



KWAZULU-NATAL CONSERVANCIES ASSOCIATION

www.nacsa.org.za **THE GUINEAFOWL NEWSLETTER NO 2 – 2011**

Conservancy Birthdays

- 33 years: Balgowan
- 32 years: Beaumont-Eston
- 31 years: Dargle, Mid-Illovo, Kamberg, Umzumbe
- 30 years: Baynesfield, Paddock Plains, Kranskop, Umgenyane
- 29 years: Eshowe-Entumeni, Mooi River Valley
- 26 years: Umtamvuna
- 25 years: Lion's Bush
- 24 years: Fairfield Estates, Pholela Biosphere, Melmouth, Zinkwazi
- 23 years: Valhalla, Formosa/Wagonsdrift
- 22 years: Hattingspruit, Silversands
- 21 years: Blythedale, Mount Royal, Renishaw, Mbona Mountain, Heatonville
- 20 Years: Nyalazi, Everton, Umdloti, Umgeni Estuary, Byrne Valley
- 19 years: Umvoti Vlei
- 18 years: Padfield Manors, Davelshoek, Yellowwood Park
- 17 years: Efaye, Ivanhoe Farming, Kearsney College
- 16 years: Kloof, Ferncliff Catchment, Umvuzi, Kwambo, Assagay, Mtunzini
- 15 years: Lake Victoria, San Lameer, Richmond/Marianhill, Drummond, Gillets, New Germany
- 14 years: UKZN-Howard College, Summerveld
- 13 years: Ivungu, Cato Ridge/Thornridge, Dolphin Coast, Karkloof
- 12 years: Sungulwane
- 11 years: Clansthal, Nkoxweni
- 10 years: Thomas More, David Hall
- 9 years: Crestholme, Upper South Coast, Westville, Marianhill Landfill, Esikhaleni, Dundee FA
- 8 years: Ganan-Eden, Southbroom, Northern Drakensberg
- 7 years: Tugela Mouth, Edgewood Campus
- 6 years: Umbilo River Valley
- 5 years: Camelot EG, Lower Mpushini, Upper Mpushini
- 2 years: Bulwer Biosphere, Kongweni, Masifunda (UKZN Pmb campus), Seaforth
- 1 year: World's View

Montrose Conservancy (Dundee) not included

Chairman's Chatter

I feel that Conservancies are the only way for SA to retain or improve the goals towards reaching our 'Biodiversity' targets. Briefly in that the owner/lessee of a property 'voluntarily' undertakes to manage their property for the betterment of the environment. This has to be done in partnership with other NGO organizations and the Provincial Nature Agency. In August your Committee together with Waldo Bekker (EKZNW) thrashed out hopefully the last draft for the Memorandum of Association. Waldo then sent the draft out for comment with a deadline. He will now include these in his final draft.

An MOA will require certain 'goods and services' to be delivered by both parties. In the Conservancies case we will be obliged to provide an annual report. I would like each conservancy to submit short quarterly reports to the Secretary for an annual report by the Association. It is only by substantiating the work we do that EKZNW can access resources to assist us. Even seemingly insignificant contribution's, in the bigger picture makes a difference.

EKZNW are in the middle of a restructuring phase causing a delay in a replacement for Jamie Physics post. Hopefully we will have someone more dedicated to the post of Conservancies. With official recognition the Association would be a better position to access funding, to be able to employ a co-ordinator to be able improve the network of conservancies throughout the province. We would like to see regional forums (eg Dargle) where geographically grouped conservancies can meet with a person to report to the main body.

Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances Gary Edwards resigned as treasurer and Tony Wint has taken over. Thanks both for the time put in. Remember that your 'subscriptions' are important for the running of the Association with no other source of income. We need Conservancies to notify the KZNCA secretary annually as to changes in the Committee and confirm addresses and numbers.

Keep up the good work and let's continue to make a difference.

