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OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2012
 JACOBUS JOHANNES RETIEF

**TABLE BAY NATURE RESERVE
 QUARTERLY REPORT FOR THE MILNERTON AREA
 CITY OF CAPE TOWN: BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT**
 All photographs by author, unless otherwise stated.



Figure 1. Aerial view of Table Bay Nature Reserve (photo by Bruce Sutherland).

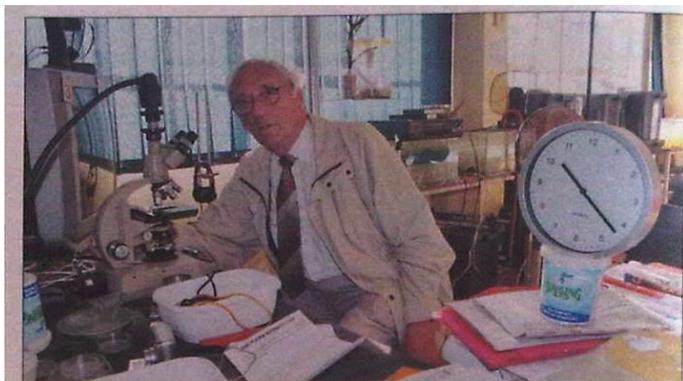


Figure 2. Sections of the Table Bay Nature Reserve.

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1.1 This quarterly report summarises the activities of the Biodiversity Management Branch in the Milnerton Area, specifically in and around the Table Bay Nature Reserve (TBNR) for the period from 1 October to 31 December 2012. This report is designed to meet the basic internal reporting requirements, while at the same time being written in such a way that stakeholders and role-players can refer to it for information purposes. The more detailed reporting data and statistics are collated in separate spread sheets that are not part of this report.

1.2 Dr Frank Wygold (81) passed away sometime between Friday night (2012/09/28) and Tuesday morning (2012/10/2) when he was found in his premises at the West Coast Field Studies Centre at the Brooklyn Chest Hospital. Dr Wygold was an active member of the Cape Bird Club and Friends of the Paarden Eiland Wetlands (also known as Zoarvlei). He was a well-known environmental educator and nature lover and was recognised by the City of Cape Town and the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) for his achievements. A memorial service was held in the DRC Hall, Bower Street, Brooklyn, at 14:00 on 2012/10/18. The local media reported on his death (see Figures 3-4). Dr Wygold will be sorely missed.



Dr Frank Wygold's curiosity stayed with him until the day he died. Photo: André Bakkes

'Champion of the wetlands' passes

ANDRÉ BAKKES

His dedication to natural science was so deeply engrained in his being that it was always hard to separate the career from the character.

Dr Frank Wygold's living became his life. Nature defined him, and he in turn defined nature.

The unique, eccentric and renowned environmentalist, died of natural causes last week at the age of 81.

Wygold's commitment to the environment in general and the Friends of the Paarden Eiland Wetlands in particular will be sorely missed.

His friend and fellow Cape Bird Club Conservation committee member, Dr Dave Whitelaw, talks about Wygold with fondness – ultimately fuelled by respect.

"He was a remarkable man. His tireless commitment and dedication to conservation education will be remembered by all who knew him," says Whitelaw.

He sums up the importance of Wygold's contribution to the Paarden Eiland Wetlands, also known as Zoar Vlei, by saying that every cause requires a champion.

Wygold unreservedly took on the mantle of "champion".

Whitelaw says that his friend and colleague committed his entire life and life savings to this unselfish cause.

"This man deserves so much more praise for his work, especially in his unique approach to conservation education," Whitelaw says.

Over the years scores of children have been exposed to the perfection of nature by means of Wygold's microscopes and projectors.

His invaluable work in conservation has since been honoured with several awards, and ward councillor Bernadette le Roux has coined him as an "encyclopedia".

Despite all the recognition, Whitelaw reveals that his friend was in essence a lonely person who ultimately "found himself in the vlei".

For many people, however, the person behind the passion stays an enigma.

Hazel Petrig, the secretary of the Friends of the Paarden Eiland Wetlands, and personal friend of Wygold lifts the shroud ever so slightly when she describes Wygold as "versatile, knowledgeable, helpful, thoughtful, concerned, and essentially a happy man".

He was even a keen baker, she says.

"He loved experimenting and brought many of his culinary 'flops' for us to savour over tea! Frank used to regale us with fond memories of his childhood, saying that he and his siblings had resolved that hot cross buns, mince pies and pancakes should be eaten all year round, and not just at Easter, Christmas and on Shrove Tuesday!"

Petrig highlights the ever-present connection between life and the environment when she concludes: "It is always sad when people with so much knowledge and interest come full circle. It is a reminder of the transience of all human life and contains in it a warning for the next generation: if we don't appreciate and conserve what we have at our disposal, we will lose it."

Obituary

Tireless conservationist will be missed

FATIMA AH HENDRICKS

Dr Frank Wygold, tireless campaigner for the Paarden Eiland Wetlands and passionate conservationist has died at the age of 81.

His body was found on Tuesday October 2 at the Brooklyn Chest Hospital where he lived.

British-born Dr Wygold, humble about his achievements and accolades, had a doctorate in nuclear physics and degrees in mechanical and electrical engineering.

He was a member of various associations such as the Cape Bird Club and Friends of the Paarden Eiland Wetlands.

Dr Wygold received a medal from the City of Cape Town for Community Affairs. He was recognised by the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa for his environmental research and advocacy work.

Twelve years ago he was given permission to set up a self-financed laboratory in one of the wings of the Brooklyn Chest Hospital.

Up to 40 000 school children toured his laboratory over the years. After each tour he would take them to the wetlands to experience the outdoors. Dr Wygold also allowed students to conduct their fieldwork in his laboratory. He opted to live at the hospital to be close to the wetlands.

Patricia Tallant, manager of the Paarden Eiland Central Improvement District who has worked very closely with Dr Wygold, described his death as a "disaster".

"He will be remembered for his belief in nature and all things environmental," said Ms Tallant.

"He was such a tireless campaigner.

He really will be sorely missed. I can't imagine Paarden Eiland Wetlands without seeing him there."

Ms Tallant said the advocacy groups became fed-up with complaints from people living in the vlei area about the clogging up of the water bodies. More than 2 000 signatures were collected in a petition to have the wetlands cleaned up.

Controlled burns have been scheduled and plans were being made to get rid of the reeds at the Paarden Eiland Wetlands.

"Now that everything Dr Wygold advocated for will be in place, he won't be here to see it coming to fruition," said Ms Tallant.

Dr Wygold always wanted the area to be a place where people can watch the birdlife.

Chairperson of the Friends of the Paarden Eiland Wetlands, Peter Albert, said Dr Wygold was the core motivation within the organisation.

"I might be the chairman and I was able to organise meetings, but he was the driving force."

Mr Albert said Dr Wygold would be remembered for his passion for the environment.

"Nature was always his main interests which led him to bow out of the family business interests to pursue this."

As Dr Wygold was known to be a very private person, it was unclear if he had any family in South Africa. His laboratory equipment, said to be worth at least R1 million, would be bequeathed to the Cape Bird Club.

A day before his body was found, eviction notices were stuck to the door of his laboratory. Hospital officials wanted him to leave even though he had paid rent until April 2013.



Frank Wygold

Figure 3. Article in local press about the late Dr Frank Wygold.

Figure 4. Article in local press about the late Dr Frank Wygold.

2.1 A “rare” Black skimmer was recorded at the TBNR’s Rietvlei section and was seen by hundreds of bird watchers between 2012/10/04-05. This American bird was never before officially recorded anywhere in Africa. The result was that almost a thousand birders congregated upon Rietvlei to see this bird. Cliff Dorse and Trevor Hardaker were instrumental in confirming the sighting.

TBNR staff extended the gate operating hours to between 06:00am to 19:00pm for four days between 2012/10/04-07 to accommodate bird watchers from all over South Africa. Koos Retief and Natanya Dreyer prepared a media release, while Bruce Sutherland captured images to accompany the media release. At least four prominent media articles appeared in the local and regional press (Figures 5-8) and Koos Retief attended to a radio interview for Radio Sonder Grense (RSG) on 2012/10/09.

Despite the sudden rush of birders, the Black Skimmer was only observed for two days by about a third of the bird watchers. Others that came too late for the bird had to leave somewhat disappointed.



■ The Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) was spotted in Rietvlei by West Beach resident, Robin Wood. As news spread, hundreds of birders descended upon the reserve to catch a glimpse of the bird.

Rare bird has twitchers all aflutter

DES FEATHERSTONE

Rietvlei was aflutter after a Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) was spotted there by West Beach resident, Robin Wood, on Thursday October 4.

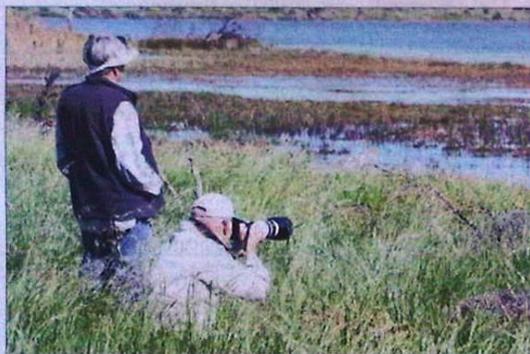
News of the sighting broke late on Thursday when it was sent out on SABirdnet, and shortly afterwards, on the rare bird page on Facebook. By Thursday evening 100 people had already gathered to see the solitary bird.

Word soon spread across the birding community and on Friday morning the gates to the reserve were opened early to allow enthusiasts to get a glimpse of the Skimmer and by Sunday, more than 400 people had gathered after hearing the news.

Ms Wood, who is a keen photographer, was entertaining family members with a walk around the Rietvlei wetlands when an unusual bird flew past.

They thought it may have been an African Skimmer, which would have been a rare sighting nonetheless, as they are a threatened species, which lives further north and in Central Africa. Luckily, Robin snapped a shot of the bird and showed it to Koos Retief, the reserve’s area manager. He then contacted Trevor Hardaker, a bird expert, who identified it as a Black Skimmer.

If you are not a birder, it’s hard to believe the level of excitement surrounding this sighting. The Black Skimmer, a tern-like seabird, breeds in North and South America and has never been seen in



■ Merle Clarence and Tony Wienand from Somerset West get a closer look.

South Africa before.

In fact, there has never been a recorded sighting on the African continent before. How it came to be here is a mystery. Perhaps blown off course by strong winds or hitching a ride on a ship, no one could say for sure.

It was suggested that perhaps it was male and had refused to ask for directions.

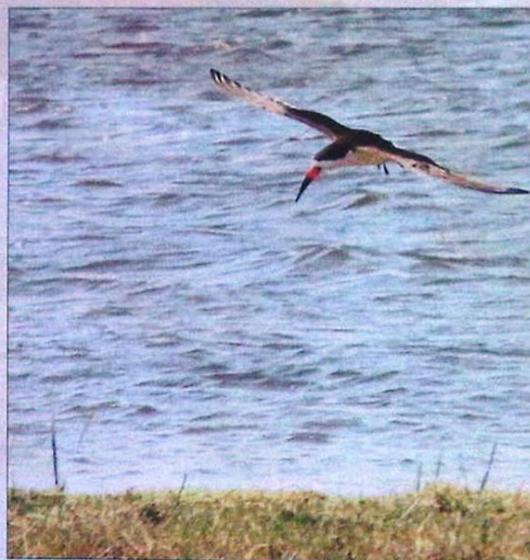
On Friday morning it was obligingly posing for photographers near the ski area at Rietvlei. Birders of all sorts came from far and wide. Members of birding clubs gathered with binoculars, notebooks and impressive cameras.

