



## Newsletter / Nuusbriëf

### LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD

It's remarkable how much a very small group of enthusiasts can achieve in the space of a year, and the Friends of Bracken can look back at 2008 with some satisfaction. However, Bracken Nature Reserve has many needs and 2009 will be another busy year for its Friends (FoB). Fittingly, we end this year with a Sundowner Picnic at the top of Perdekop, our favourite place. The panoramic view from this vantage point must surely inspire us to look ahead with eagerness and optimism. So, as we sit with our picnic baskets and watch the sun go down, let's raise our glasses to another successful year in 2009.

### TYDELIKE PERSONEEL

Ons moet dalk binnekort afskeid neem van ons twee tydelike personeel lede by Bracken. Hulle is nog onseker of hul aanstaande jaar werk sal kry, en waar. Ons hoop regtig dat ten minste een weer hier by ons sal kan wees, want hul is staatmakers wat baie gemis sal word. Conette Koorts voltooi binnekort haar studies. Elzette Krynaauw is ook op 4 Oktober getroud met Jacques Klue. Baie geluk van al ons Vriende van Bracken! Dankie vir al jul harde werk en ondersteuning aan ons. Veral met die Lentefees was jul onmisbaar! Seën vorentoe.

### WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS!

Thanks to our Spring event and the awareness created by it, we are able to now welcome **Wendy Groenewald** and **Corné van Zyl** as new paid up members, hoping that you will enjoy our activities soon. Tina-Louise Buttner will represent **Shoprite Checkers** at our events. We also welcome three new Corporate Members, **JBT Corporation**, **Crammix Bricks** and **Cape Boards**.

### FRIENDS OF BRACKEN WILD FLOWER CALENDAR - 2009

A beautiful calendar depicting twelve striking indigenous wild flowers found at Bracken Nature Reserve was designed by 3<sup>rd</sup> Year conservation student Conette Koorts as part of her Communications Project towards her Diploma in Nature Conservation. This project was funded by the FoB, with the printing organised by Bracken Friend, Brenda Adams. This proved to be an excellent tool for marketing, so that our membership has expanded to include three additional Corporate members. In fact, Cape Boards and Crammix Bricks were so impressed that they ordered some of the calendars to be reprinted for distribution to their clients. Thank you so much to all involved. Please remember to support all our sponsors whenever possible.

### SPRING EVENT - PERDEKOP FLOWER SHOW

Our Spring Event (or Perdekop Flower Show) took place on Saturday 9 September, on one of the few bright sunny days in an unusually cold wet month. There was a steady stream of visitors to view the flowers at Perdekop and many residents of nearby Protea Village were impressed with the unexpected beauty and variety "just over the hill". There were games and competitions for children from local schools, a display and information table manned by members of CREW, boerewors rolls and pancakes on sale, and a lively atmosphere created by a talented group of drummers from Durbanville. Before the results of the raffle and lucky draw were announced, the children from the nearby Everite hostel surprised us with a well choreographed traditional dance item. Our lovely wild flower calendar attracted a lot of interest and copies were sold out in record time.

### FRIENDS VISIT TO CLARA ANNA FONTEIN

Byron de Klerk, one of our Bracken Friends, is the farm manager at Clara Anna Fontein, a game park on the Durbanville Hills, and he kindly arranged a free outing for the Friends on Saturday 20 September. The weather was perfect and the wild flowers at their best! It was interesting to learn that the game actually help to spread and propagate the flowers. What a pleasure it was to be able to see so much game right on our doorstep, such as Zebra, Wildebeest, Oryx, Bontebok etc. Another surprise was to be able to view Table Mountain between two hills, in such a way that both Lion's Head and Devil's Peak were hidden! A truly rare sight. Byron drove us up to the top of the hill in a 4x4 "Safari" vehicle, where we could walk a short distance in the fynbos trying to identify some of the wild flowers. There was some snow on the distant mountain range, adding to the beautiful views. Grateful thanks to the owners of Clara Anna Fontein for hosting us, even throwing in free coffee at the bush camp after the drive!