Malcolm Stainbank



Conservancies activities

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Baynesfield Beacon Hill Camelot</p> | <p>Oribi Count 22, CREW grassland visit Started Friends of Beacon Hill group The Keep Hillcrest Beautiful forum is setting up a project concerning all the conservation interested parties in the Durban outer west (called Conservation Outer West or C.O.W.). Roelie Kloppers from Wildlands trust will be speaking on Tuesday 18 October at 17h30. All welcome. For more details contact Tony Wint.</p> | <p>Lower Mpushini Had their annual Aloe Festival and also took part in a cleanup for Environment Day Masifunda Frog evening, burning in early August – burning grasslands in an urban environment requires special permission and is a challenge particularly with some members of the public. Mtunzini Fighting a mining application 100m from a residential suburb. They had an outing to Amatikulu Nature Reserve Pholela Biosphere Game count Toti Follow them on Facebook. Members have an active interest in their environment. They have endangered Spotted Ground Thrush. They took part in the World clean-up day. UKZN Edgewood Campus and Richmond Marianhill Industrial Conservancy Had a Seminar on “Water Quality in a time of changing climate” Umtamvuna Donated R10 000 to Port Edward Primary School to rehabilitate a wetland on the property. Had a spring Wildflower walk at Umtamvuna Nature Reserve. Winterskloof Cleaning up along the Railway line World’s View Recently registered.</p> |
| <p>Drummond Greater Midlands</p> | <p>Conservancy Forum – started by Andrew Anderson of Dargle Cvy includes Balgowan, Boston, Dargle, DUCT Howick, Forkspring, Kamberg, Karkloof, Lion’s Bush, Mhlangeni, World’s View, Winterskloof. Between them they have 4 potential Stewardship sites Game count and Star-gazing Benvie Open Gardens Recently registered Members set up a Poachers Forum including representatives from the Police force who committed one of their members to handle wildlife cases. The forum also identified a prosecutor.</p> | |
| <p>Ingomankulu Karkloof Kongweni</p> | | |

Camelot Environmental Group

Some 30 years ago, an old farm was discovered by developer Richard Gaylord. Richard’s long term vision was to create a magical place, with castles and Tudor villages. With this in mind he purchased the Hillcrest farm, gave it the medieval name Camelot, and pursued his dream. Today, Camelot Estate has castles and Tudor villages, with lakes, ponds, dams and nature trail.

The Camelot Environmental Group, (CEG), was formed 1998, with approval from the developer. Conservation was a priority, and many projects were completed over the years. The first and most pressing problem was Lake Avon, which was completely covered with alien vegetation. Parrot Feathers, and Kariba Weed, (escapees from aquariums), were the worst offenders, and residents could literally walk on water. Many unsuccessful methods of removal were tried. Eventually, manual labour proved to be successful. Today, water clearing is ongoing, and lakes sparkle. Indigenous vegetation entices many birds to reside here. Large birds perch on loafers around the waterways.

Over the years Camelot’s bird list named some 200 species. Fish are plentiful, and large carp weigh 12kg. There is a catch and release programme. Amphibians are often spotted in and around the waterways.

The grasslands are home to many birds, mammals, reptiles, creepy crawlies and stunning butterflies. Where possible alien growth is removed, using herbicide and manual labour.



Grasslands are burnt on a rotational basis during the winter months.

Seats on the nature trail invite walkers to take a break and admire the scenery. Pathways, waterways and trees are named. Hundreds of indigenous trees are planted on the nature trail, Bird Island, and Golf Course. The bimonthly Camelot Environment News keeps residents up to date with all flora and fauna sighting throughout the estate.

Camelot is the perfect place for “happily ever after-ing”



Invasive Alien Plants

Bramble, American Bramble, *Rubus hybrids*

Google “Bramble” and you get very little information. Most of this information comes from a conversation we had with Malcolm Stainbank recently.

Brambles belong to the rose family Rosaceae and they come from the south-east of the United States. They have successfully invaded our grasslands from low altitudes right up into the Drakensberg.

Brambles spread by underground suckers. They send up spikes of white flowers in spring.

Spraying the plants with herbicides while they are flowering will have no effect.

