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

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Newsletter of the Wildlife and Environment Society of  
South Africa Western Cape Region

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*Please acknowledge WESSA Western Cape if quoting from this newsletter.*

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAPE ENVIRONMENT

All material for inclusion in the next edition of *Cape Environment* should be forwarded to [shaune@wessa.wcape.school.za](mailto:shaune@wessa.wcape.school.za) or faxed to 021 701 1399 by **Monday 23 October 2006**. Please note where necessary articles may be shortened or edited.

## OUR VISION



**Celebrating 80 years of  
environmental action!**

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.

## Articles

### **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, APATHY AND FATIGUE!**

by Steve du Toit

There is a time period in all current decision-making processes where the power rests in the hands of the people, the “interested and affected parties”; the public of South Africa. It is called the public participation or stakeholder engagement phase.

Let us consider the critical role of public participation when:

- The water resources from the mountain catchments, along river courses and wetlands, through estuaries, to the oceans, are increasingly under threat.
- The Western Cape, one of Sa’s drier provinces, is home to three globally recognised biodiversity hotspots: the Fynbos, Succulent Karoo and Sub-Tropical Thicket biomes.
- Aquatic ecosystem functioning has broken down and species associated with the system have been lost in 97% of Western Cape rivers; at least 90% of the province's main ecosystems are endangered or critically endangered.
- Of the 250 estuaries in South Africa ranked in terms of their ecological and conservation importance, four of the top six fall in the Western Cape (Knysna, 1; Berg, 2; Oliphants, 3; and Swartvlei, 6).
- 50% of fish species in the Western Cape are endemic and 83% of these are threatened\*\*.
- 433 000 m<sup>3</sup> of industrial and domestic effluent is released into the surrounding aquatic systems per day in the Western Cape \*\*.
- Annual water demand exceeds availability in three of the four Water Management Areas covering the Western Cape.
- Since 1996, the Western Cape Province had the second highest population growth rate in the country (14.3%) and a population (in 2001) of 4.5 million\*. This growth was paralleled by a more than thirty-fold expansion of the city's urban footprint from 23 sq kms to 774 sq kms.
- Gasson (2002) further noted that Cape Town's metabolism consumes slightly less than 1 million tons of raw materials a day; 96% of this is freshwater. Only 5% of this freshwater inflow is recycled\*\*.

Creighton (1993) defined public participation as a mechanism by which the public is not only heard before the decision, but has an opportunity to influence the decision from the beginning to the end of the decision-making process. Greyling (1999) defined public participation as a process leading to a joint effort by stakeholders, technical specialists, the authorities and the proponent who work together to produce better decisions than if they acted independently\*\*\*.

Whether it is a decision to reduce fishing quotas, build a townhouse complex, approve the Provincial Spatial Development Framework, build a dam, or approve an inter-basin transfer scheme, all of these decisions require, at some point, input from the public.

There is a broad spectrum of legal resources and tools available to South Africans, which include:

- Legislation such as 1) the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) which recognises the need for the integrated management of all aspects of water resources and, where appropriate, the delegation of management functions to a regional or catchment level so as to enable everyone to participate and 2) the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998); where S24 allows members of the public to not only enforce environmental rights, but also promote the statutory entitlement of interested and affected persons to compel compliance with the law\*\*\*\*. A directive can be issued to stop the cause of significant pollution or degradation.
- Regulations under the NEMA, including the “listed activities”, or “EIA regulations”.
- Institutions created under the National Water Act, e.g.: Catchment Management Agencies (CMA); Water User Associations (WUA); Water Tribunals; Water Services Authorities; Water Services Committees; Advisory Committees etc.

- Guidelines such as the Guidelines for Golf Courses, Golf Estates, Polo Fields and Polo Estates in the Western Cape; Guidelines for Resort Developments in the Western Cape; Provincial Urban Edge Guideline; the DEAT Guidelines on Scoping etc.
- Spatial Development Frameworks (e.g. The Western Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework), as well as the local Municipal SDFs.
- Municipal Integrated Development Plans.
- Various initiatives (e.g. The Cape Action for People and the Environment (CAPE); the Subtropical Thicket Ecosystem Plan (STEP); Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme (SKEP); Garden Route Initiative (GRI); and the Gouritz Initiative (GI)

There are also lesser-known tools such as S17 of NEMA (Act 107 of 1998), which opens the door to facilitation, conciliation and arbitration processes which are less confrontational and costly than litigation.

However, despite being well-resourced, there appears to be a frustrating apathy with regard to input into decision-making processes. We, the public, either do not make full use of, or are not aware of this “window of opportunity” to really convey to developers, government and politicians our position on a matter.

The important cornerstone of successful public participation, especially during an EIA process is a win-win-win result, where an authorised activity is economically, socially and environmentally sound. In the Garden Route, for example, there are many retired financiers, farmers, actuaries, lawyers, scientists and other professionals. A financier could motivate that a lower density luxury tent proposal could be as financially viable as a walled golfing estate. A quantity surveyor could motivate that considerably less building materials would be required; a hydrologist could show that such an alternative would have a far smaller impact on the water resources of the area. A sociologist could show that the structure, traditions and culture of the local communities would not be negatively impacted upon, but rather reinforced through such a low-impact activity. And so on.

The solution is clear, be aware of one's surroundings (find out, at least, what is the status of the river nearest to your home or work), break through the cycle of ignorance and apathy, inform the media, officials, ratepayers associations and local leaders of problems, where possible familiarise yourself with guidelines and regulations and more importantly get involved!

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**Do not be ignorant! Work out your ecological footprint on [www.myfootprint.org](http://www.myfootprint.org)**

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## **FYNBOS ROAD**

Map reviewed by Andy Gubb

Well-known cartographer, Peter Slingsby, has produced a map of the Agulhas Plain, entitled "Fynbos Road". Not many people know this intriguing area of South Africa, which has many places of interest.