The bird was interesting, but the birders themselves are an interesting flock. Some of them travel

great distances to see a particular bird. There was a couple who had flown in from Johannesburg, seen the Skimmer and flown back again. Apparently this is not unusual for twitchers.

One person at the vlei had previously been all the way to Ghana to see a bird, so the morning’s trip from Gardens was no big deal. Several people had come from Somerset West, settling in with coffee and rusks to make a morning of the event. There was a lovely friendly, almost festive atmosphere at the vlei, as birders chatted and compared notes.

There seemed to be a few different categories of birders. There are the obsessive list makers adding another bird to their list of sight-



■ The Black Skimmer in flight.

ings. They have life lists, area lists and annual lists, among others. The serious students and academics have cameras and notebooks and are easily distracted by other birds in the area.

The avid photographers carry some very impressive photographic equipment. There were tripods, huge telephoto lenses and telescopes, carried through the reeds

and dust, to get that perfect image to add to the collection.

And then there are the social bird watchers joining other birders for a chat and a cup of coffee.

Altogether, a lovely bunch of people from all walks of life, friendly and happy to answer stupid questions and share their coffee. The appearance of this single Black Skimmer brought Rietvlei to life.

Figure 5. Article in the local press about the Black Skimmer at Rietvlei section.

US hurricane blows rare bird to Rietvlei reserve

JUNIOR BESTER

AVID bird watchers are all headed in one direction – to the Rietvlei Wetland Reserve in the hope of a rare sighting of a black skimmer, never before officially recorded in Africa.

The sighting of the black skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) near Milnerton has been a major boost for the reserve after it was photographed during a birding outing. And now bird watchers from across the country are on their way there.

“This is arguably by far the rarest sighting ever recorded at Rietvlei,” Table Bay nature reserve area manager Koos Retief said.

At first, the local bird watcher apparently thought the bird was an African skimmer, more commonly seen here. But once the picture was shown to the park manager, local bird expert Trevor Hardaker was called in to decide.

Hardaker said: “The African skimmer is a smaller and lighter bird which has an orange beak, whereas the black skimmer is larger, with more black feathers, and its beak is also partly black.”

He added that it was a very significant sighting for bird watchers since it provided a rare glimpse of a bird more



RARE VISITOR: The black skimmer, which is drawing crowds of avid bird watchers to the Rietvlei Nature Reserve keen to be part of the first such sighting officially recorded in Africa. PICTURE: BRUCE SUTHERLAND, CITY OF CAPE TOWN

commonly seen across north and south America. It is assumed the skimmer got caught up in Hurricane Isaac, that has been raging off the

coast of the US since August. “After the skimmer’s arrival in Cape Town, we received word that there was another rare sighting of a skimmer in

Ireland. We then took into consideration the flight abilities of the skimmer, and established that the bird in Rietvlei is the same one that was seen in Ire-

land,” Hardaker said. ● Gate staff have extended the reserve operating hours from sunrise to sunset for the many birders expected.

Figure 6. Article in the regional press about the Black Skimmer at the Rietvlei section.

RIETVLEI-NATUURRESERVAAT

Voël ‘vir eerste keer in Afrika’

Het dalk in 'n storm beland

Annelle Maré

KAAPSTAD. – 'n Voël wat oënskynlik duisende kilometers van koers af is, het gister vir groot opwindning onder voelkykers en kenners gesorg.

'n Swart waterploëer (*Rynchops niger*), wat gewoonlik in Noord- en Suid-Amerika voorkom, is Donderdagnmiddag in die Rietvlei-natuurreservaat by Table View gewaar.

Volgens kenners is dit die eerste keer dat die voël in Afrika gesien is.

“Dit is onwaarskynlik dat hierdie spesifieke voël die Atlantiese Oseaan op 'n skip oorgesteek het,” het prof. Les Underhill, hoof van die Universiteit van Kaapstad se dieredemografie-eenheid, gister gesê.

“Hy het waarskynlik in 'n storm beland en net aanhou vlieg. As 'n mens dit mooi uitwerk, kon hy 'n goeie drie of vier dae lank aaneen gevlieg het!”

Die voël is Donderdagnmiddag deur 'n inwoner van Table View in die Rietvlei-natuurreservaat gewaar.

Kort voor lank het die nuus van die buitengewone besoeker soos 'n veldbrand onder voelkykers versprei.

“Die meeste ernstige voelkykers hou 'n lysie waarop hulle al die voëls aanteken wat hulle al gesien het,” het Megan Loftie-Eaton, 'n student aan die UK onder Underhill, verduidelik.

“Dit is 'n baie seldsame geleentheid, dus sal mense moeite doen om dié een by hul lysie te kan voeg.”

Trevor Hardaker, 'n plaaslike voelkyker en vennoot by 'n argitekstfirma in die stad, vertel die opwinding was Donderdagaand reeds groot.

“Ons het mooi gevra dat die reservaat 'n bietjie later oopbly. Nadat ek so teen 17:00 'n kennisgewing uitgestuur het, was daar omtrent 50 mense wat voor sons- ondergang kom kyk het.”

Van die besoekers wat gister daar was, het van so ver as Gauteng gereis vir die geleentheid om 'n swart waterploëer te sien.

“Ons het vasgestel 'n swart waterploëer is in Augustus, kort nadat die orkaan Isaac aan die ooskus van Amerika gewoed het, in Ierland gewaar. Dis dalk dieselfde een. Dié voëls migreer tussen Noord- en Suid-Amerika, dus kan dit wees dat hy uit Ierland suid koers gekies het.”

Helen Biram van die Wits-voëlklub en John Bradshaw van die Inkwazi-voëlklub in Johannesburg het spesiaal Kaap toe gekom.

Foto's: YUNUS MOHAMED

Figure 7. Article in the regional press about the Black Skimmer.

Rare bird sighting at Rietvlei stuns

LEON STEENKAMP

The first-ever sighting of a bird never before officially recorded in Africa ruffled the feathers of local bird watchers last week.

The black skimmer, a bird that normally migrates between North and South America and is totally unknown here, was sighted at Table Bay Nature Reserve’s Rietvlei Section last Thursday.

The unexpected avian visitor was photographed by a member of the public during a birding outing to Rietvlei. It was first thought that the bird was an African skimmer. When a photograph was shown to the reserve manager, the Environmental Resource Management Department’s biodiversity co-ordinator, Cliff Dorse, was called out to investigate the sighting.

Bird expert, Trevor Hardaker, arrived later and together with Dorse, confirmed that it was in fact the first official sighting of a black skimmer in Africa.

Since it was first seen, many other birders have come out to see it. The gate staff extended the operating hours from sunrise to sunset to accommodate birders from as far as Gauteng. Operating hours have since reverted to normal.

According to Koos Retief, area manager: Milnerton Area, this is arguably by far the rarest sighting ever recorded at Rietvlei.

The black skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) is a tern-like seabird that is native to the Americas. It breeds in North and South America. Northern populations usually winter in the warmer waters of the Caribbean and the Pacific coasts, while the South American populations make only shorter movements in response to annual floods. The bird is known for “skimming” the water surface in low flight as it searches for food.

According to Hardaker adverse weather could be the reason for the bird showing up here in Africa.

“Some further research has revealed that our bird seems to be of the nominate North American form (predominantly white tail and white underwings) rather than one of the two other races, both from South America,” he said.

He says that although there have been a couple of historical claims, there is not a single confirmed and accepted record of a black skimmer anywhere in the world on this side of the Atlantic Ocean.

“Hurricane Isaac hit the gulf coast of North America in late August and, on 30 August, an adult nominate form black skimmer was reported from County Mayo in Ireland! It was just seen on that one day.”

The black skimmer, the first of its kind seen and documented in Africa, was photographed at the Rietvlei section of the Table Bay Nature Reserve last week. Photo: Trevor Hardaker

“The distance from County Mayo to Cape Town is around 11 000 km. Flying at an average speed of 13 kph that should take just under 35 days!” Hardaker said. If one does the calculation, it’s just too much of a coincidence that a black skimmer should also appear here in Africa, Hardaker suggests.

After the news of the bird’s presence on African shores broke, local birders flocked to Rietvlei in the hopes of getting a historical glimpse of it.

Retief said some birders descended on Rietvlei over the weekend, but the last sighting was just after 19:00 on Friday evening.

On Sunday morning a black skimmer was spotted at Walvis Bay and Hardaker suspects it might be the same individual.

Figure 8. Article in the local press about the Black Skimmer.

3 BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

3.1 Protection Status

Cliff Dorse, Biodiversity Coordinator, reported the following on the status of the City's Reserve proclamation process:

On 22 June 2011 Council supported that the City proceeds with the proclamation of the 15 Nature Reserves as per the Protected Areas Act. Council also approved the proposed reserve boundaries and the draft Integrated Reserve Management Plans (IRMP's).

This council resolution allowed the Branch to commence with the process of preparing the Surveyor General (SG) diagrams for the almost 400 erven, and sourcing copies of all the Title Deeds. This process has been far more complex than was originally anticipated since many of the properties are not registered in the name of the City but rather the old district municipalities. This has to be changed to the City of Cape Town first.

There are about 50 SG diagrams that have to be "framed" because only portions of these erven can be proclaimed. This is complicated by the fact that many erven that appear as separate individual erven actually are portions of the same larger parent erf. These properties have to be subdivided before they can be proclaimed.

It is also difficult to obtain the original title deeds as many of them are several hundred years old. Sourcing these documents is time consuming and expensive. The City's legal services department is assisting with this process.

Once this information has been collated, the City will submit the proposed reserve boundaries and IRMP's to the MEC of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning for gazetting. An additional 60 day national public commenting period is stipulated in the Protected Areas Act before the MEC may gazette the nature reserves.

The Branch requested a letter from Legal Services department for the provincial legal advisors to propose ways to simplify the Intent to Declare. Currently almost 400 erven and 250 title deeds, need to be captured on the same Intent to Declare document in the existing prescribed format.

While the official proclamation has not happened as yet, the council resolution clearly shows the intent of the City to protect these important areas for perpetuity.

3.2 Audits and Reviews

3.2.1 The annual reserve site visit was held on 2012/10/23, and was attended by Branch Manager Julia Wood, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator Adele Pretorius, Central Regional Manager Erika Foot, as well as TBNR staff Christopher Singo and Koos Retief (assisted by Simone Greveling at the Milnerton Racecourse Section). See Figures 9-10.

The itinerary included site inspections at the Rietvlei offices, the Milnerton Aquatic Club, the Rietvlei fishing shoreline, Wave's Edge Wetland, Milnerton Lagoon, Zoarvlei section, Milnerton Racecourse Section, and the Diep River Section, and the Rietvlei water area. The aim of the site visit is for senior managers to gain insight on to projects on the ground, and to interact with staff in the reserve. This is an annual opportunity to discuss highlights, site specific projects, challenges and issues of importance.



Figure 9. Site inspection at Milnerton Racecourse Section with Julia Wood, Simone Greveling, Adele Pretorius, Erika Foot, and Christopher Singo (photo by Koos Retief).



Figure 10. Site inspection on Rietvlei water area with Julia Wood, Adele Pretorius, and Clinton Roux (photo by Koos Retief).

3.3 Biodiversity Network

3.3.1 Ground-truthing of mapped wetlands in the Milnerton Area was conducted on 2012/10/15 by Mfundo Wotsita, Ian Cranna and Koos Retief (see Figures 11-12).