Spray “Brush-off” onto the foliage after January. The plant takes the herbicide down to the roots as it builds up its re-



serves in the root system for the winter. “Brush off” is selective so will not kill everything around it as well.

Reference: WESSA-KZN Handbook on Invasive Alien Plants.



‘Green Scorpions’ – what are these elusive creatures, Part 2

In the last edition of the *Guinea fowl* we looked at what a “green scorpion”, or EMI is. In this issue we look at where they are to be found within the plethora of government departments and suite of relatively new environmental legislation out there. In order to make this a simpler task let’s look at the issue by unpacking what each agency/department has by the way of enforcement personal and powers.

National Department: Water & Environmental Affairs (DWEA)- DWEA is most likely to have the most EMI’s within a consolidated department, however, their focus will largely be on the bigger conglomerates, such as the private waste processing and metal works industries as well as matters that are of a national interest, such as the erection of ports and airports.

KZN Provincial Department: Environmental Affairs & Rural Development (DEARD)- This is the provincial organ of state directly mandated to enforce the provisions of NEMA. These will include some of the provisions under the SEMA’s as well. They will police matters such as unauthorized/environmentally irresponsible development (in terms of the list of activities requiring authorization), Pollution and waste.

KZN Wildlife (EKZNW): Although strictly not an organ of state (as defined under the Constitution) this is a parastatal with

mandates in terms of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (SEMA’s). All biodiversity and wildlife crime is dealt with by this agency and they do have personal that are designated as EMI’s.

National Department: Water Affairs (WA)- Although the National Water Act is now a SEMA, WA have not chosen to delegate EMI powers to their personal. Instead their Compliance, Monitoring & Enforcement Division conduct their enforcement actions under the National Water Act rather than under NEMA.

National Department: Mineral Resources (DMR)- This Department acts in terms of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) and, although mining is a listed activity under NEMA, the DMR is still the competent authority in all matter pertaining to mining. DMR has no EMI’s as the MPRDA is not a SEMA.

National Department: Forestry (DF)- The National Forests Act (NFA) is currently not a SEMA. Enforcement is meted out in terms of the NFA and not NEMA, therefore the DF has no EMI’s. In the next issue we discuss just how effective the EMI’s are in the policing of environmental crime in South Africa.

T.H.H.Petterson



Jean's Jottings

NOBEL-WINNING ENVIRONMENTALIST'S LEGACY WAS TO PROVIDE SHELTER FOR THE WITHERING EARTH.



Photo Credit: Martin Rowe

This being the International Year of Forests and as we draw inspiration from this remarkable woman, I urge us all to commit to continue her great work and provide the world with the legacy she deserves. The world's forests are essential to life in all its diversity and to attaining humanity's biggest goals such as reducing poverty, curbing climate change and achieving sustainable development.

It was with sadness that we learnt of the passing of one of nature's greatest ambassadors and defenders, Professor Wangari Maathai. Maathai, who became the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, was at the forefront of the conservation and protection of forests and water resources in Kenya.

Much of her youth was spent on a family farm where she learnt to appreciate nature. So when she returned home after a five year university scholarship in the States, to discover the trees cut down for firewood, eroding the soil and degrading the rivers and wildlife, she decided to do something about it. Maathai's simple but big idea to plant trees led to the 2004 Nobel Peace prize awarded to her for "her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace".

Some found it difficult to link her campaign with peace, but Maathai was clear. "Wars are fought over resources. If we did a better job of managing our resources sustainably, conflicts over them would be reduced. Protecting the global environment is directly related to securing peace".

As head of the Green Belt Movement founded in 1977, she was responsible for planting more than 40 million trees in Africa. She was the first woman from East Africa to receive a PhD and taught veterinary medicine at the University of Nairobi. I challenge every conservancy in KZN to draw up a Tree Register of trees over 50 years and label all these precious trees before we lose any more of our natural heritage.