The Fynbos Road meanders through places with names full of mystery, romance and history Grootbos, Uilenkraal, Baardskeerdersbos, Elim, along the banks of the Nuwejaarsrivier to the Plains of Agulhas and on to the secluded beaches and wild reserves of De Hoop and Die Mond.

Peter developed the map with input from local people. Consequently, all the shipwrecks along the coast are identified, as well as unique birding areas, whale viewing sites, the extraordinary fynbos, hiking routes and the long and fascinating history of the area. From Hermanus and Danger Point, to Bredasdorp, Arniston and Witsand, there is a magic world waiting to be explored with this map to guide you.

The A2-sized map is double-sided at a scale of 1:160 000, with inset street maps of all the towns at larger scales. It is printed on hard-wearing paper, has a hard cover and a durable plastic sleeve. The map has full topographical detail and shows more than 30 types of tourism and other facilities. It

retails for approximately R50 and is available from bookshops, sports stores, tourism agencies and many local accommodation establishments. It is also available online from [www.themaps.co.za](http://www.themaps.co.za).

Detailed maplets of outstanding walks can also be freely downloaded.

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## DO YOU KNOW YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS

by Sam Ralston

*What are my environmental rights and how are these rights protected?*

*Who can I report infringements of environmental legislation to?*

*What does duty of care mean?*

*What is administrative justice and how can it be used to protect the environment?*

These are just some of the questions that consultants, officials and environmental NGO's are regularly asked by you, the public. Often we don't know the answers!

Environmental law can be complicated and confusing. To make things worse, it is also changing almost perpetually. There is also a large body of officials, within various departments, who are supposed to ensure that these laws are implemented. All this makes it very difficult for the average person to keep abreast of, and understand the law, let alone know how to bring a problem to the attention of the right authority. In the end it is the environment that suffers.

Help will be at hand shortly. The Western Cape Region, on behalf of WESSA National, is busy developing an Environmental Rights Book, with kind support from the Development Bank of Southern Africa, the Mazda Wildlife Fund and a handful of dedicated lawyers working on a voluntary basis (yes, you can get lawyers to do things for free - you just have to ask nicely). This book will attempt to answer some of the typical questions asked by concerned members of the public and should demystify the often-daunting field of environmental law. It is not intended to be a legal textbook and will not cover every morsel of environmental law. What it will do, is act as an entry point into the field of environmental law, and enable people to do something practical and immediate when they are confronted with an environmental problem.

Topics covered will include constitutional and administrative aspects of environmental law, resource conservation and pollution and waste management. A special section will be dedicated to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

No similar resource currently exists in South Africa, so watch this space, as the book should be completed by the end of this year!

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**Recycle: Deliver your glass, used oil, metals, paper, plastic (No. 1,2,4,5) to Recycling Depots such as Footprints Environmental Centre in Wynberg (794 5586).**

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Picture 1

## WHAT LIES BENEATH

by Steve du Toit

Under this tranquil scene (Picture 1), lies a fascinating history of events. Very recently, fynbos was destroyed so that golfers could enjoy playing "on the edge". But long, long before the game of golf was even conceived, our ancestors were hunting game, collecting plants, and living in caves directly under this golf course.



Picture 2

According to Dr Peter Nilssen of the South African Museum, people living in what is now termed the "Middle Stone Age" were, based on findings in the "Pinnacle Point" caves, Mossel Bay, using ochre for ornamental use as far back as 180 000 years ago (pers comm). Nilssen has uncovered 28 archaeological sites, 21 of which are within the Middle Stone Age (MSA), and 15 of those are caves or rock shelters. Two of the caves "yielded rich MSA horizons with outstanding preservation of fossil bone, and lithic assemblages" (Marean et al 2004).



Picture 3

The archaeologists excavating the one cave could not ask for a better view (Picture 2). However, when the Pinnacle Point Environmental Liaison Committee attended a site visit on 31 May 2006 (Picture 3), the crew were hard at work (Picture 4). Previous findings showed that "lithic assemblages are dominated by the early stages of artifact manufacture, and resemble typologically and technologically the regional variant of the MSA (the Mossel Bay Industry)" (Marean et al 2004). Who would have guessed that industry in Mossel Bay stretches back more than 100 000 years?!!!



Picture 4

While golfers play along the cliff edges of this ancient landscape, it is hoped that the "wise men" of the current generation will ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect what remains of our history.

## DIAPER DILEMMA

*"With current information, when determining the best diaper through an energy analysis, disposable diapers are preferred. However they produce substantially more solid waste. Cloth diapers produce half as much solid waste but use more water volume and produce more waterborne waste. Evaluating the best diaper depends on local conditions. If in a drought, it's best to use disposable diapers. If the area has landfill problems, it's best to use commercially laundered cloth diapers. If there are air pollution problems, resort to disposable diapers. The best diaper ultimately depends on the community's situation."*  
Complete article at <http://www.ilea.org/lcas/franklin1992.html>

**WESSA WESTERN CAPE 58<sup>th</sup> AGM AWARDS 2006** WESSA Western Cape held its' 58th AGM on the 21st June 2006. Dr Ian McCallum, a medical doctor, psychiatrist, analytical psychologist, specialist wilderness guide, writer and former Springbok rugby fullback delivered a fascinating talk on "Tracking the Human Animal" based on his book entitled "Ecological intelligence: rediscovering ourselves in nature (2005)". He currently is a Director of Invent Africa, a safari organisation dedicated to wilderness awareness (<http://www.inventafrica.com/>) and offers corporate leadership programmes based on the principles of ecological intelligence. The light refreshments and glühwein was enjoyed by all.



**VOLUNTEER (GROUPS) AWARD 2006** Award presented by WESSA Regional Manager, Andy Gubb (left), to James Forsyth, Friends of Tokai Forest for their efforts in developing a vegetation corridor and improving biodiversity in the Tokai area through alien clearing and wetland rehabilitation activities.

**VOLUNTEER (INDIVIDUALS) AWARD 2006** WESSA Senior Environmentalist, Patrick Dowling (left), presenting the award to Louis Raubenheimer for his indefatigable commitment to advancing action-based environmentalism and combatting the spread of alien invasive plants in the Western Cape.



**NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION AWARD 2006** WESSA Environmentalist, Ruth Massey, handing over the award to Michelle Sholto-Douglas (left) from Footprints Environmental Centre for their committed and pro-active work in the promotion of wise and sustainable resource use; effective waste management and hands-on environmental education.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANCY AWARD 2006** Nigel Titus (left) from CNdV Africa receiving the award from WESSA Environmentalist, Sam Ralston, for their progressive vision when developing the Western Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF) and so contributing significantly to sustainable development in the Western Cape.



**CORPORATE AWARD 2006** WESSA Western Cape's Regional Committee Chairperson, Louis de Villiers (centre) and Vice-Chairperson, Sharon Bosma (right), handing over the award to Raj Lochan of the ROSE Foundation for their dedicated efforts in promoting responsible recycling of used oil and for their pro-active approach to environmental education around sustainable resource use.



Receptionist: Maureen Ngubane, Bookkeeper: Alta Swanepoel and Project Assistant: Roshan Stanford. The Region's administrative staff who always work wonders behind the scenes.



David Nodolo (left) and Les McEwan who maintain the Region's beautiful fynbos garden. Les has been volunteering in the garden for an astounding 22 years!

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**Implement greener communication such as web conferencing to reduce your travel requirements.**

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**Calculate how much road, rail and air travel you or your business generates at [www.carbonneutral.com](http://www.carbonneutral.com)**

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### **UPDATE OF THE KEYSER RIVER RESTORATION PROJECT (KRRP)** by Chris Beattie

The vision is to rehabilitate and maintain the Keyser River to create a safe, healthy & ecologically functioning river, through the implementation of a socially responsible restoration project.

Two years ago, the project began with employing two river wardens to undertake the various maintenance tasks in terms of the Environmental Management Plan (EMP). Over time, it became clear that proper management of work on the ground was not cost effective relative to the amount of benefit seen. The Partnership now operates the project on a different basis and contracts the required maintenance and development work to developing contractors capacitated by the Working for Wetlands Programme.

The project has gained momentum and partnerships, which provide for financial resources, financial and logistical support and environmental management, has continued to grow with the addition of new business partners.

The KRRP partners include City of Cape Town, WESSA Western Cape, Working for Wetlands, WET-LAND Solutions, Kirstenhof Residents & Ratepayers Association, Pfizer Laboratories, Arvin Meritor, Gabriel, Tellumat, Edwoods, Market Toyota Tokai, ROSE Foundation, William Simpson and Syntell.

The project team has been active in re-aligning the Environmental Implementation Plan (EIP), which outlines all the on-the-ground contributions of the project partners and ascribes tasks to each one. These tasks are aligned toward the removal of litter, rubble, invasive terrestrial and aquatic

vegetation, increasing biodiversity by planting indigenous species and improving the aesthetics and security of the area.

Significant progress has been made over the last few months particularly in the areas of bank regrading and replanting of indigenous vegetation. In addition the signboards have been refurbished and a third board installed on Military Road. The signboard previously located on Tokai Road extension is being repositioned at the bridge on the Main Road thus providing additional visibility to the project. Aquatic monitoring is also undertaken by the project team on a quarterly basis to determine the impact of pollution and the ecological state of the river.

The future development of the area includes further shaping of banks and development to create a seasonal wetland surrounded by an appropriately planted earth berm protecting adjacent properties from flooding.

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**Choose products kinder to the environment and use suppliers who are implementing greener processes.**

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## **PARTNERSHIPS FOR HEALTHY RIVERS**

by **ANDY Gubb & Renee Hector - Kannemeyer**

WESSA Western Cape and the City of Cape Town have produced a handbook on how to develop vibrant partnerships between stakeholders who are committed to seeing the rivers of the City of Cape Town restored, rehabilitated, conserved and utilized. The project was sponsored by the Table Mountain Fund, an associate trust of WWF. A partnership is a potentially exciting and powerful way of approaching the restoration and conservation of the rivers in the City of Cape Town. They represent the truth of the adage that "the whole is more than the sum of its parts".

Partnerships can be difficult to form from a technical viewpoint and even more difficult to sustain. The handbook draws on successful experiences to guide the process of partnership formation. It will assist civil society groups, individuals, businesses and government to come together in a formal relationship aimed at managing local rivers through the sharing of resources and decision-making.

Although the handbook deals specifically with rivers and riverine habitats, its content is equally applicable to other habitats in need of restoration and management. It is a practical guide, outlining the description of and need for a partnership, who should be involved, how to establish a partnership and how to maintain a healthy partnership. Practical pointers on how to constitute an organisation, manage conflict and monitor and evaluate a project are all included. The appendices provide detailed information on the legal context for the development of a partnership, examples on how to draw up a memorandum of understanding and constitution and guidelines on how to develop a business plan.

**The Handbook is being distributed, at a nominal cost, by WESSA Western Cape. Please contact Roshan at 021 701 1397.**

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### **Ecological Footprint - What is it?**

*Ecological Footprint measures individuals, household's, cities, countries and the worlds consumption of natural resources and the biologically productive area required to produce these resources. Eco-footprint compares this to the planets biological capacity to renew these resources. It incorporates the total area required to produce and supply the food, energy, water and products people need and demand and to absorb the waste generated. Measure your ecological footprint <http://www.earthday.net/footprint/>*

