver: In respect of attendance at any club meeting, outing or event I undertake to participate entirely at my own risk. I agree that I shall have no claim whatsoever against the organizing body, any individual organiser or official, marshal, assistant helper or agent, the sponsors or any local authority or their employees in respect of any loss or damage whatsoever which I may suffer arising from any injury to my person or loss or damage to property as a result of, or arising out of, whether directly or indirectly, my participation in this event, including my arrival thereat and departure therefrom and attendance at any ceremony or function thereof however such loss or damage may arise and regardless of whether or not same shall have been caused directly or indirectly by negligence, albeit gross, of one or more or all of the aforementioned parties. In the event of my signing this form as a guardian of a minor I hereby consent to such minor being bound by the foregoing and further, I indemnify the aforementioned parties to the extent, if any, to which such minor is not capable of waiving his right as stipulated above.

Signature: Date:

Cheques should be made payable to **Friends of Bracken Nature Reserve** and posted to P O Box 8, Brackenfell 7561, or paid direct to Savings Account 9179197783 with ABSA Bank, Brackenfell.
Enquiries: Jo Hobbs: 021 981 1275 or Thea Weyers: 021 982 3654