Ground-truthing is the verification of mapped features by means of visual observations in the field. The first site inspections focused on the mapped wetlands in the TBNR, but additional site inspections must be arranged to inspect the other wetlands in the Milnerton Area (outside the TBNR boundaries). The ground-truthing so far has indicated a large amount of accuracy in the mapping of wetlands in the Milnerton Area.



Figure 11. Mfundo Wotsita and Ian Cranna assisting with the ground truthing of the Milnerton Area's mapped wetlands.

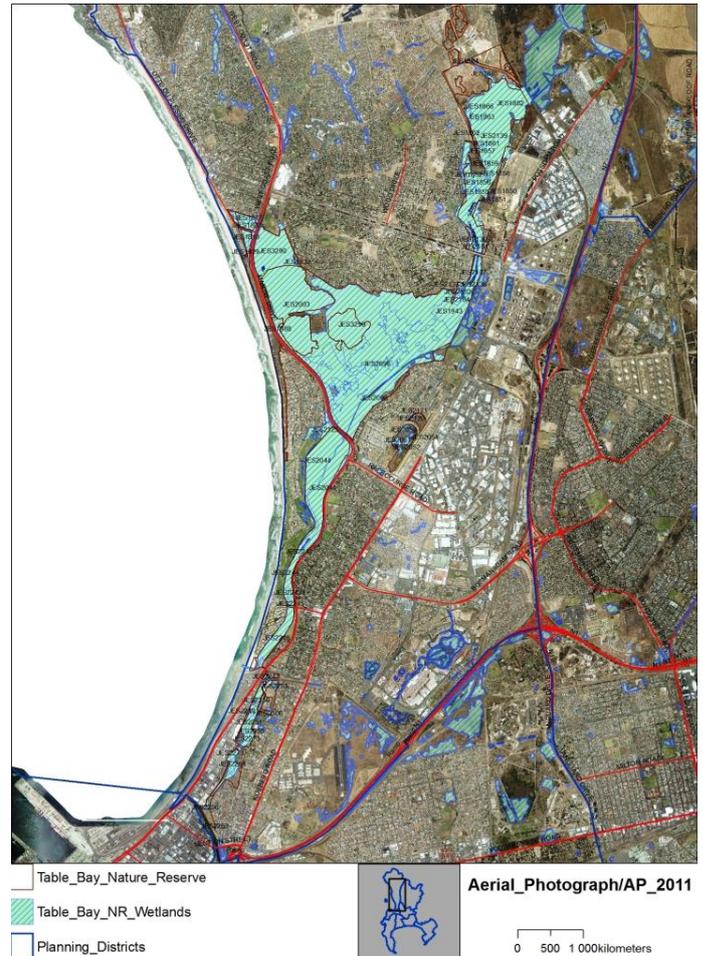


Figure 12. Wetlands layer of the Milnerton Area's Biodiversity Network.

3.4 Biodiversity Database

The following numbers of species have recently been recorded in the various sections of the Table Bay Nature Reserve, as well as Potsdam Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW). See Table 1 below.

Table 1. Numbers of species recently sighted.

| Group \ Data Site | Zoarvlei | Rietvlei | Milnerton Racecourse | Diep River & Fynbos Corridor | Potsdam WWTW |
|-------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Mammals | 13 | 17 | 9 | 6 | - |
| Birds | 146 | 132 | 99 | 53 | 15 |
| Reptiles | 16 | 14 | 9 | 4 | - |
| Fish | 7 | 10 | - | 1 | - |
| Amphibians | 4 | 5 | 5 | 1 | - |
| Insects | - | - | 15 | - | - |
| Plants | 14 | 97 | 187 | 16 | - |

4 NATURE CONSERVATION

4.1 Flora Management

4.1.1 Invasive vegetation clearing at the Eastern boundary of Diep River Section has commenced with EPWP staff and TBNR supervisors. The Port Jackson trees are very old and therefore contain much thick wood which is separated from the brush. Members of the Du Noon community are allowed to collect this thick wood for firewood. The rest of the brush is being stockpiled to be burned away under controlled conditions in 2013 (see Figures 14-15).



Figure 13. Port Jackson's on eastern boundary of Diep River.



Figure 14. Port Jackson's on eastern boundary of Diep River.

4.1.2 Reed bed management at Wave's Edge Wetland included cutting firebreaks around the management block as well as clearing the under-road drainage culverts and cutting channels for the water to drain out of the wetland. The drainage is hoped to allow drying of the reeds to be able to burn them, and to allow access for cutting to take place (see Figures 16-17 below).



Figure 15. Firebreak at Wave's Edge.



Figure 16. Cutting of drainage channels through reeds.

4.1.3 Various other invasive plant species were removed by the TBNR team, including highly invasive prickly pears, nasturtiums and Scottish thistles (see Figures 17-20 below).



Figure 17. Alien plant removed from Rietvlei section.



Figure 18. Example of a prickly pear removed.



Figure 19. Nasturtiums are becoming extremely invasive in TBNR.



Figure 20. Scottish thistle discovered at Rietvlei.

4.2 Fauna Management

4.2.1 Monitoring of Wildlife: Game counts and sightings

4.2.1.1 A Coordinated Waterbird Count (CWAC) census was conducted at TBNR on 2012/11/08. The census was attended by TBNR staff Elzette Krynauw, Koos Retief, Christopher Singo, Rob Slater, Cassandra Ricketts, as well as volunteers Helm van Zijl and Simone Greveling. The census covers 11 water area sections, which includes Potsdam Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) as well as a terrestrial (bush) bird survey. All *ad hoc* animal sightings are also recorded.

The waterbirds numbered a total of 2,902 birds of 45 species, including Great crested grebe 18, Dabchick 19, White pelican 151, Whitebreasted cormorant 119, Reed cormorant 21, Crowned cormorant 3, African darter 28, Grey heron 22, Blackheaded heron 5, Purple heron 2, Little egret 9, Yellowbilled egret 1, Cattle egret 7, Blackcrowned night heron 1, Sacred ibis 30, Glossy ibis 21, Greater flamingo 148, African spoonbill 6, Egyptian goose 218, Yellowbilled duck 44, Cape teal 28, Redbilled teal 35, Cape shoveller 20, Spurwinged goose 8, African fish eagle 2, African marsh harrier 1, Purple swamphen 1, Common moorhen 16, Redknobbed coot 923, African black oystercatcher 9, Whitefronted plover 2, Blacksmith lapwing 53, Marsh sandpiper 4, Pied avocet 93, Blackwinged stilt 32, Water thicknee 2, Kelp gull 39, Hartlaub's gull 706, Caspian tern 6, Swift tern 1, Sandwich tern 2, Whitewinged tern 1, Pied kingfisher 10, Cape wagtail 30, and Mallard 5.

Additional (terrestrial) bird species included European (common) starling, Cape spurfowl, Red-eyed dove, Cape turtle dove, Yellow-billed kite, Pied crow, Fiscal shrike, Pintailed whydah, European bee-eater, Southern red bishop, Greater striped swallow, Laughing dove, Redwing starling, Helmeted guineafowl, Whiterumped swift, White-throated swallow, African black swift, Little swift, Bokmakierie, Karoo prinia, Karoo scrub robin, Cape sparrow, Red-faced mousebird, Grey-backed cisticola, and Cape canary.

Other animal species recorded included a male Cape grysbok, a Marsh terrapin, and an unidentified red jellyfish at the Milnerton Lagoon. All data was captured on the Biodiversity Database to update the species records. See Figures 21-22 and Table 2 below.

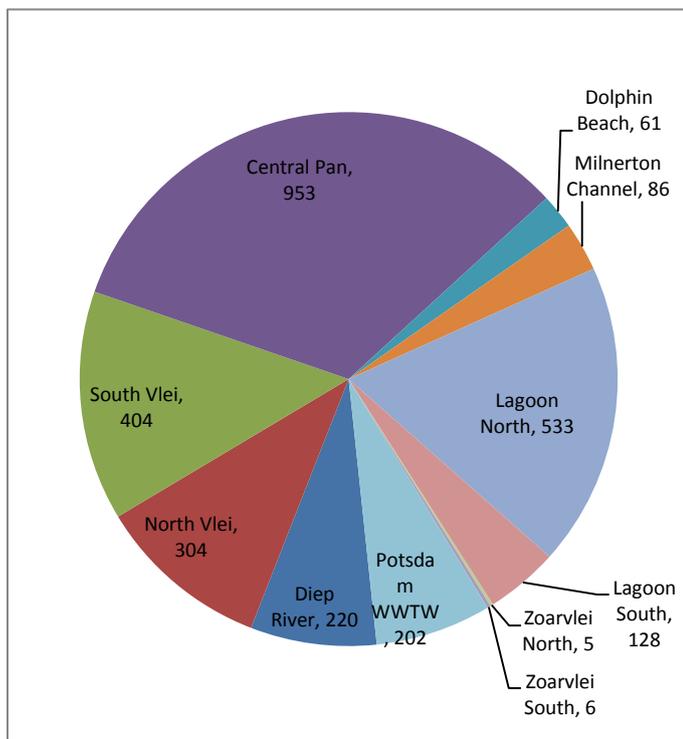


Figure 21. Pie chart of numbers of birds in various sections of TBNR and Potsdam WWTW during CWAC on 08/11/2012.

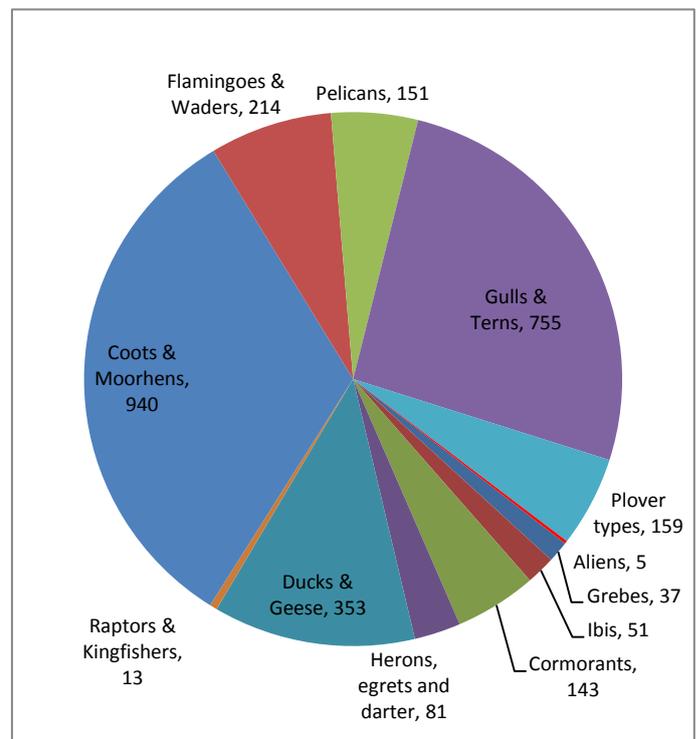


Figure 22. Pie chart of bird groups during CWAC 08/11/2012.