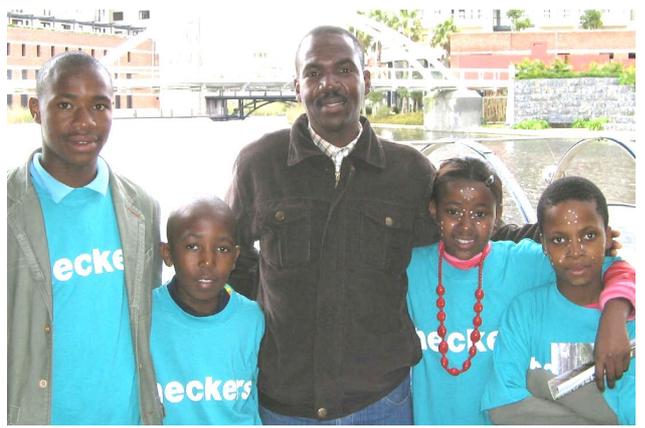


*FoB members at Clara Anna Fontein.*

## A VISIT TO INTAKA ISLAND SANCTUARY AND MTN SCIENCE CENTRE

On 24 September (Heritage Day), the Friends accompanied 40 Xhosa-speaking children and ten adults from the Brackenfell Everite hostels on an educational trip to Intaka Island Wetlands at Century City to identify birds and plants, followed by a visit to the nearby MTN Science Centre. The outing was sponsored by MTN and Shoprite Checkers.

At Intaka Island the official bird guides accompanied two groups on a walk around the ponds to the bird hides and identified the birds and plants along the way. Some of the youngsters who attended the Heritage Day outing to Intaka Island are pictured here with Bird Guide S'Khumbuzo Mbewu. The visit to the MTN Science Centre provided another exciting experience. All the children (and adults) had a great day, as evidenced by the "thank you" speech delivered by one on them in the bus on the way home. This appreciation appears in a shortened form below.



### A WORD OF THANKS TO FRIENDS OF BRACKEN NATURE RESERVE, INTAKA ISLAND & CHECKERS!!

#### On behalf of Everite Youth:

We want to thank you for the crucial things you have done for us. There are few or none, who would have done what you have done for our poor black community. You have done a great work in trying to turn our lives around. Honestly your mission is accomplished, because you have opened our narrow minds. To be honest, till now we haven't considered the nature reserve that is surrounding us as an essential thing. For us we have taken it as just bush which has nothing to do with us, but from the experience and the knowledge you have given us, we now acknowledge the importance of it and are aware of how we benefit. We now at last realise why it is important to have such beautiful environment. We wish to work hand in hand with you and promise that we will always be there for you. Whenever you need help please do not hesitate to consult us. We will welcome you with warm hands because you have shown us how kind and caring you are. It's indeed a privilege to have you next to us and may you please keep up the good and wonderful work.

## WE WILL SOON HAVE A WEBSITE!

We have long wanted a website, to put us properly "on the map" and now, at last, we have one! **Gregory and Petro Smallbones** (Valuables Properties) were very involved with Bracken Nature Reserve in the early days, before the formation of our Friends group. As a community service, they started a website at that time, which is now being revived and updated for us, free of charge! This will also be linked to the WESSA website. We warmly welcome Gregory and Petro into our fold as honorary members. To visit the site, go to [www.brackenfell.org/bracken](http://www.brackenfell.org/bracken).

## VLV DONASIE

Ons wil graag vir Mimi Pienaar en die VLV Bellville-Wes tak bedank vir hul skenking van 'n bedrag geld om 'n werklose persoon uit die gemeenskap vir 'n dag' in diens te neem op die reservaat. Bracken Natuur Reservaat personeel is in noue samewerking met die Everite gemeenskap en as gevolg hiervan is besluit om een van die werklose inwoners aan te stel vir 'n dag. Sikholiwe Sithela is gekies en het ons kom help met die skoonmaak van die inheemse tuin deur onkruid uit te trek en bourommel uit te spit. Hy het ons ook gehelp om 'n uitstalling te maak oor die gevare van brande. Die Brackenfell tak van VLV het ook 'n boom van die jaar, nl. Swartbas geskenk, wat reeds in die tuin geplant is. Baie dankie.