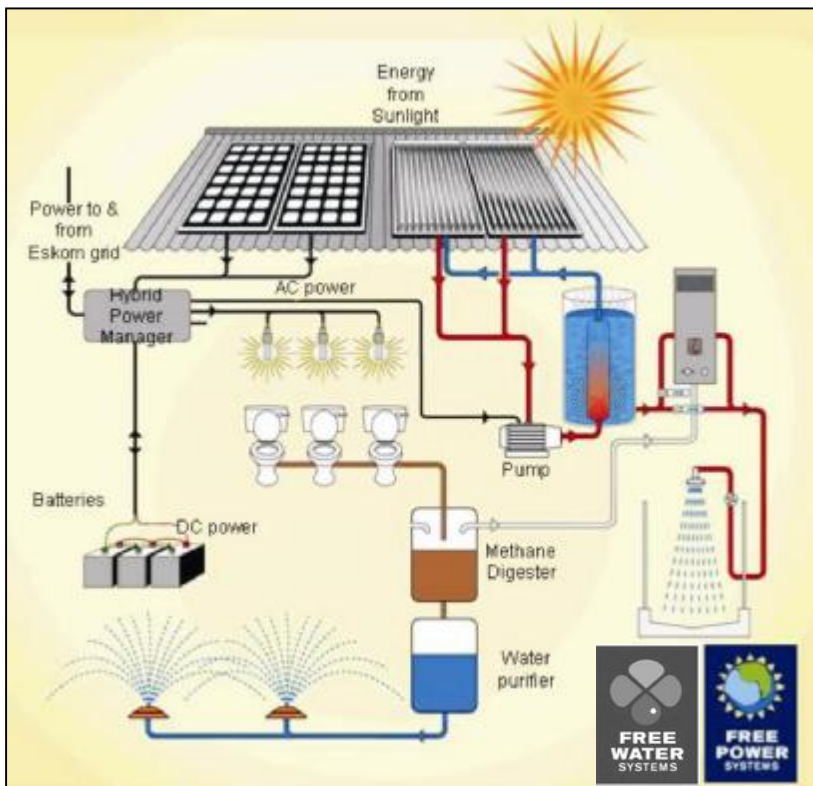
## REDUCING YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT PAYS

by Edward Murray (Free Water Systems)

***With the realisation that our water, air and power are not infinite resources, reducing our environmental footprint is no longer a concern, it is a necessity!***

Consider that a house requires three basic services: (family with two children, 3 bedroom, 90 m<sup>2</sup>)

- Water: 800 litres per day or 292 000 litres per year
- Electricity: 5.5 KW hours per day (no air-conditioning) or 2008 KW hours per year
- Sewage: 600 litres per day or 219 000 litres per year



For a Local Authority to approve a new 10 000 house development they have to plan for the provision of: 29 000 000 litres of clean drinkable water in a year, 200 000 KW hours of electricity and processing of 21 000 000 litres of raw sewage.

### ***Save Money!***

We cannot continue building more power plants, bigger sewage farms and larger dams. What we can do however, is take advantage of new technology to reduce the amount of electricity and water we consume. In the past, this has been perceived as an onerous task "making do with less". There are now "environmental assets" that you can buy that will reduce your water and electricity consumption, save money without sacrificing convenience, and will add value to your property.

### ***Solar water heating cost effective and an attractive household asset.***

Individuals and developers can reduce the amount of electricity a household consumes by installing solar water heating systems for the geyser and underfloor or radiator heating. Costly and relatively inefficient solar panel technology has been replaced by the new, 92% efficient, vacuum-tube technology ensuring that solar heated geysers pay for themselves within 2-4 years and can save up to 40% of your electricity bill.

### ***Depend less on conventional power suppliers***

Electricity from the sun using photovoltaic panels combined with maintenance-free batteries and a Hybrid Management System (using both energy from Eskom and solar panels) are becoming increasingly popular as the mains power supply becomes less dependable. The advantages of a solar power system is that unlike a generator that only works when switched on, it adds electricity to your house whenever the sun is shining, is silent, does not require fossil fuels and does not take up space in your garage.

Why not start with a few panels to provide back-up power and some power to the house and add more panels later if desired?

### **Save water, save costs**

With more people having access to running water, either water consumption will have to be restricted, or more dams (with the ensuing social and environmental problems) will have to be built. A response by some has been to use boreholes, which deplete groundwater, wetlands and vleis. Alternative, more environmentally friendly, options are to recycle your household water by 1) installing a grey water system to water your garden from recycled grey water or 2) installing a rainwater system to run your entire house on rainwater. The trapped rainwater is fed into the mains with a high pressure pump to maintain pressure and when the rainwater is expended, the system automatically switches to council water. A filter fitted to the water mains filters both rainwater and council water (and removes chlorine from council water). Rainwater can also be harvested for industrial use in factories.

These options considerably reduce your water bill. Other water saving devices include: fitting water efficient shower heads and taps (saving up to 50% of water and heating (electricity) costs).

Fitting a toilet stop (a small, stainless steel device) fitted to the cistern of your toilet allows your toilet to flush for as long as the handle is held down, instead of flushing 11 litres every time.

### **Digest this**

A new development in processing sewerage is a digester (used instead of a septic tank) which produces water output that is clear, odourless and free of E-Coli. The digester uses the natural build-up of methane and carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) (produced when sewerage is broken down) to asphyxiate bacteria before releasing a processed batch of liquid which can be used for irrigation and may be further processed with ozone and used to flush toilets.

**Anyone interested in purchasing an environmentally friendly asset can phone Edward or Kobus from Free Water Systems on 0860 SAVEWATER / 021 531 6471 or visit [www.freewater.co.za](http://www.freewater.co.za)**

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**Our “standby culture” is responsible for 1 000 000 tons of carbon being pumped into the atmosphere each year, making climate change a reality, so switch off lights, computers etc. at night.**

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## **What's happening in WESSA Western Cape branches**

### **WESSA Western Cape George Branch**

**By Lynne Thompson (Chairperson: Barry van Ginkel)**

Our June meeting attracted more than a full house to hear Jan Vlok, always a popular speaker, speaking on "The Wonders of the Little Karoo". Jan is not only passionate about his life's work but is an authority with a deep understanding of this subject. His images are captured with an artist's eye and never fail to elicit "Oohs & Aahs." He reflects on the sadness of habitat degradation and contrasts it with the optimism and joy of finding long-lost or new botanical species in unsuspected areas. For instance, Jan highlighted the change that global warming is likely to bring, but although rainfall patterns show a steady decline, there are still the amazing odd remnants of ancient subtropical vegetation.