Table 2. CWAC census results of 08/11/2012.

| Bird \ TBNR site | Total | Diep River | North Vlei | South Vlei | Central Pan | Dolphin Beach | Milnerton Channel | Lagoon North | Lagoon South | Zoarvlei North | Zoarvlei South | Potsdam WWTW |
|-----------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| TOTALS | 2902 | 220 | 304 | 404 | 953 | 61 | 86 | 533 | 128 | 5 | 6 | 202 |
| Great crested grebe | 18 | | 8 | 10 | | | | | | | | |
| Dabchick | 19 | 2 | 2 | 1 | | 6 | | | | | 2 | 6 |
| White pelican | 151 | 7 | 34 | 47 | 50 | | | 13 | | | | |
| Whitebreasted cormorant | 119 | | 11 | 29 | | | | 77 | | | | 2 |
| Reed cormorant | 21 | 3 | 1 | | | | 12 | | | | | 5 |
| Crowned cormorant | 3 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| African darter | 28 | 1 | 10 | 4 | 6 | | | 7 | | | | |
| Grey heron | 22 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 3 | | | 6 | | | | 2 |
| Blackheaded heron | 5 | | 3 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | |
| Purple heron | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Little egret | 9 | 1 | 1 | | 4 | | | 2 | | | | 1 |
| Yellowbilled egret | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Cattle egret | 7 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Blackcrowned night heron | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sacred ibis | 30 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 | | 11 | | | | | 5 |
| Glossy ibis | 21 | 2 | 11 | 4 | 3 | | | | | | | 1 |
| Greater flamingo | 148 | 13 | 2 | 15 | 95 | | 12 | 6 | | | | 5 |
| African spoonbill | 6 | | | | 6 | | | | | | | |
| Egyptian goose | 218 | 38 | 4 | 60 | 31 | | 6 | 48 | 12 | | | 19 |
| Yellowbilled duck | 44 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 2 | | 4 | 9 | | | | 14 |
| Cape teal | 28 | 28 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Redbilled teal | 35 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 14 | | 2 | | | | | 4 |
| Cape shoveller | 20 | | 6 | 4 | 7 | 3 | | | | | | |
| Spurwinged goose | 8 | 8 | | | | | | | | | | |
| African fish eagle | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| African marsh harrier | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Purple swamphen | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Common moorhen | 16 | 4 | | | | 2 | 2 | | | | | 8 |
| Redknobbed coot | 923 | 72 | 70 | 186 | 573 | 19 | | 1 | | | 2 | |
| African black oystercatcher | 9 | | 1 | | 5 | | | 1 | 2 | | | |
| Whitefronted plover | 2 | | | | | | | | 2 | | | |
| Blacksmith lapwing | 53 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 11 | | 12 | 9 | | | | 9 |
| Marsh sandpiper | 4 | | | | | | | 4 | | | | |
| Pied avocet | 93 | | | 2 | 86 | | | 5 | | | | |
| Blackwinged stilt | 32 | | | 4 | 3 | | 23 | 2 | | | | |
| Water thicknee | 2 | | | | | | | 2 | | | | |
| Kelp gull | 39 | | 2 | | | | 1 | 1 | 35 | | | |
| Hartlaub's gull | 706 | 3 | 89 | 15 | 43 | 30 | | 327 | 76 | 1 | 2 | 120 |
| Caspian tern | 6 | | | 1 | 5 | | | | | | | |
| Swift tern | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Sandwich tern | 2 | | | | 2 | | | | | | | |
| Whitewinged tern | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Pied kingfisher | 10 | | 1 | 1 | | | | 6 | 1 | | | 1 |
| Cape wagtail | 30 | | 25 | | | | 1 | | | 4 | | |
| Mallard | 5 | | | | | | | 5 | | | | |

4.2.1.2 Various other *ad hoc* animal sightings were recorded during the quarter and updated on the Biodiversity Database. Some noteworthy sightings included various snakes and other reptiles, as well as mammals (see Figures 23-32).



Figure 23. Rhombic skaapsteker (*Psammophylax rhombeatus*) removed from MAC and released in Rietvlei.



Figure 24. An unidentified Bladder Grasshopper (*Bullacris* species) discovered at Rietvlei Section.



Figure 25. Cape mole rat (*Georchus capensis*) at Rietvlei section (photo by Ingrid Aminzadeh).



Figure 26. Marsh terrapin (*Pelomedusa subrufa*) in Rietvlei Section.



Figure 27. Cape Burrowing Scorpion (*Opisthophthalmus capensis*) at the Rietvlei Section.



Figure 28. This damaged tortoise (*Chersina angulata*) is still alive.



Figure 29. Cape dwarf chameleon (*Bradypodion pumilum*) at Rietvlei section.



Figure 30. One of several Common brown water snakes (*Lycodonomorphus rufulus*) rescued and released at Rietvlei.



Figure 31. Rhombic skaapstekker (*Psammophylax rhombeatus*) in Diep River Section.



Figure 32. Mole snake (*Pseudaspis cana*) rescued from Sandpiper Crescent with a strange colour pattern.

4.3 Erosion Management

4.3.1 Rietvlei shoreline erosion was monitored during this quarter. TBNR staff persisted with planting shoreline plants and water the edges of the banks at the fishing sites.

5 WATER MANAGEMENT

5.1 Water quality

5.1.1 Water quality was monitored over three occasions at 15 monitoring points in the Table Bay Nature Reserve. The monitoring dates were 2012/10/30, 2012/11/27, and 2012/12/10 (December samples were collected by laboratory technicians).

5.3 Rainfall measurements

5.3.1 Rainfall at the Rietvlei main entrance totalled a below-average 27mm. The total recorded for 2012 was 387mm (see Table 3 and Figures 33-35 below).

Table 3. Rainfall records from the Rietvlei main entrance gate.

| RIETVLEI RAINFALL Updated on 2013/01/02 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Ave | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 |
| January | 10.658 | | 16.0 | 57.9 | 3.5 | 8.0 | 16.0 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 4.0 | 4.00 | 1.00 | 10.00 | 5.00 |
| February | 5.7833 | | 2.0 | 10.0 | 6.0 | 0.9 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 19.5 | 6.0 | 9.00 | 5.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| March | 7.9 | | 0.0 | 10.1 | 32.2 | 7.0 | 14.5 | 4.0 | 15.0 | 4.0 | 0.00 | 1.00 | 7.00 | 0.00 |
| April | 31.838 | 5.0 | 18.9 | 29.9 | 10.9 | 79.5 | 69.5 | 27.2 | 45.5 | 10.0 | 32.50 | 9.00 | 20.00 | 56.00 |
| May | 50.646 | 26.1 | 48.7 | 38.6 | 22.2 | 2.3 | 54.1 | 104.0 | 42.5 | 44.0 | 94.00 | 84.00 | 34.00 | 64.00 |
| June | 64.473 | 51.6 | 36.4 | 62.8 | 13.1 | 66.8 | 83.3 | 25.5 | 127.7 | 67.0 | 83.00 | 71.00 | 93.00 | 57.00 |
| July | 67.581 | 46.1 | 175.7 | 69.5 | 27.3 | 65.8 | 38.0 | 64.2 | 96.0 | 116.0 | 57.00 | 38.00 | 13.00 | 72.00 |
| August | 63.842 | 24.3 | 108.7 | 66.9 | 81.1 | 45.5 | 74.0 | 45.0 | 86.0 | 68.5 | 79.00 | 30.00 | 54.00 | 67.00 |
| September | 31.758 | 49.3 | 61.5 | 19.5 | 53.8 | 17.8 | 30.0 | 12.0 | 34.0 | 4.0 | 47.00 | 12.00 | 33.00 | 39.00 |
| October | 23.673 | 5.3 | 31.2 | 33.7 | 25.3 | 119.0 | 9.8 | 20.5 | 22.0 | 2.0 | 29.00 | 0.00 | 10.00 | 16.00 |
| November | 19.2 | 8.8 | 22.5 | 13.2 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 9.8 | 31.0 | 30.0 | 46.0 | 62.50 | 12.00 | 8.00 | 11.00 |
| December | 10.431 | 2.5 | 10.5 | 20.1 | 15.5 | 6.5 | 0.0 | 4.5 | 22.0 | 19.0 | 7.00 | 10.00 | 18.00 | 0.00 |
| TOTAL | | 219.0 | 532.1 | 432.2 | 293.7 | 421.9 | 402.9 | 345.9 | 541.7 | 390.5 | 504.0 | 273.0 | 300.0 | 387.0 |

NB: Open Spaces = No DATA (RED) indicates insufficient DATA

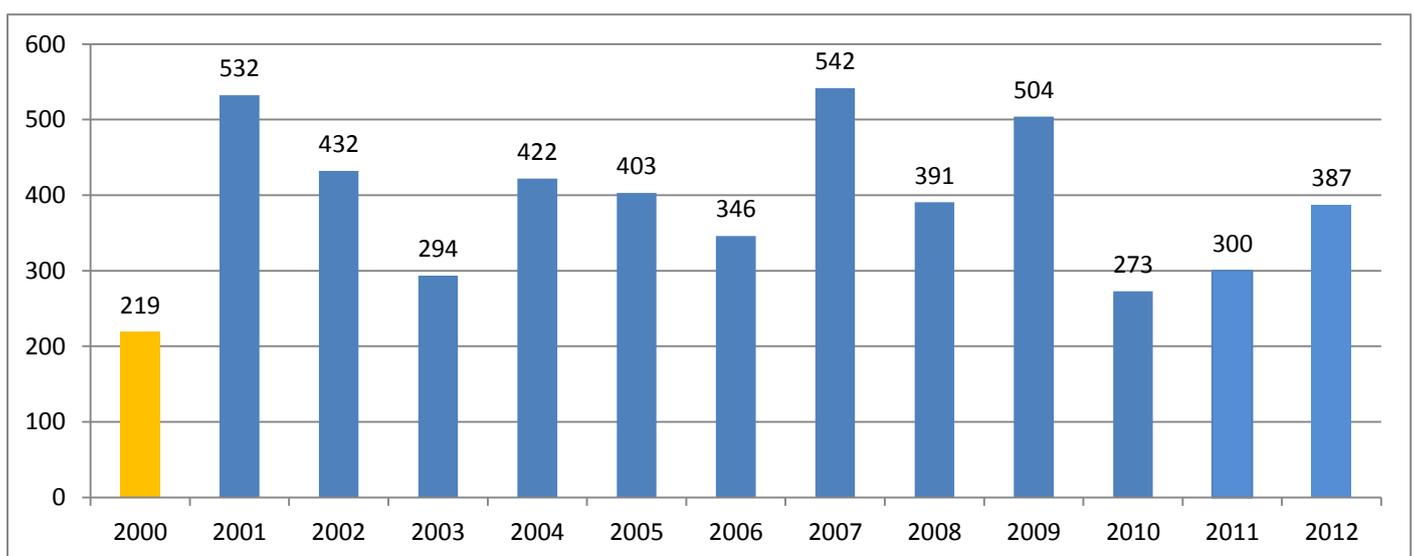


Figure 33. Total rainfall recorded at Rietvlei per year.