*Oorhandiging van die geld vir die dag se werk.*

## SOME RESERVE NEWS

Recent visitors to the nature reserve office will notice some improvements as the old asbestos roof has been replaced and a much needed parking area has been laid out (thank you, Eric!). Funding has been received from the Rowland & Leta Hill Trust and from a City Council Grant-in-Aid which will assist in the completion of Elzette's special project - the establishment of an educational garden at the entrance to the reserve. Paths have already been grassed and some planting has been done. Plans for a pond are also under way. Unfortunately the funding for proteas to be planted around the perimeter of the reserve arrived just too late to catch the winter rains, but we were able to plant 40 Cape Sugarbush (*P. repens*) in advance and these are doing well. The balance will be planted after the summer season. An arrangement has been made with a local nursery for the propagation of indigenous plants, which will help us greatly. Meetings will take place shortly to discuss the future use and renovation of some of the dilapidated buildings on the site, and we are optimistic about plans for the future of the reserve.

## A "THANK YOU" FROM ELZETTE

I would like to thank the Friends of Bracken for all their help and support over this year with regards to the Environmental Education Centre and the programme. Also a big thank you for motivating for funding for the indigenous/environmental education garden project. Last month we collected the grass for the footpath at 'Le Bois Lawns'. After we laid the grass, I was really impressed with how good the whole garden is starting to look. We still want to try and put in the pond this year and then 'Just Plants Nursery' will be propagating plants for us which we will hopefully start to plant late next year.

## A WORD FROM THE RESERVE MANAGER

First and foremost I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Friends of Bracken for all the assistance and support they have given to the Bracken Nature Reserve staff, without your support we would have not been able to achieve and complete most of the goals that we had set for this year. Your support is invaluable to the City of Cape Town Biodiversity Branch and to us. Here are some highlights of the year:

### Invasive plant species eradication

Clearing of invasive plant species such as Port Jackson and *Eucalyptus* has been one of the best accomplishments of the year, as this is one of the most serious threats to biodiversity. This project has also enabled us to create short-term employment, skills development and environmental education for the neighbouring local community.

### Rehabilitation and Search and Rescue

The rehabilitation programme for Bracken Nature Reserve is an activity that will need to be carried on for many years to come. Four "search and rescue" operations for indigenous vegetation have been conducted on various sites scheduled for development in the Brackenfell and surrounding areas. Approximately 500 plants were collected and planted on compatible soils within previously degraded areas of the reserve.

### Environmental Education

The Friends have played a major role in assisting our Environmental Education Officer, Elzette Klue, in providing environmental education programmes to the learners from several local and previously disadvantaged schools. In partnership with the Friends she managed to successfully host the Spring Festival held at Perdekop in September in which approximately 100 learners. To date almost 200 learners and more than 40 adults have taken part in various environmental education programmes presented by the staff of the reserve.

### The establishment of a faunal corridor between Bracken and Perdekop Nature Reserve

Urban development is expanding at an alarming rate and as a result poses a significant threat to the healthy functioning of natural ecosystems and biodiversity. More and more of our valuable conservation sites exist as isolated remnants, a good example being Bracken Nature Reserve and Perdekop Nature Reserve. The granite koppie adjacent to Perdekop, which is the private property of Crammix brick factory has the potential to act as a functioning corridor. The koppie consists of an ecotone of Cape Sand Plain Fynbos and Swartland Granite Renosterveld; both these vegetation types are highly threatened and irreplaceable. Therefore it is imperative that the site be managed as a conservation area, and we hope that this may be achieved in the future.

### Future projects

1. Eradication of invasive and exotic species
2. Job creation and skills development for the disadvantaged communities
3. Establishment of the corridor between Perdekop and Bracken Nature Reserve
4. Expansion of Environmental Education programmes
5. Upgrading and maintenance of infrastructure

Last but not least I would like to send my good wishes to all the members of the Friends of Bracken for the coming festive season.