The Branch set up a stand at the annual Garden Route & Klein Karoo Tourism Showcase in May. Poor attendance figures for the three-day show reflected the Georgian malaise of "Outeniqua rust". Our stand did attract a few new members. A map of current developments in George was on display and graphically illustrated the vast green areas earmarked for township development. This created a considerable amount of interest, as most people were unaware of the scale of these proposed developments. During the last three months, 20 new applications have been submitted for rezoning

and/or an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process in the George urban area. All these are major developments, including a proposed low-cost housing estate with an initial 15000 units and a R200 million tourist centre. The infrastructure in George, in common with many other Western Cape areas, is under stress to provide basic services, water availability being the main issue.

## **WESSA Western Cape Garden Route - Environmental Education Report** by Lorraine McGibbon

Some highlights:

Thanks to the passion and commitment of members of the Lakes Bird Club, we were able to visit 4 primary and 2 high schools in George and wet their appetites for bird watching and making more bird friendly environments both at a school and community level. Members in Knysna and Plett visited schools there. At least 2 George schools are signing up for regular bird talks with Peter Ginn, our local birding expert.

Outeniqua Primary School grade 4's celebrated the end of term with visits to the Outeniqua Nature Reserve where they walked the Forest Buzzard Trail. Teachers, learners and parents were delighted to find such a beautiful area on the perimeter of George and the teachers have indicated that they will be back to use the outdoor classrooms for forest, plantation, wetland and fynbos studies. The Mzoxolo Primary environmental club members saved up money and hosted a video show in order to hire the taxi so that they too could walk this trail on one of their club afternoons.

The SKEEP programme in the Oudtshoorn area is progressing well with learners and teachers from 12 schools in the Little Karoo visiting Minwater Farm for a 2-night camp. Our focus for these groups was around animals and birds and how they fit into the Little Karoo landscape and what we can do to keep their environment a healthy and safe one.

Ladismith High School is on track for becoming an environmental school. There was a good turnout of parents, teachers and community members to nominate a working group who will be responsible for drawing up the vision and mission of the school. In the meantime, the teacher and those of us who are supporting the school, visited Berg-en-Dal Farm to find out more about permaculture, cobbing and reducing your eco-footprint. The possibilities are so exciting!

## **WESSA Western Knysna Branch** by Ian Withers

### **FUNDRAISING:**

The Knysna Branch, along with the various Southern Cape branches is working towards a fundraising blueprint. If this is successful, it may be expanded to other areas. Russel Smart has been approached to formally raise funds on behalf of WESSA to help sustain both the George office and our Environmental Education endeavours. Russel is well qualified to deal with this on a professional basis and showed enthusiasm when approached. Watch this space!

### **CONSERVATION:**

Margo McKay passed away 19th May 2006 just before her 90th birthday. She was a champion for the Knysna Elephants and was responsible for WESSA in the Southern Cape. She wrote a WESSA publication: "The Knysna Elephants and Their Forest Home". All proceeds of which she dedicated to environmental education. A short clip on her work and dedication to WESSA was screened on the 50/50 TV program. Margo was also responsible for promoting the Pledge Park and her unflinching conservation endeavours will be long remembered.

We are pleased to report that Greg McCullough who was previously appointed as Knysna's Environmental Control Officer is now consulting for the Municipality in this position. A post that the Knysna Branch fought hard and long for to achieve.

## ACTIVITIES:

All incumbent members of the Knysna committee were re-elected en bloc at our recent AGM held on the 27th May.

A power point presentation titled "The Burnt Piliansburg Elephants" was well received at a recent bring and braai at the Knysna Elephant Park hosted by Lisette Withers.

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## SOUTHWINDS GUEST HOUSE SIMONSTOWN



"South Winds" is a luxury, self-catering, wooden bungalow situated directly on the rocks at Castle Rock Marine Reserve on the Cape Peninsula. It is a conservation haven for a diverse and colourful marine ecosystem and a playground for scuba divers and rock pool enthusiasts. It is only 5km from the charming village of Simon's Town.

**Mention WESSA Western Cape and 10% of booking fee will be donated to the organisation.**

There are three fully-furnished double, well-appointed, sunny bedrooms, an immaculate open plan kitchen, double sized lounge/dining room with a wood burning fire, viewing deck and 160 degree views of the ocean and surrounding mountains.

To make your reservation or to find out more about what "South Winds" has to offer, please email Sonia Last ([sonia@capeherb.com](mailto:sonia@capeherb.com)) or call her on 701 5140.

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## Networking

### BRENTON BLUE BUTTERFLY

The Brenton Blue butterfly, *Orachrysops niobe* (Trimen) is currently only known to be extant at one locality in the southern Cape (the Brenton Blue Butterfly Reserve = BBR), and currently globally Red Listed as "Critically Endangered". In David Edge's PhD thesis entitled, "Ecological factors influencing the survival of the Brenton Blue butterfly *Orachrysops niobe* (Trimen) (Lepidoptera : Lycaenidae)", he investigates the life history and ecological interactions of *O. niobe* and recommends management techniques for the BBR. For more information contact David on email: [daveedge@telkomsa.net](mailto:daveedge@telkomsa.net) or Tel: 044 3810014.

## **FRIENDS OF BRACKEN NATURE RESERVE (FoB)**

A small group of "Bracken Friends" has been meeting regularly since February, and we are currently in the process of formalising our WESSA Friends membership as Friends of Bracken Nature Reserve, or FoB for short.

Bracken Nature Reserve is 35 ha in extent, situated partly on the site of an old granite quarry used until recently as a landfill area. There is also a 5 ha "dog leg" extension on a granite koppie which was previously the site of an old signalling canon. This section offers stunning 360° views, but is not yet open to the public. Eventually it is hoped that a short hiking trail will link this with the main section of the reserve.