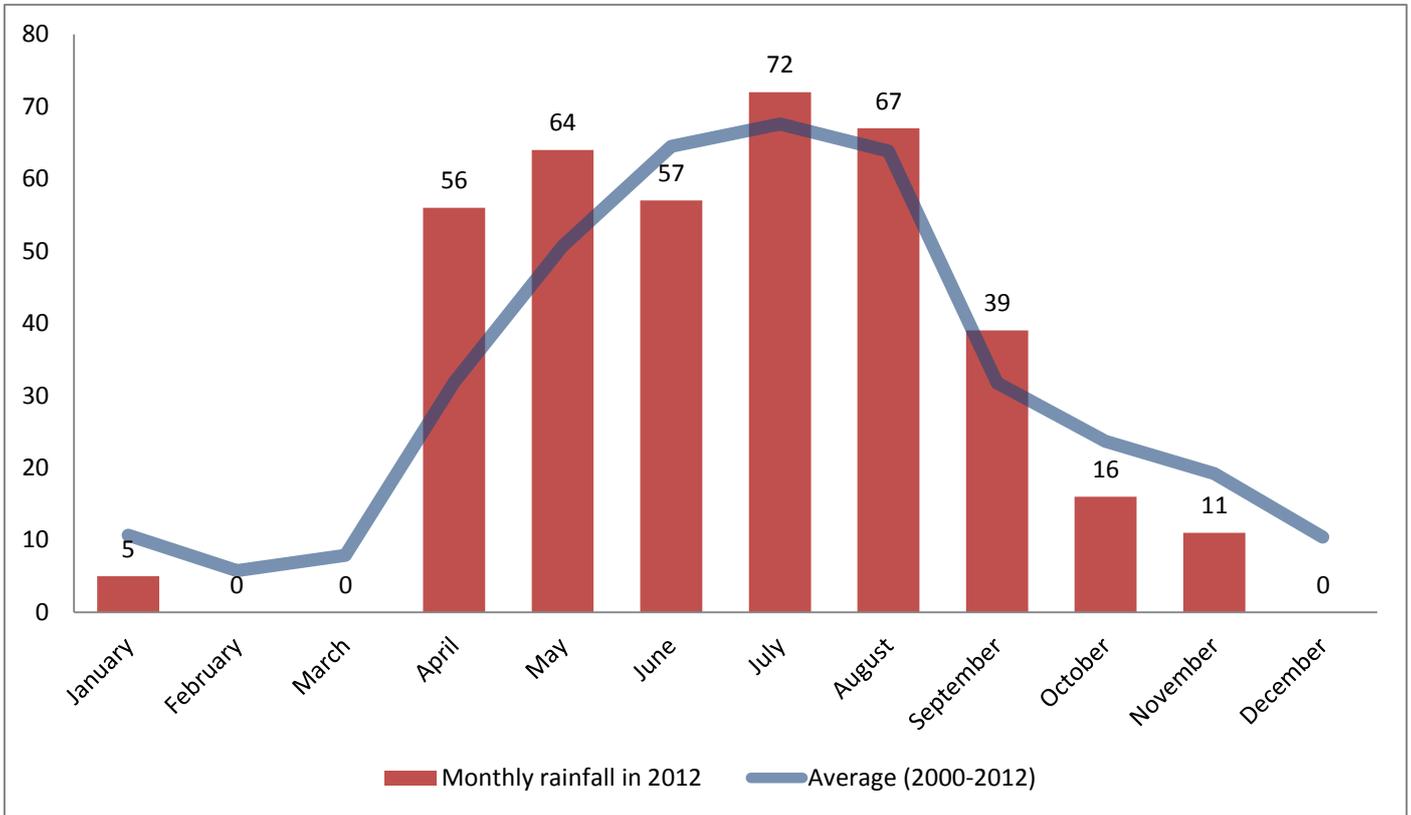


Figure 34. Monthly rainfall at Rietvlei during 2012.

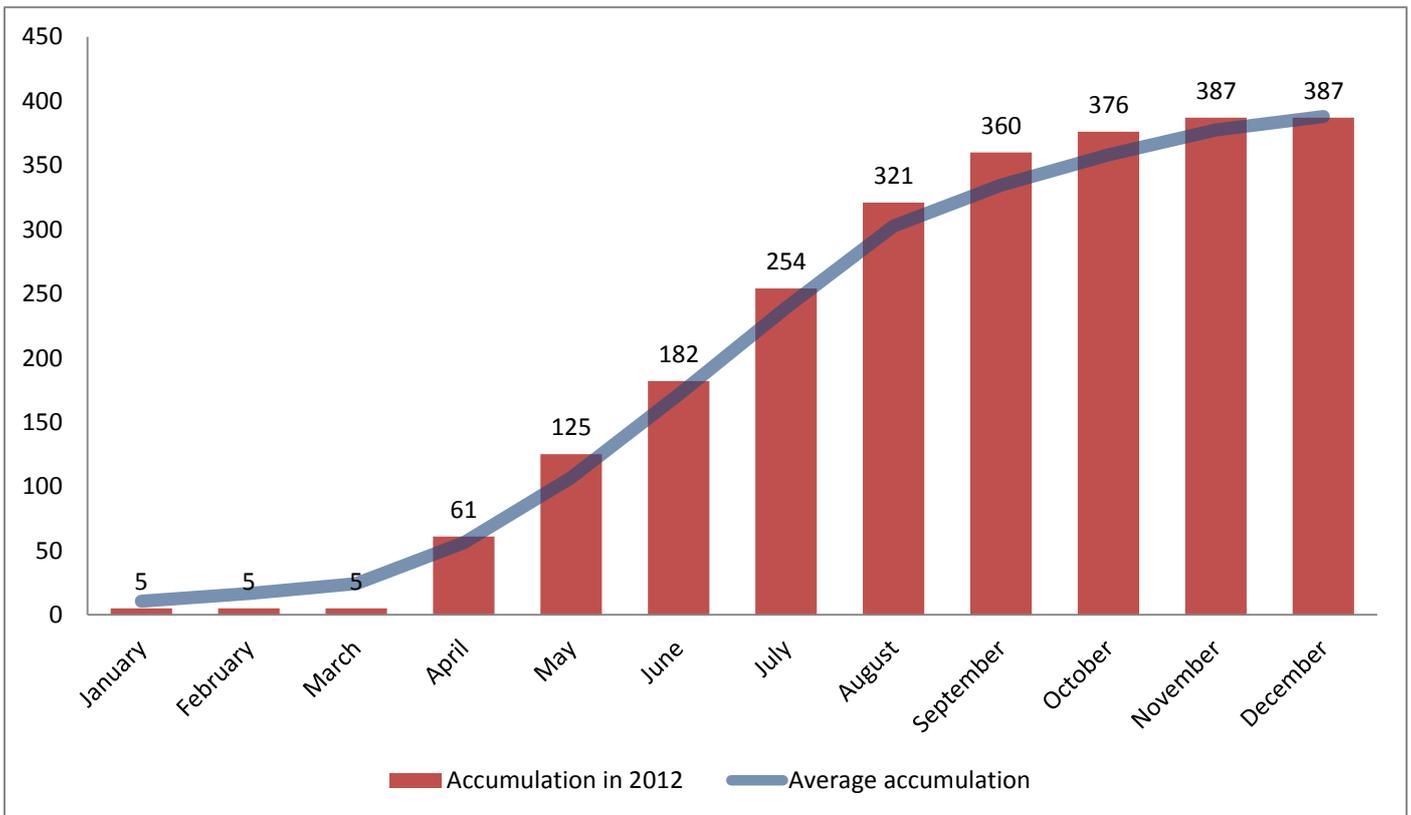


Figure 35. Accumulation of rainfall at Rietvlei during 2012.

6.1.2 Controlled burning plan for Zoarvlei section: An application for permission for a controlled burn of the reedbeds of Zoarvlei was submitted. A site meeting was held on 2012/11/15 with Air Pollution Control, Traffic Management, Fire Department and Biodiversity. The site meeting resulted in a positive perspective on the planned burning. The Air Pollution Control Department will write a report to Subcouncil 15 with recommendations to allow the planned controlled burn during the next quarter (see Figures 39-41 below).



Figure 39. Layout of Zoarvlei north controlled burn block.

Figure 40. Part of the reed beds at Zoarvlei north.

Controlled burn near reserve

FAATIMAH HENDRICKS

The City of Cape Town has warned residents living near the Table Bay Nature Reserve to take precaution, as a controlled burn is scheduled to take place on one day between November and March next year at the Zoarvlei wetlands.

The burn will take place when weather conditions are favourable to remove accumulated dry reeds and bulrushes in the area between the Paarden Eiland industrial area to the west and Brooklyn to the east. Before the burn, the City's environmental resource management department applies herbicide to the wetlands and removes the bulrushes that are dispersing seeds.

The burn will take place during the week (Monday to Thurs-

day) and residents will be notified by letters or email once the exact date has been decided, said Koos Retief, area manager for the biodiversity branch. Residents are advised to keep their windows shut and flammable items such as gas canisters should be removed from outside areas and laundry should be taken off washing lines to prevent odour contamination from the smoke when the burn takes place. Sprinklers may be used to dampen gardens as a further precaution.

"Some of the nature reserves managed by the City of Cape Town require the proliferation of a natural fire regime, without which our unique and irreplaceable indigenous vegetation would not be able to regenerate," said Mr Retief.

The Table Bay Nature Reserve comprises Cape Flats sand fynbos and Cape Flats dune strandveld which must burn occasionally to stimulate new growth and to remove dead plant material.

Controlled burns at Zoarvlei takes place every year or every second year to open up the habitat. However, mountain fynbos is burned in 15 to 20-year intervals and lowland Cape Flat fynbos every 10 to 12 years.

It is not yet known when the permit will be granted, as the application process can take months to finalise. The fire and traffic departments, as well as neighbouring residents must comment on the application. Comments are all then submitted to Sub-council 15 to be approved or declined.

Contact the air pollution control office on 021 590 1419 with any queries.

Figure 41. Article in the local press.

6.1.2 Controlled burn plan for Wave's Edge Wetland block:

An application to conduct a controlled burn at the Wave's Edge block was re-submitted to Air Pollution Control Department. Due to the fact that the previous approval for the controlled burn was issued too late in the 2011/2012 fire season, the application had to be resubmitted to Subcouncil 1. The permit was approved and has been issued. Presently TBNR and EPWP teams are working to prepare fire breaks. The water levels are presently still very high in this wetland, and additional work is required to clean the under-road culverts under Marine Drive and Otto du Plessis to allow the excess water to drain out of this wetland. It is hoped that if the water drains, the reed beds will dry out in order to be burnt during the next quarter (see Figure 42 to the right).



Figure 42. Layout of the Wave's Edge Wetland controlled burn area.

6.1 Reactive Fire Management

6.1 Fires outside the TBNR were occasionally attended to. A fire occurred between Blaauwberg Nature Reserve (BBNR) and TBNR on 31/10/2012. This fire was stopped by 2 TBNR and 1 BBNR staff before the Fire Department arrived, to prevent it from spreading to a sensitive restoration project on Blaauwberg Hill. TBNR recorded 3 hours overtime.

6.2 Fires in the Diep River section occurred on 08/11/2012 and other dates. TBNR staff assisted the Fire Department to stop a 11,330 m² (1,1 hectare) fire at the western edge of the railway reserve which forms part of the boundary of the Diep River Section. Another 15,226 m² (1,5 hectare) fire on the same day was stopped in the centre of the Diep River Section. TBNR recorded 3 hours overtime. These fire areas were mapped to update the fire history database (see Figures 43-44 below).



Figure 43. Fire at the railway reserve which forms the eastern boundary of Diep River Section.



Figure 44. Removal of exposed rubble after a fire in the Diep River Section.

7.1 Rehabilitation of Maisel’s Cottage demolition site at Zoarvlei section: The demolition of the Maisel’s Cottage at Zoarvlei left a scar in the landscape. The TBNR and EPWP teams rehabilitated the area by planting indigenous plants from local sources as well as removing invasive and alien species that were found on site. Several bakkie loads of small pieces of rubble and alien plants, including a large prickly pear, were removed from site (see Figure 46-47 below).



Figure 45. Rehabilitation of demolition site.



Figure 46. Removal of prickly pears and other alien plants.