## FoB PROGRAMME for January – June 2009

<b>Monday 19 January</b>	– <b>Bring &amp; Braai evening</b>
<b>Monday 9 February</b>	– <b>First committee meeting of the year</b>
<b>Monday 2 March</b>	– <b>General meeting with speaker (to be advised)</b>
<b>Saturday 21 March</b>	– <b>Belladonna Breakfast</b>
<b>Monday 6 April</b>	– <b>AGM with speaker (to be advised)</b>
<b>Monday 25 May</b>	– <b>Tielman Roos of Mooi Plaas will speak on the Biodiversity &amp; Wine Initiative</b>

Other speakers as well as special outings and events will be announced later. An **Open Day** is under consideration for June or July, and of course we will have our **Spring Event** in September. Members will be given details of all events beforehand, and notices will also appear in the *Tygerburger*. **Hacks** will be organised on a regular basis as before. Contact Eddie Allen at 021 982 4548 (h) to find out more.

For other enquiries you can contact Thea Weyers (Chairperson) at 021 982 3654 or 083 564 1106 or Jo Hobbs (Secretary) at 021 981 1275.

## THE HARMONY OF NATURE

Science teaches those who immerse themselves in it to know the workings of God in Nature, but the practice of science does more than this. As the depth of their understanding grows, its students cannot fail to learn the inter-dependence of all creation. This is even more than the brotherhood of man, this is the harmony of all nature. Furthermore, those who devote themselves to science, thereby learn humility.

**Magnus Pyke** (British scientist), *The Guardian* 1974

**AND FOR SOME HOLIDAY FUN, SEE OVERLEAF ⇨**

## EASY/MAKLIKE SUDOKO!

### DIRECTIONS

Find the initial numbers (1 to 9) to fill in on the grid by answering the NATURE questions on the left first. Then use the co-ordinates given for each number to enter on the grid. Now the Sudoku can be completed by filling the grid so that there is one number from 1 to 9 in every row, column and small block of nine.

### AANWYSINGS

Antwoord die NATUUR vrae aan die linkerkant. Elke antwoord is 'n getal van 1 tot 9 wat ingevul word op die rooster deur die gegewe koördinate te gebruik. Hierna kan die Sudoku op die gewone manier uitgewerk word sodat daar een syfer van 1 tot 9 in elke ry, kolom en blokkie van 9 verskyn.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									

*H1, C6, D2* [ \_ ]

Insekte het elk .... pote.  
Insects have.... legs each.

*G9, A8, H4, B5* [ \_ ]

Arende lê gewoonlik .... eiers per broeisel.  
Usually eagles lay .... eggs per brood.

*B2, H5, D7* [ \_ ]

Suuringblomme het .... blomblare.  
Oxalis (sorrel) flowers have .... petals.

*D8, C3, F1* [ \_ ]

Katte het glo .... lewens!  
Cats are believed to have .... lives!

*E7, B4, G5, D1* [ \_ ]

'n By kan jou .... maal steek.  
The number of times one bee can sting.

*H9, E2, D5, A6* [ \_ ]

Seekatte het .... tentakels.  
An octopus has .... tentacles.

*D9, A4, I2, C8* [ \_ ]

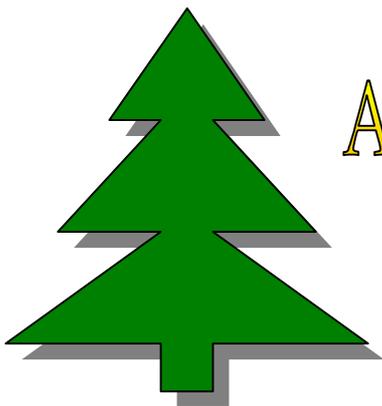
Voëlspore wys .... tone na voor.  
Bird tracks have .... toes pointing forward.

*A5, H8, G1* [ \_ ]

Daar is .... hoof windrigtings.  
How many main wind directions are there?

*G2, E4, I7* [ \_ ]

As 'n spinnekop 'n poot verloor, bly daar .... pote oor.  
The number of legs left if a spider should lose one leg.



A BLESSED CHRISTMAS TO ALL  
VOORSPOED VIR 2009