The reserve is still in the early stages of development but it is already open to the public every day of the week. Paths are being laid out, and there are benches in the picnic area with splendid views of Table Mountain. The vegetation is West Coast Renosterveld and Sand Plain Fynbos and it has been identified as a core botanical conservation site. Two rare plants have recently been recorded. To our great delight we now have an Environmental Education Centre (still completely empty!), and a nearby cottage has been renovated for use as the Reserve Manager's office. During the past few months we have organised introductory walks in the reserve and members have busily been planting around the entrance to the reserve and the centre. We shall be celebrating Spring on Friday and Saturday 1 & 2 September 2006, when we hope to show local residents what the reserve has to offer, and to recruit more members.

Anyone who would like more information can phone Thea Weyers at (021) 982-3654 or Jo Hobbs at (021) 981-1275.

## **FRIENDS OF THE RONDEBOSCH COMMON**

**BETTY'S BOOK:** We are at present trying to publish a book of paintings by flora artist and nature lover, our own Betty Dwight. Betty has painted scenes from the Common all her life and this book would be a tribute to Betty now in her early eighties. The book will also be an important treasure trove representing the diversity of plant life on Rondebosch Common.

We are looking for sponsors as we need to raise some R50,000 to make the project a reality. We would like 10 companies / individuals to donate R5,000 each. Anyone who may be able to help please contact our Chairperson, Tim ([Rondebosch-common@mweb.co.za](mailto:Rondebosch-common@mweb.co.za)), or Joanne (Tel: 685-3451), who can provide you with a portfolio to present to a possible donor.

**HISTORY PAMPHLET:** Our history pamphlet has been finalised and was launched at our AGM in May. It enables visitors to observe the changes, over time, in the size of the Common. It also indicates historical buildings in the immediate surrounds of the Common and you will learn about the various uses to which this very old commonage has been put in years long gone.

Details from Joanne 685-3451 or Sue 686-8968

**WETLAND NEWS:** Restoration of the wetland is all but complete after three months of intensive work. A proper pathway has been created around the Kikuyu grass area, which the many walkers or joggers can include in their circuit of the Common. We still need to construct the main entrance to the Common, and put up signage, both informative and educational. Planting will take place around the main entrance area, using our own indigenous plants.

Recovering part of the old wetlands has been a long-time aim of the Friends. It will become an important asset to both the local community and the surrounding schools as an outdoor classroom. Different habitats have been created for wading birds, plant varieties and for tadpoles. At the moment two species of frog live on the Common and we hope that more will return.

The Friends could not have embarked on this exciting project without the help and support of our generous donors, Roland & Leta Hill Trust Fund, the City of Cape Town, Freshwater Consulting and all the volunteers. We now have to wait patiently for the winter wetland area to re-establish itself.

We welcome your comments to [Rondebosch-common@mweb.co.za](mailto:Rondebosch-common@mweb.co.za) or you can write to POB 41, Rondebosch 7701.

### **FRIENDS OF RIETVLEI**

At the end of 2005 there was a fire in the reserve near the Otto du Plessis bridge where it crosses the Diep River. This area has been sprayed to eradicate kikuyu grass. The area is now being rehabilitated with restios that have been rescued from the bulldozers at Century City. Keep a look out for this patch when you are driving to or from Milnerton.

Alien vegetation clearing (mostly Port Jackson and rooikrans) has been undertaken by contractors along the Milnerton Ridge boundary, Sanccob area, Waves Edge area, Flamingo Vlei boundary and up the Diep River adjacent to Gie Road.

Controlled burning is being done on suitable days in the "bird hide block". This is to eradicate brush piles that were stacked after the chopping down of rooikrans. The Working for Wetlands team have propagated suitable pioneer plants that will be planted in the area shortly. The plants that were planted out as part of this project last winter are generally growing well.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

The proposed extension and upgrading of wastewater treatment and associated infrastructure in the Blaauwberg Area final scoping report is now available at Table View library. You can also access the report from the consultants, CCA Environmental on [www.ccaenvironmental.co.za](http://www.ccaenvironmental.co.za). The committee has commented on this study previously, expressing concern that Potsdam wastewater treatment works will once again be enlarged and therefore impacting directly on Rietvlei. Following this scoping phase the project will be going into environmental impact assessing of the chosen options. The proposed bulk water storage and supply to Blaauwberg development area study is at the stage of draft scoping report. This will be made available from the consultants Ninham Shand shortly. Look out for notification of an Open Day that should be advertised in the local press shortly.

### **FRIENDS OF THE LIESBEEK**

Autumn and Winter have kept the Liesbeek Maintenance Project work team busy with the extra chores of sweeping leaves and unblocking drains. The removal of invasive aliens such as poplar saplings, canna indica, wild ginger, balloon vine, moth catcher creeper and triffid weed continues. Forty-four indigenous trees – yellow woods, ilex mitis (Cape holly), rooiels, Cape ash, wild peach and curtis dentata (assegaai hout) have been planted on the Sans Souci to Main Road reach. We thank City Parks for providing the trees. With the canna indica having been dug out prior to the planting, numerous positive comments have been made about how good it is to actually see the river and enjoy the sightings of the African black ducks.

The half-yearly report on the project is available to anyone wanting it. Contact Liz on 671-4553.

Our thanks go to our sponsors – SA Breweries, WP Rugby, Tuffly Brands, Newlands Residents Association and individual Friends.

On 4 June (Environmental Sunday) a group went on a walk along the river from Winchester Avenue to the riverine park in Bishopscourt Village where we had a picnic tea. Access to the Liesbeek is now possible for persons in wheelchairs due to the completion of a 65 metre long boardwalk. This has been constructed by an Extended Public Works Programme team

from the Table Mountain National Park. The funding for this was obtained from the Cape Town City Council. Joan Parker spoke on the ongoing rehabilitation and planting of indigenous flora on the banks done by residents in the area as well as by Mathew Moetsi whose salary is sponsored by ERA STEER Constantiaberg. The promising winter rains bode well for a good spring show.