7.2 Displaced people at Zoarvlei section: The previous quarterly report highlighted the impact of about five illegal structures at Zoarvlei where displaced people were illegally occupying sections of the TBNR. The City’s Displaced Peoples’ Unit (DPU) removed the illegal structures and relocated the people out of the area on 2012/10/14 and several other dates. TBNR staff cleaned up the sites and continued to patrol these areas. It is likely that these people would rebuild the illegal structures elsewhere in Zoarvlei and then the same action would be taken until there are no illegal occupations in TBNR. The annex to the Bayview Soccer Club at Zoarvlei is permanently occupied by an illegal occupant which the Sport and Recreation Department are required to evict (see Figures 48-49 below).



Figure 47. Vibracrete annex to Bayview Soccer Club which is illegally occupied.



Figure 48. Sleeping material and litter from displaced people that overnight in Zoarvlei Section.

7.3 Displaced people behind Killarney works yard: A vibracrete wall jutting out from the corner of the Killarney works depot towards the Diep River (just south of Blaauwberg Road bridge) concealed illegal occupants and structures in the TBNR. Despite having removing the structures several times over the last few years, the illegal occupants continued to return. It was then decided to remove the wall completely so that no structures can be concealed behind the wall This particular location was the scene of a wildfire about a year ago, as a result of copper cable burning. The removal of the wall will ensure visibility into the reserve and allow compliance officers to respond to illegal occupation. The illegal occupants are now attempting to build a structure against the Blaauwberg bridge, as they refuse to leave the area (see Figures 50-51 below).



Figure 49. The vibracrete wall being removed (photo by C. Roux).



Figure 50. Illegal structure under Blaauwberg Bridge.

7.4 The prohibition on graffiti contained in the CITY OF CAPE TOWN GRAFFITI BY-LAW, 2010, prohibits graffiti in public areas in terms of clause 3.

(1) No person shall within the area of jurisdiction of the City, without a permit issued by the City, apply graffiti or cause graffiti to be applied to any— (a) property; (b) natural surface; or (c) wall, fence, structure or thing in any street or other public place. (2) Any person who aids or assists the person referred to in subsection (1) in the application of graffiti as contemplated therein, in contravention of this By-law, shall be guilty of an offence.

Certain walls that were cleaned with new paint were painted illegal by graffiti vandals again, but TBNR staff will cover them over with clean paint until the graffiti vandals stop (see Figures 52-53 below).



Figure 51. Graffiti at Festival Street, facing Zoarvlei Section.



Figure 52. Graffiti removed by TBNR team.

7.4 Dumping of garden refuse: Several residential properties and commercial guest houses around the TBNR occasionally dump garden refuse into the nature reserve. Dumping is an offence and could result in criminal prosecution. Residents are urged to report any cases of dumping in the nature reserve (see Figures 54-55 below).



Figure 53. Bluegum branches dumped in TBNR by Kwantu Guest House, Milnerton Ridge (photo: Clinton Roux).



Figure 54. TBNR team removing Palm branches dumped in TBNR from 14 Stilt Road, Table View (photo: Clinton Roux).

8 PEOPLE AND CONSERVATION

8.1 Stakeholder Engagement (external meetings)

TBNR staff attended no less than nine external stakeholder meetings during this quarter. See Table 4 below for details.

Table 4. Records of external stakeholder meetings relating to the TBNR.

| AREA | DATE | MEETING / WORKSHOP | PURPOSE |
|------|------------|---|------------|
| TBNR | 2012/10/10 | Koos Retief and Christopher Singo with Diep River Apostolic Church committee | Interview |
| | 2012/11/01 | Meeting with Anderson Group about the proposed controlled burning at Zoarvlei | Planning |
| | 2012/11/02 | Milnerton South Local Area Spatial Development Framework meeting | Discussion |
| | 2012/11/06 | Parklands Environmental Liaison Committee | Feedback |
| | 2012/11/13 | Milnerton Aquatic Club management meeting | Feedback |
| | 2012/11/19 | Meeting with Table View Neighbourhood Watch and Community Policing Forum representative about displaced people, graffiti and vandalism in and around TBNR | Planning |
| | 2012/12/03 | BirdLife SA's review of Rietvlei Important Bird Area (IBA) meeting | Planning |
| | 2012/12/07 | Zoarvlei Management Advisory Committee | Feedback |
| | 2012/12/13 | Rietvlei Management Working Group | Feedback |

8.2 Stakeholder Engagement (internal meetings)

TBNR staff attended no less than six internal stakeholder meetings during this quarter. See Table 5 below for details.

Table 5. Records of internal stakeholder meetings relating to the TBNR.

| AREA | DATE | MEETING / WORKSHOP | PURPOSE |
|------|------------|--|----------|
| | 2012/10/11 | Koos Retief and Christopher Singo with Taryn Rossenrode regarding IAS reporting requirements | Planning |
| TBNR | 2012/10/12 | TBNR staff quarterly gathering | Feedback |
| | 2012/11/16 | Legal compliance assessment of TBNR infrastructure | Feedback |
| | 2012/11/23 | Meeting with HR regarding new electronic attendance management system | Planning |
| | 2012/12/03 | Meeting with City Parks regarding roles and responsibilities at Zoarvlei | Planning |
| | 2012/12/26 | Orientation to City and Private Conservation sites around the Dassenberg | Feedback |

8.3 North District Meetings: Management and Health & Safety

TBNR staff attended one Regional Meeting during this quarter (See Table 6 below)

Table 6. Records of district meetings relating to the TBNR.

| DATE | VENUE | MEETING |
|------------|--------------------------|---|
| 2012/10/26 | Mamre Information Centre | North Region Management and Health & Safety meeting |

8.4 Environmental Resource Management / Branch Meetings / Fun Days

TBNR staff attended two Branch meetings this quarter (see Table 7 below).

Table 7. Records of branch meetings relating to the TBNR.

| DATE | VENUE | THEME |
|------------|--------------------------|--|
| 2012/11/09 | Goodwood Sports Grounds | Branch Entertainment Day |
| 2012/11/29 | Mamre Information Centre | Branch Meeting (not attended by Koos Retief during CPUT evaluations) |

8.4.1 The Branch entertainment day was held on 2012/11/09. During this event several certificates of recognition are given to various conservation efforts in the City of Cape Town by the Director of Environmental Resources Management and the Manager of the Biodiversity Management Branch.

Table Bay Nature Reserve was awarded with a certificate for the best reserve of 2012. Although it was felt that the development of the TBNR team and construction of the new offices improved the reserve's performance, the reserve manager thanked all the role players involved in the reserve, including the Friends of Rietvlei, Milnerton Aquatic Club and SANCCOB, for their input (see Figure 55 to the right).



Figure 55. Certificate awarded to the best reserve of 2012.

8.5 Benefits, use of facilities, and media headlines

8.5.1 The Rietvlei Boma was used for no less than 18 events this quarter, providing at least 663 person days of benefit to people (see below Table 8 for details).

Table 8. Rietvlei boma usage and benefits to people in person days.

| DATE | GROUP | ACTIVITY | PERSON DAYS |
|--------------|--|------------------------|-------------|
| 2012/10/11 | TBNR staff quarterly gathering | Feedback and social | 80 |
| 2012/11/05 | EPWP group | Health and Safety talk | 55 |
| 2012/11/12 | LGSETA & Dept. of Ichthyology & Fisheries Science, Rhodes | Marine Resource course | 13 |
| 2012/11/13 | LGSETA & Dept. of Ichthyology & Fisheries Science, Rhodes | Marine Resource course | 13 |
| 2012/11/14 | LGSETA & Dept. of Ichthyology & Fisheries Science, Rhodes | Marine Resource course | 13 |
| 2012/11/12 | EPWP group | Health and Safety talk | 61 |
| 2012/11/19 | EPWP group | Health and Safety talk | 69 |
| 2012/11/26 | EPWP group | Health and Safety talk | 57 |
| 2012/11/27 | EE Friends meeting | End of year meeting | 15 |
| 2012/11/29 | City Health Services | End of year meeting | 18 |
| 2012/12/03 | EPWP group | Health and Safety talk | 42 |
| 2012/12/04 | North Region managers/staff | Regional meeting | 13 |
| 2012/12/05 | Economic, Environment & Spatial Planning (MFMA finance training group) | End of year function | 40 |
| 2012/12/06 | IDP & OPM Department | Workshop | 22 |
| 2012/12/07 | Champs Forum | Year-end meeting | 27 |
| 2012/12/10 | EPWP group | Health and Safety talk | 45 |
| 2012/12/14 | EPWP group | Fire Fighting Training | 31 |
| 2012/12/18 | EPWP group | Health and Safety talk | 49 |
| TOTAL | | | 663 |

8.5.2 The Rietvlei Education Centre was used for no less than two events this quarter, providing at least 33 person days of benefit to people (see Table 9 below).

Table 9. Rietvlei Education Centre usage and benefits to people in person days.

| DATE | GROUP | ACTIVITY | PERSON DAYS |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| 2012/11/22 | Friends of Rietvlei | End of year meeting – student presentations | 21 |
| 2012/12/13 | Rietvlei Management Working Group | Meeting | 12 |
| TOTAL | | | 33 |

8.5.3 Environmental Education and Outreach

at Rietvlei reached no less than 314 person days over 9 events during this quarter (see Table 10 below). Some of the events are collaborative efforts between Table Bay Nature Reserve and SANCCOB’s environmental education centre. Students are organised into two groups, and while one group is at Rietvlei, the other groups is at SANCCOB. Halfway through the morning the groups are swapped around. The programmes include indoor uitiion as well as outdoor activities. In Figure 56 to the right, former Rietvlei education intern, Rifqah Johnson, can be seen guiding children from SANCCOB to Rietvlei.



Figure 56. School group hosted in a SANCCOB-TBNR collaboration.

Table 10. Environmental Education Statistics at TBNR.

| DATE | GROUP(S) | LEARNERS | ADULTS | PD'S | PROGRAMME |
|---------------|------------------------------|------------|-----------|------------|--|
| 2012/10/01 | Nourvier Metodiste Laerskool | 50 | 10 | 60 | With SANCCOB (Bird ID) |
| 2012/10/02 | Brandhouse Beverages, | 0 | 6 | 6 | Beach clean-up at Diep River mouth |
| 2012/10/13 | Public | 10 | 20 | 30 | Milnerton Racecourse Spring Walk |
| 2012/10/23 | Nerina Primary school | 11 | 3 | 14 | Bird Watching and plant Identification |
| 2012/11/01 | Sentinel Intermediate School | 53 | 2 | 55 | With SANCCOB (Plant ID hunt, Bird ID) |
| 2012/11/21 | Reed harvesting group | 0 | 9 | 9 | General conservation education |
| 2012/11/22 | Reed harvesting group | 0 | 9 | 9 | General conservation education |
| 2012/12/03 | Kirstenbosch AEO's | 0 | 13 | 13 | Reserve visit |
| 2012/12/05 | Greenlands Primary School | 108 | 10 | 118 | With SANCCOB (Fish and Plant ID) |
| TOTALS | 9 | 232 | 82 | 314 | |

8.5.4 The Friends of Rietvlei

contributed generously to the development of environmental education resources at Rietvlei during this quarter. They have obtained funding from Chevron to repair the roof of the Education Centre as well as construct a wheelchair access ramp (see Figure 57). Furthermore, the Friends also produced a series of eight interpretive information sign boards, in three official languages, and installed these at selected points in the nature reserve (see Figure 58 below).



Figure 57. Wheelchair access ramp constructed by the Friends.



Figure 58. Interpretive information signboards in three languages.

8.5.5 The Milnerton Aquatic Club often featured in the local media with several noteworthy initiatives and activities to promote water- and shore-based recreation (see Figures 59-60 below).