Jean Lindsay



Photo Credit: Lisa Merton

SNIPPETS FROM THE PAST – FARMER'S WEEKLY AUGUST 1986

Award for Balgowan Farmer

The Natal branch of the Wildlife Society of South Africa has elected a Balgowan farmer, Tony Kerr, as the 1985 Natal Conservationist of the Year. The award is in recognition of his work in launching the farm-conservancy scheme, which aims to prevent vandalism on farms in three provinces. Kerr started the first conservancy ten years ago and built up a unit of farmers who hired a special guard to control the stripping of bark, vagrancy and poaching, and other forms of conservation vandalism.

Natal now has 75 conservancies, all owned by 1,075 landowners and covering 650,000 ha, which are patrolled by 241 game guards, trained at a school started by Kerr with the help of the Natal Parks Board. The conservancy concept has recently also been introduced in the Cape and Free State, where it has received good support from farmers.



The implications of land cover change

Debbie Jewitt is the ecosystem ecologist for Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife. This summarises the presentation she gave at the AGM called “Quo vadis conservation biology: the implications of land cover change in KZN”.

KZN has four land cover maps of the province (1994, 2000, 2005 and 2008) which allows rates of transformation within the province to be determined. On average, nearly 128 000 hectares are transformed annually – that makes up about 1.35% per year. It also means that by 2050 we will only have approximately 20% of the province remaining in a natural state. Between 2005 and 2008, more than 31 000 hectares occurring in macro-ecological corridors were transformed. These corridors are important linkages setup to facilitate species adaptation to climate change. A further 182 000 ha were transformed in Threatened Ecosystems, which are gazetted and recognised as important vegetation types requiring protection as they are under threat. Nearly 7000 hectares were transformed in areas identified in the protected area expansion strategy. Transformation in the above areas represents a major risk to conservation planning initiatives in the province.

It is the aim of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife to protect 10% of the province by 2013 and 17% by 2028. However, the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD), to which South Africa is a signatory, has recognised the major threat that habitat transformation poses globally, and thus has set targets of protecting 17% of the province, and halving the rate of transformation by 2020. Clearly the rate at which habitat transformation is occurring will make it extremely challenging to meet this target, especially when only about 1% of the annual provincial budget allocation is towards environmental protection.

We have many good environmental laws and policies and a brilliant constitution to protect the environment but they don't translate into meaningful protection on the ground. We are also signatories to international conventions and we set targets but there are no consequences if we don't meet those targets.

So, are conservationists making meaningful changes on the ground? If we carry on with business as usual we may run out of natural habitat in the next generation. Stand up and make a difference in conservation because if we do not then there will be little left to conserve.

Mtunzini community needs help

The Mtunzini community found out in August 2010 that the Exxaro mining company proposed mining the sand dunes north and south of the town to within 100m of the residential suburbs.

Exxaro KZN Sands proposed Fairbreeze mine will generate R1.2 billion profit p.a. for its shareholders, has an expected life of about 11 years, will generate no new permanent jobs, and no lasting benefit to the local community and stake holders. The mine and two slime dams will permanently destroy about 4600ha of productive agricultural land. It also seems that Exxaro manage to mine without a water use licence: the mine will use 2500 medium size swimming pools per day.

Pictures show the devastation that is expected of the rehabilitation of the Hillendale mine north of Mtunzini. The Hillendale mine is supposed to be the model for rehabilitating the Fairbreeze mine. The mining process is the same. The Hillendale mine is due to close in about 12 months.



Exxaro have neglected to find a means of rehabilitation and continue to claim to be on schedule with rehabilitation and able to recreate highly productive agricultural soil from soil

that has been destroyed.

Residents of Mtunzini aim to stop the Fairbreeze mine, and any sand mining on the Eastern seaboard, which has high populations, sensitive environments, tourism, and commercial agriculture and forestry industries.

The most galling thing is that each report has a picture on its cover of the beautiful rural landscape of Zululand that they are about to smash.

Mtunzini Conservancy needs support to prevent this disaster ultimately for the whole of the East Coast of KZN.

MTUNZINI CONSERVANCY

FNB, branch code 220130.

Cheque Account no. 62093027475

Please fax proof of payment with your name, address, telephone number, and email address to 086 512 6476 or email bwkewley@telkomsa.net



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