### **ARENDHOOGTE BIRD OF PREY CENTRE, GARDEN ROUTE**

Finally the sun came out and Gerrit du Plessis High School could enjoy the celebrations of National Bird Week at the Garden Route Bird of Prey Centre. A big thanks to our other facilitators Rhett Hiseman (CapeNature) and Retha Benade (Hessequa Animal Protection Society). 152 pupils at once is quite heavy going!



### **FRIENDS OF TYGERBERG HILLS**

The Tygerberg Nature Reserve commenced with rehabilitation of the Plattekloof dam within the reserve. The rehabilitation project is run with close support and guidance from CapeNature's Fresh Water Ecology expert, The Nature Conservation Corporation and The Friends of the Tygerberg Hills. The vision is to restore this dam to its original natural state and mitigate undesirable blue green Algae blooms, which occur in the system due to the oversupply of nutrients, particularly phosphorus. The origin of these nutrients is not yet conclusive but may be due to a combination of a poorly structured fish population, loss of water plants, contributions from waterfowl as well as existing reserves of nutrients within the pond. To complete this project the following three stages will be executed (a) Removal of the exotic alien fish species from the dam, predominantly Carp and Tilapia. Carp are often responsible for poor water quality and turbidity of dams as they turn up mud and feed on the aquatic vegetation within the dam; (b) Replanting indigenous aquatic vegetation, such as Potamogeton pectinatus in the dam that will improve the water quality, aid in nutrient recycling, provide shelter and food for future indigenous fish species and provide nesting material for water birds and; (c) Restock the dam with indigenous endemic fish such as Cape Galaxia and Cape Kurper that will aid in the natural ecological processes of the water system.

Reserve management is in the process of extending the boundaries of Tygerberg Nature Reserve by the proclamation and inclusion of five City of Cape Town owned Erven bordering the reserve.

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## **Diary**

### **FRIENDS OF LIESBEEK RIVER**

Hacking & Weeding: 1st Wednesday of each month. Meet at 9am at Protea, Winchester Avenue, Bishopscourt. If you would like to help on any other day do please let us know. Contact: Liz on 671-4553 or Belinda on 531-5023

### **FRIENDS OF THE RONDEBOSCH COMMON**

Spring flower rambles lead by flower expert on: 6 Aug, 27 Aug, 17 Sept, 1 Oct, 22 Oct, 5 Nov. Start 11.30 and home for lunch. Meet on grass area Campground Road side of Common. Bring money for cards, donations or membership. All are welcome. Wear wellies or old shoes. GROUPS of approx 10 people can arrange other times. Best time is between 10 am and 2 pm when most flowers are open. More details call Sue 686-8968 or Joanne 685-3451

## **SIMON'S TOWN FLORA CONSERVATION GROUP**

### **SATURDAY HACKS 05/08/06 02/09/06 07/10/06**

Venue: ELSIES PEAK

Meet at top of Golconda Road, Glencairn Heights @ 14:30 17:30

### **SUNDAY HACKS 20/08/06 17/09/06 15/10/06**

Venue: REDHILL

Meet at Pinehaven on Redhill @ 09:30 12:00

### **TUESDAY HACKS 19/09/06 17/10/06**

Venue: DORRIES DRIVE

Meet at far end of Dorries Drive, Froggy Pond @ 09:30 12:00

### **SPECIAL HACKS SATURDAYS 26/08/06 09/09/06**

Venue: WOODLANDS 23/09/06 14/10/06 28/10/06

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 Elsie's Peak every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday afternoons. For details contact Iluska Allen Tel: 021 782 2736

### **WALKS (FYNBOS RAMBLES)**

Every 4th SUNDAY of the month: DAY WALKS of approximately 5 hours, weather permitting. For details contact: Claire McCarthy Tel: 021 789 1334. Bring a picnic lunch and warm and waterproof clothing on all walks. NB: All walks are undertaken at own risk.

## **WESSA WESTERN CAPE HOTTENTOTS HOLLAND BRANCH**

### **16 August – Meeting**

'Kenya in the Rainy Season' by Otto Schmidt. Otto is a well known nature enthusiast and birdwatcher and combines these two passions with another - photography. He has recently returned from Kenya where he visited most of the national parks and game reserves.

### **3 September Outing**

We visit Tygerberg Nature Reserve, where an astounding 473 plant species on the largest patch of Renosterveld remaining in the Cape Metropolitan Area. Hestelle Mellville, the Education Officer at the Kristo Pienaar EEC has agreed to be our guide. Meet us at the Library hall at 08:30 or meet us there at 09:30.

### **20 September Meeting**

Dr Jurie van den Heever, a paleontologist from the University of Stellenbosch, will give a talk on the evolution of mankind and what it means for us humans today.

### **1 October Outing**

We will visit the Blaauwberg Conservation Area on the West coast, only 25 km from Cape Town. Spring flowers should be in abundance and this area also boasts 25 red data plant species.

### **18 October Meeting**

Cate Brown, a river ecologist, will give a talk on the conservation of rivers. The exact title will be confirmed at a later date.

## **FRIENDS OF SILVERMINE NATURE AREA**

For all walks remember to wear good rubber soled walking shoes. Bring warm windproof clothing, something to eat and plenty of fluids NB. FOR ALL WALKS PLEASE PHONE THE CONVENOR TO BOOK