MAC hooked on braai

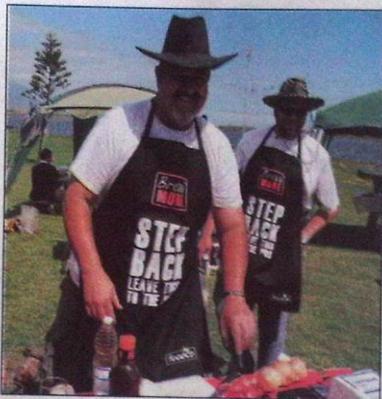
The "Hooked on MAC, Cooked on Coals" Heritage Braai Day held at the Milnerton Aquatic Club (MAC) recently was a fantastic success.

A bumper turnout of 16 teams (more than 150 people) and some great weather saw the club enveloped in a cloud of scrumptious smelling wood smoke, accompanied by a broad selection of blaring South African music - from David Kramer to "Waka Waka".

Judging was difficult but handled with aplomb and the one or two teams that tried to get away with some not so subtle "bribery" saw their efforts rewarded with nought!

In the end, the Steenkamp's "Team Sizzling Rooster" were worthy winners of Best Theme Team, but the "Galley Girls" could not be beaten for "Most Colourful and elaborate effort".

The youngsters from "Team Ag pleeze Daddy" (winners of the Best Team Spirit prize) ended the day with an enthusiastic



Morgan Mocke (left) and Garth van West were part of the teams that took part in the MAC braai festivities.

Photo: Angela Gray

rendition of Jeremy Taylor's old hit of the same name and it was a fitting end to a very enjoyable Celebration of the Nation.

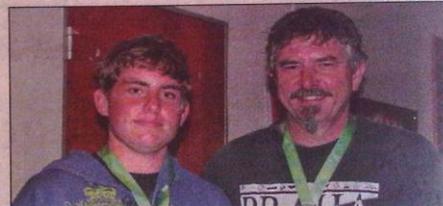
Most laps, most 12-hour fun

The fifth annual MAC 12-Hour Sailing Challenge was hosted by the Milnerton Aquatic Club at Rietvlei this past Saturday.

The event allowed sailors of all monohull dinghies to compete to see who can finish the most laps in 12 hours and who can sail the fastest lap.

The day began at 06:30 with many bleary eyed sailors having camped over at MAC the night before. Eighteen boats eagerly took to the water at the start with all 18 completing the 12 hour event. Two boats of the Extra Class were planning to sail solo for a full 12 hours non stop. Both Nicholas Basson (MAC) and Francois Korver (MAC) managed to achieve this difficult feat by the end of the day.

Nicholas said the only thing that bothered him being solo was the loneliness. All



MAC 12 Hour Solo sailors who sailed for 12 hours non stop were (left) Nicholas Basson and Francois Korver both members of the Milnerton Aquatic Club.

the other boats had teams of two to eight sailors.

The Open Class was won by the P & B Race Team of Craig Latigan, Lionel Latigan and Ryan Barnardo.

The Laser Class was won by Team Kickass with Andre Wollheim, Robert Wood and Keenan Wollheim.

The Dabchick Class was

won by the Hungry Idiots with team members Jason Gray and Daniel Spratley.

Team Escape with members Jonathan Kuckard, Jody and Rodney Tanner took honours in the The Extra Class.

The most capsizes award went to Team Navy Too. It's an "honour" they received for the third consecutive year.

Figure 59. Article in the local press about the Heritage Braai Day held by MAC at Rietvlei.

Figure 60. Article in the local press about the 12-hour sail event held by MAC at Rietvlei.

8.5.6 Civil society initiatives in nature conservation highlighted in the local media this quarter included recording of alien birds, identification of biodiversity and volunteer fire fighting (see Figures 61-63 below).

Birders can help with alien species studies

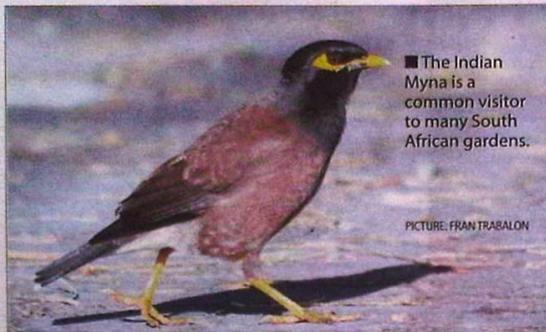
Have your say
SMS TALK with your message, name and area you live in to 30013 (32263)
SMSes charged at R1 each

Scientists want avid bird ringers and birders to aid their research into alien birds in South Africa by training their binoculars on invasive species like the Indian Myna, a common visitor to many gardens.

They also appealed to those importing animals and birds as pets to make sure they are never released into the wild, where they can potentially threaten local species.

This follows two research articles by researchers of the DST-NRF (Department of Science and Technology - National Research Foundation) Centre for Invasive Biology at Stellenbosch University, featuring the results of studies on how two of the world's 100 worst invasive alien species, the Indian Myna (*Acridotheres tristis*) and the European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), have established and became invasive in South Africa.

In a study, led by Dr Cécile Berthouly-Salazar and published in PLOS One, the CIB research team found the spread of Indian Mynas mirrored the importance of dispersal traits during range expansions. The fact that they have a longer wingspan or larger heads, makes it easier for these individual birds to fly and disperse to new regions,



■ The Indian Myna is a common visitor to many South African gardens.

PICTURE: FRAN TRABALON

where, if conditions are suitable, they can become established.

Dr Cang Hui led a study on the European Starling, which was published in Ecography. They found that starlings in their native and non-native ranges move around and into new areas based on the "good-stay, bad-disperse" rule. This means that they are quite flexible to stay in one area or move to another, depending on environmental conditions.

"If conditions deteriorate, for instance, because of climate change, they will be likely to disperse and invade other areas of South Africa with more suitable conditions," Dr Hui predicts. Currently, the European Starling is found in an L-shaped region south to the 30 degree latitude along the coast of the Western, Eastern and

Northern Cape, as well as KwaZulu-Natal, but they have been spotted in Gauteng too.

For the paper in Ecography, Dr Hui and his fellow researchers delved into the ringing records from 1909 to 2008 of European Starlings that are available from the British Trust for Ornithology.

"Ringing records and distribution records for this species in South Africa are lacking and generally limited to Cape Town, where 18 European Starlings were first introduced in 1897 in an effort to make the Cape look more "British".

"If more local ringing records of these species were available, we could make much more accurate estimates about future movement trends of this species," added Dr Hui by way of asking local ringers to also focus on invasive species when



■ The European Starling.

PICTURE: PIERRE SELIM

marking birds.

"Science citizenry is very important to research," Dr Hui believes. "The information that the public help to gather can provide valuable data for researchers to work with."

The two researchers agree that the early detection and rapid response to possible invasive species are of utmost importance. They say it is very difficult to stop the spread of a species once it has become established, especially in such a large area of the host country.

"The population viability simply becomes too strong, and we seldom have enough resources to keep eradication programmes on indefinitely," says Dr Berthouly-Salazar.

"Even better resourced countries like Australia have given up trying to eradicate the European Starling from their shores," adds Dr

Hui.

The use of pathogens as a biological control measure against invasive bird species is not advised. "Such an approach can be highly risky and controversial as these pathogens might target local species and threaten both natural bird communities and domestic fowl industries," says Dr Hui.

"There's a window of opportunity in which you can try to remove invading birds from a system, but once this period of about 40 years has past, it's almost impossible to do anything further to curb their spread," says Dr Hui. "We are nearing a time in which we have to start considering these 'invaders' as an inevitable part of our environment, and handle them accordingly."

Phone 021 808 2684 or email: science@sun.ac.za for details.

Figure 61. Article in the local media about identifying alien birds.



Is it a snake? This photo of what might look like a snake was taken in the Koo Valley and uploaded on iSpot. It was identified as a Cape Grass Lizard.

Photo: iSpot

iSpot will identify all

LEON STEENKAMP

Ever wondered just how venomous that scorpion was you found in the bath? Or what the name is of that bird that is tweeting so beautifully on your roof top?

Nature lovers who enjoy exploring the outdoors by hiking in the City of Cape Town's surrounding nature reserves or who are simply curious about the fauna and flora they come across in their daily excursions can now find the answers on a very informative website.

iSpot is a website that allows inquisitive individuals to load photographs of animals and plants online and then have them identified by nature specialists.

The website is managed by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (San-

bi), a body that is responsible for protecting and creating awareness about the country's unique natural treasures.

According to the site's introductory page Sanbi hopes that the site will become the "premier Citizen Science portal for southern Africa, providing photographic, distributional and biogeographic data on all taxa (a group of one or more populations of organism/s) with species lists, surveys and atlas opportunities." A one-stop-shop for recording and exchanging biodiversity information.

There are a number of groups in which photos can be uploaded including Amphibians and Reptiles, Birds, Fungi and Lichens, Fish, Invertebrates, Mammals, Plants and Other Organisms.

The website offers identification of all species found in Southern Africa. Visit www.iSpot.org.za.

Figure 62. Article in the local press about the web-based identification forum called iSpot.

Meet the volunteers who fight fires

PATRICK RYAN

With fire season on it's way and having seen such horrendous fires in the northern hemisphere recently, I thought I'd take this opportunity to introduce our own local heroes, the Volunteer Wildfire Services (VWS).

We are made up entirely of volunteers from all walks of life.

I joined with a personal goal in mind. I am a photographer and working on a book and exhibition on wildfire and the people who dedicate their private time to this risky activity.

However, I have been completely drawn into what is sometimes called the family of the VWS, by the selfless and passionate people I have met.

These are people who drop what they are doing to respond to a fire call. It can be a tough decision, leaving friends during a braai or get-together, being woken at 2am or grabbing your kitbag on public holidays and heading through to one of our bases. But it is one that our volunteers willingly make, almost always with good humour.

Working under the authority of SANParks and Cape Nature, the VWS is becoming an invaluable asset to the Western Cape and especially the communities who

border the reserves and wildlands.

This unit is made up of brave people. People who shoulder their kitbag, don their PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and head up into the mountains and deep into the valleys. This is not work for the faint-hearted, as the heat and smoke is intense and leads to the ritualistic global firefighter motto "Safety First".

But the VWS wildfire firefighters are well trained, in fact you might have seen us hiking through the forest and mountain sides each winter as we train new recruits and sharpen our skills.

The enthusiasm shown by our members is reflected in the events we stage to raise awareness and funding.

These include the annual VWS Open Day (this year at the beginning of December) and the VWS Trail Challenge organised by the Newlands Station.

Our Jonkershoek Station has their awareness day which will be early next year and is always a great event. We are currently opening another station in the South Peninsula, this will aid the first response call to fires in the South Peninsula which have proven to be large and sometimes devastating.

To this end we are currently looking to the donation of three containers to help with the estab-



■ Volunteer firefighters captured by photographer Patrick Ryan.

ishment of this base and have started a Monthly Pledge Project, details of which will be available on our website.

We are also collaborating with

the NSRI and Spur to create an awareness and fundraising evening at the Little Creek Spur during the month of October.

For more information email

marketing@capefires.com or call 082 938 0090.

● Patrick Ryan is the marketing director of the Volunteer Wildfire Services.

Figure 63. Article in the local press about volunteer fire fighters.

9 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

9.1 Staff Establishment

Staff at TBNR consisted of 11 permanent staff and no less than 71 contract (non-permanent) staff (see Table 11 below). Apart from two students, most of the non-permanent staff were EPWP contract workers that work on projects ranging from invasive vegetation clearing, reed bed cutting, firebreak maintenance, as well as the construction of boardwalks.