- Thursday 31 August 08:00: Meet top of Glencairn Freeway, Convenor : HB, Black Hill Circular walk
- Saturday 2 September 14:00: Meet at Gate 1 Convenor : JC, Hack with Jays Happy Hackers
- Sunday 3 September 13:30: Meet at Gate 2 Convenors : SB & CMC, A circular route via Muizenberg Cave with a little hacking on the way
- Thursday 7 September 08:00: Meet at Jan Smuts Drive Simonstown, Convenor : HB, Up to Swartkop
- Thursday 14 September 08:00: Meet at Gate 1, Convenor : RD, Elephants Eye Lookout
- Saturday 16 September 13:30: Meet at Gate 1, Convenor : YV, River Trail Bokkop
- Thursday 21 September 08:00 - 12:30: Meet at Gate 2 Convenor : DL, Down Ou Kaap Pad up Silvermine Valley. Good walk to stretch those legs
- Thursday 28 September 08:00: Meet at Reservoir parking, Convenor : SW, Three Peaks Views over Hout Bay. Lots of energy needed
- Sunday 1 October 13:30: Meet at TMNP entrance gate Glencairn Heights, Convenors : SB & CMC, A circular walk up Elsie's Peak with a short interlude of hacking on the descent. Beautiful views
- Thursday 5 October 08:00: Meet behind the stone church at Kirstenbosch, Convenor : HB, Walk down to Josephine Mill for tea if it is open
- Saturday 7 October 14:00: Meet at Gate 1, Convenor : JC, Hack with Jay
- Sunday 15 October 13:30: Meet at Gate 2, Convenor: YV Views over Kalk Bay St James
- Thursday 19 October 08:00: Meet Constantia Nek parking, Convenor: RD, Constantia Nek to Kirstenbosch
- Saturday 21 October 13:30: Meet at Gate 2, Convenor : HB, Gentle walk to Berties
- Thursday 26 October 08:00: Meet at the Kom, under the palms, Convenor : Ellen, Longbeach

**WR - 785 1477, SB - 785 1477, CMC - 789 1334, JC - 715 2074, SW - 715 1708, HB -782 5079, YV - 788 5620, DL - 788 1712, RD - 712 2616, PR - 788 9469, B&F - 782 5350**

## **WESSA WESTERN CAPE GEORGE BRANCH**

Tuesday 22 Aug: Saasveld Students have recently spent time in various National Parks as study sites for their practical module for the Nature Conservation Diploma. Each covered a different topic and it will be most interesting to view the presentations of a few selected budding conservationists who have impressed their mentor. Coming events: Nature ramble: "Turtles - the canaries of the area", "Snakes Alive" Please watch local press for dates and details. Enquiries: Lynne 044 889 0165

## **FRIENDS OF TYGERBERG HILLS**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS: Quick Guide:**

- August 26 Walk in reserve at 15h00
- August 26 CREW outing to Uitkamp
- August 29 CREW interest group meeting
- September 2 Hack at 8h45, Place to be announced
- September 5 Botanical talk on Lobostemons
- September 9 Walk in reserve at 8h00
- September 16 CREW outing to Stellenbosch
- September 21 CREW outing to Holcim
- September 23 Walk in reserve at 16h00
- September 26 CREW interest group meeting

October 3 Enviro talk  
October 7 Walk in reserve at 15h00  
October 14 Hack at 8h45, Place to be announced  
October 21 CREW outing to De Grendel

**WALKS:** See Quick Guide for dates and times!

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 something to drink and wear appropriate walking / hiking shoes! For general information on the walks, please contact Jurg on 083 701 8496 or [jurgz@mweb.co.za](mailto:jurgz@mweb.co.za)

### **KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR OUR NEW "WINE WALK"**

**HACKS:** Our weekend hacks take place every second Saturday of the month (see Quick Guide). Wear old clothes; bring gloves, saws, loppers and plenty of water/cool drink and a snack. Mid-week hacks take place on an ad hoc basis For details or to be placed on our hacker's list contact Neville at 021 671 2766

**CREW (Custodians for Rare and Endangered Wildflowers).** Every last Tuesday of the month at 19h30 the CREW interest group meets at the Kristo Pienaar EE Centre. This is an opportunity to learn from each other as we prepare and share information on plants from our area. Contact Ince 082 506 1800 or Karen 021 945 2855 for info.

### **KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR REGULAR BOTANICAL AND ENVIRO TALKS**

#### **FRIENDS OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE**

Our next get-together will be on 24th Sept. Venue to be decided. We would be delighted if you could forward your remittance to the Treasurer. Ron Zeeman can be contacted on 788 1918. **WALKS:** 20 Aug, 17 Sept, 15 Oct, 19 Nov: Contact Jayne McDermid on 785 3928

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## **Important Dates to Remember** **FOR AUG, SEPT & OCT**

- 20 – 26 Aug: World Water Week
  - 1 – 7 Sept: National Arbor Week
  - 11 - 17 Sept: National Cleanup Week
  - 9 – 15 Oct: National Weed-buster Week
  - 16 – 17 Oct: National Marine Week
-

## Thanks to:

- the “Lick ‘n Stick” team, Mrs Goodchild and the Kirstenhof Primary School children who ensure that this newsletter reaches you.
- the members and friends of WESSA Western Cape who offer their time and services willingly and at short notice.
- 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:-**

- EC van Wulven
- The Lynette Croudace Charitable Trust
- Estate Late JC Davey

### **WESSA Western Cape Funders: WESSA Western Cape would like to acknowledge the funders of its various projects. They are as follows:**

- ArvinMeritor A & ET SA (Pty) Ltd
- City of Cape Town
- Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
- Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism Social Responsibility Project Department
- Development Bank of South Africa
- Gabriel SA (Pty) Ltd
- Market Toyota Tokai
- Pfizer Laboratories (Pty) Ltd
- Syntell (Pty) Ltd
- Tellumat (Pty) Ltd
- The Wallace Global Fund
- William Simpson
- WWF Table Mountain Fund

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

- Rose Foundation
  - Woolworths
-

## WESSA Annual Membership Fee

- Regional (Cape Environment) – R80
- EnviroKids & Regional newsletter – R150
- African Wildlife & Regional newsletter - R225  
(for over 65s/ under 25s) – R130
- EnviroKids & African Wildlife & Regional newsletter – R285
- Clubs/Education – R200
- Affiliates (Friends & Institutions) – R400
- Small business – R1500
- Corporate – R6500
- Patron – R15000

**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](mailto: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](mailto:maureen@wessa.wcape.school.za) OR go to  
[www.wessa.org.za/organisationmember.htm](http://www.wessa.org.za/organisationmember.htm)

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