Table 11. TBNR staff complement.

| TBNR | POSITION | PURPOSE | PERMANENT | CONTRACT |
|---------------|----------------------|--|-----------|-----------|
| Internal | Area Manager | Functional / Operational Management | 1 | |
| | Assistant Cons Off | Gate control / Visitor Mngt / Law Enforcement | 2 | |
| | Assistant Cons Off | Conservation Compliance – Diep River | 1 | |
| | People & Cons Off | Environmental Education Officer | 1 | |
| | Foreman | Supervision of Junior Staff | 1 | |
| | Small Plant Operator | Chainsaw / Brush-cutter / weed eaters / mowers | 1 | |
| | Senior Workers | Labour / Field Ranging | 4 | |
| | Intern | Education Programme Management | | 0 |
| | Student | Nature Conservation Learning | | 2 |
| External | Workers | EPWP Labour | | 69 |
| TOTALS | | | 11 | 71 |

9.1.1 An initial informal incapacity / ill-health consultation was held with Sonwabile Shilinga on 2012/10/19 to discuss his exhaustive use of sick leave. The matter was recorded procedurally and will be monitored accordingly. An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) counsellor was assigned to advise him on how to maintain and monitor his health.

9.1.2 Medical Aid Freedom of Association: All TBNR staff that receive City of Cape Town medical aid benefits attended the annual freedom of association presentation by competing medical aid funds at the Parow Civic Centre on 2012/11/12.

9.1.3 A Professional Driver's Permit (PrDP) was obtained by Koos Retief. This is to enable him to drive trucks and Unimog fire trucks if called upon.

9.1.4 Annual audiometric testing of the TBNR staff was conducted on 2012/11/14 at the Cape Town Civic Centre. This testing is to monitor possible hearing loss of staff members exposed to noise in the workplace

9.1.5 A year-end function was attended by all TBNR staff from 13:00 to 16:00 on 2012/12/12.

9.1.6 The new electronic attendance management system requires that all permanent staff reporting to TBNR be profiled to use their fingerprint scans to clock in and out at the offices. The scanning was done on 2012/11/22 meaning that all staff will now clock in electronically. This enables managers to monitor and manage attendance and absence in the workplace.

9.2 Staff Training

TBNR staff attended six person days of official training during this quarter (see Table 12 below).

Table 12. TBNR staff training records.

| AREA | DATE | TRAINING | ATTENDANCE | PDS |
|--------------|---------------|--|------------|----------|
| | 2012/10/16-17 | Principles of leadership training (CPUT) | 1 | 2 |
| | 2012/12/10-11 | Time and attendance management training | 2 | 4 |
| TOTAL | | | | 6 |

9.2.1 The Work Integrated Learning (WIL) Programme of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) places students with City of Cape Town nature reserves. Koos Retief annually serves on the evaluation panel of the CPUT, and attended this year's evaluations during the week 2012/11/27-30. A total of 32 students submitted WIL reports for 2012. Of these, 15 were City of Cape Town students, of which all but two passed their final assessments. The two students who were not assessed as competent yet have to rewrite or resubmit sections of their work in order to be able to graduate with the other students in 2013.

From the TBNR students, **Robert Slater** was provisionally accepted by CPUT to undertake further studies in Nature Conservation for the B.Tech degree, and **Cassandra Ricketts** was offered a temporary position by SANParks at Boulders Beach to complete outstanding sections of her report, including Communications and Compliance Management.

9.3 Staff Activities

9.3.1 TBNR staff held a quarterly gathering on 2012/10/11 during which the previous quarterly report was discussed in detail. This is an opportunity for workers to gain insight into the management of the reserve, and for workers and managers to learn from each other.

A series of certificates were also handed out to the staff for successfully completing training course in First Aid and Fire Fighting. The gathering was ended off with a braai in the boma.



Figure 64. TBNR staff quarterly report feedback and social braai.



Figure 65. EPWP staff receiving training certificates (photo by a team member).



Figure 66. EPWP staff receiving training certificates (photo by a team member).

9.3.2 North Region staff underwent a team building outing to Kirstenbosch.

The purpose of the outing was educational as well as team building. Former Rietvlei Education Intern, Chanelle Naidoo, who now works as an intern for Kirstenbosch, took the team for an education programme that entailed indoor and outdoor activities, focusing on biodiversity, vegetation types, and endemic and threatened plants (see figures 68-70). Opposite is a group photo of some members of the North Region team:

Top left to right: Koos Retief, Sakhile Luhani, Zieyaad Allie, Gavin Olivier, Allan Gargan, Lungiswa Mangcola, Elzette Krynauw, Bulelwa Nomna, Monwabisi Varoyi, and Ntomboxolo Matshabane. **Bottom left to right:** Chanelle Naidoo, Mzukisi Matyobeni, Nomthandazo Jevu, Sonwabile Shilinga, Jikephi Noludwe, Mzwandile Ntsokobe, and Qalile Lisa.



Figure 67. North Region team receiving a lecture at the Kirstenbosch Environmental Education Centre.



Figure 68. Former Rietvlei Education Intern (now working as an intern at Kirstenbosch) teaching North Region staff about biodiversity and vegetation types in Cape Town.



Figure 69. Some members of the North Region team in a group photo at Kirstenbosch (photo by a bystander).

10 TOURISM AND VISITORS

10.1 Entrance and revenue: A total of **R54 221** was collected at the Rietvlei main gate during this quarter (see Table 13 below for details). This was R21 522 more than the R32 699 received during the previous quarter. See Figures 70-71 for pie charts relating to the income and visitors to the Rietvlei section.

Table 13. Summary of revenue collected at Rietvlei main entrance.

| DESCRIPTION | OCT | NOV | DEC | COST | QUANTITY | INCOME | TOTAL |
|--|-----|-----|-----|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|
| Permissible Commercial Activities | | | | | | | R 1 950 |
| 10-20 people | 4 | 2 | | R 270.00 | 6 | R 1 620 | |
| 1-9 people | 2 | 1 | | R 110.00 | 3 | R 330 | |
| Daily Entry | | | | | | | R 18 810 |
| Adult | 459 | 350 | 510 | R 12.00 | 1319 | R 15 828 | |
| Children | 73 | 74 | 138 | R 6.00 | 285 | R 1 710 | |
| Children (under 3) | 6 | 8 | 16 | R 0.00 | 30 | R 0 | |
| Senior | 175 | | 36 | R 6.00 | 211 | R 1 266 | |
| Student | | | 1 | R 6.00 | 1 | R 6 | |
| Friends of Reserves | | | | | | | R 0 |
| Friends of Rietvlei | 55 | 33 | 53 | R 0.00 | 141 | R 0 | |
| Environmental Education | | | | | | | R 590 |
| Learner (all other schools) | | | 118 | R 5.00 | 118 | R 590 | |
| Vehicles and Craft | | | | | | | R 17 544 |
| Vehicles | 335 | 189 | 244 | R 17.00 | 768 | R 13 056 | |
| Power boats | 13 | 28 | 61 | R 44.00 | 102 | R 4 488 | |
| Season Tickets | | | | | | | R 1 044 |
| Seniors Season tickets | | 1 | | R 59.00 | 1 | R 59 | |
| Adults Season tickets | 1 | 1 | 2 | R 115.00 | 4 | R 460 | |
| Family Season tickets | 2 | | 1 | R 175.00 | 3 | R 525 | |
| General | | | | | | | R 14 283 |
| Fishing adults | 87 | 108 | 134 | R 38.00 | 329 | R 12 502 | |
| Fishing children | 40 | 19 | 44 | R 13.00 | 103 | R 1 339 | |
| Fishing seniors | 10 | 18 | 6 | R 13.00 | 34 | R 442 | |
| GRAND TOTAL | | | | | | | R 54 221 |

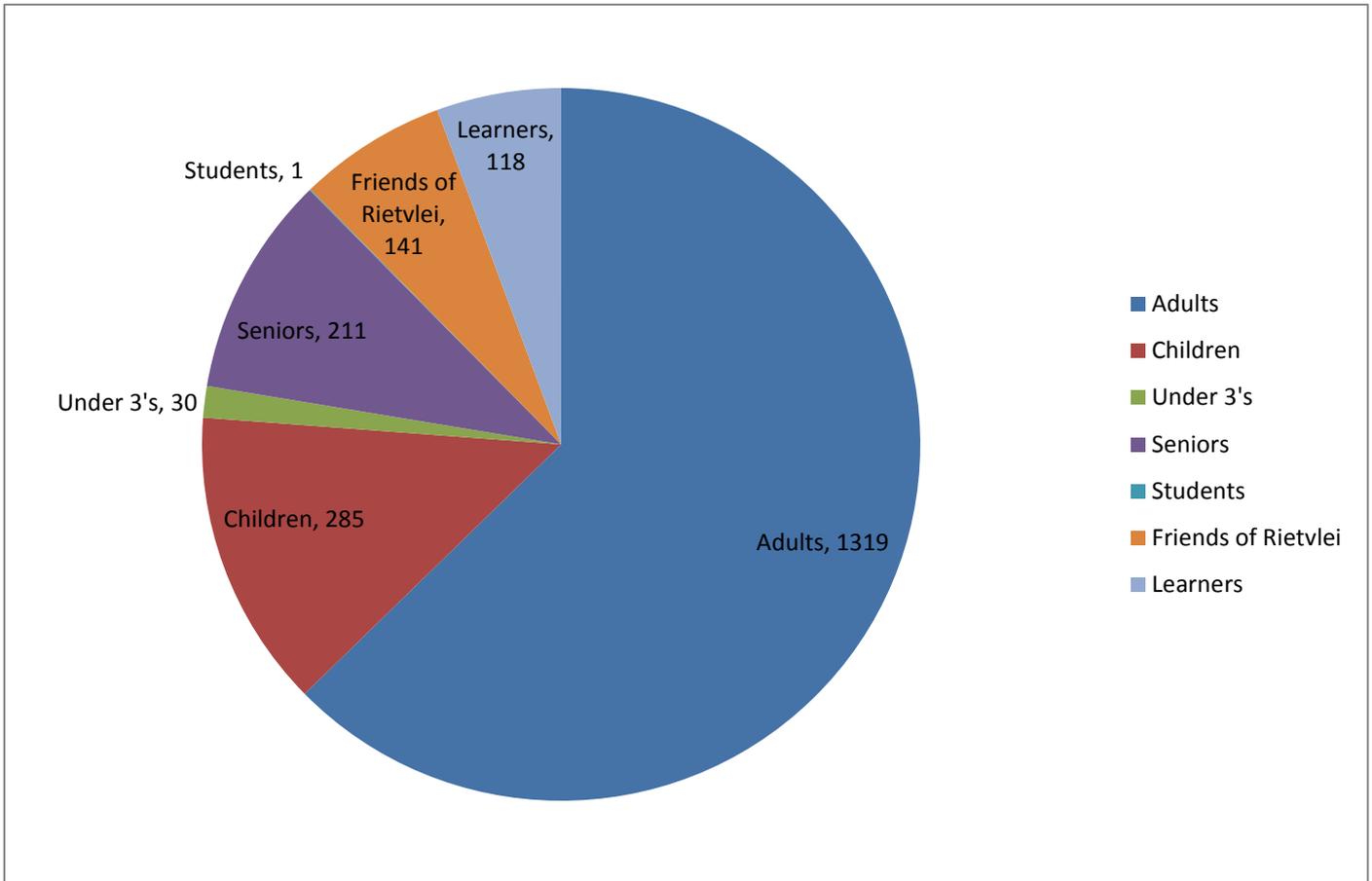


Figure 70. Pie chart of visitors to Rietvlei during this quarter.

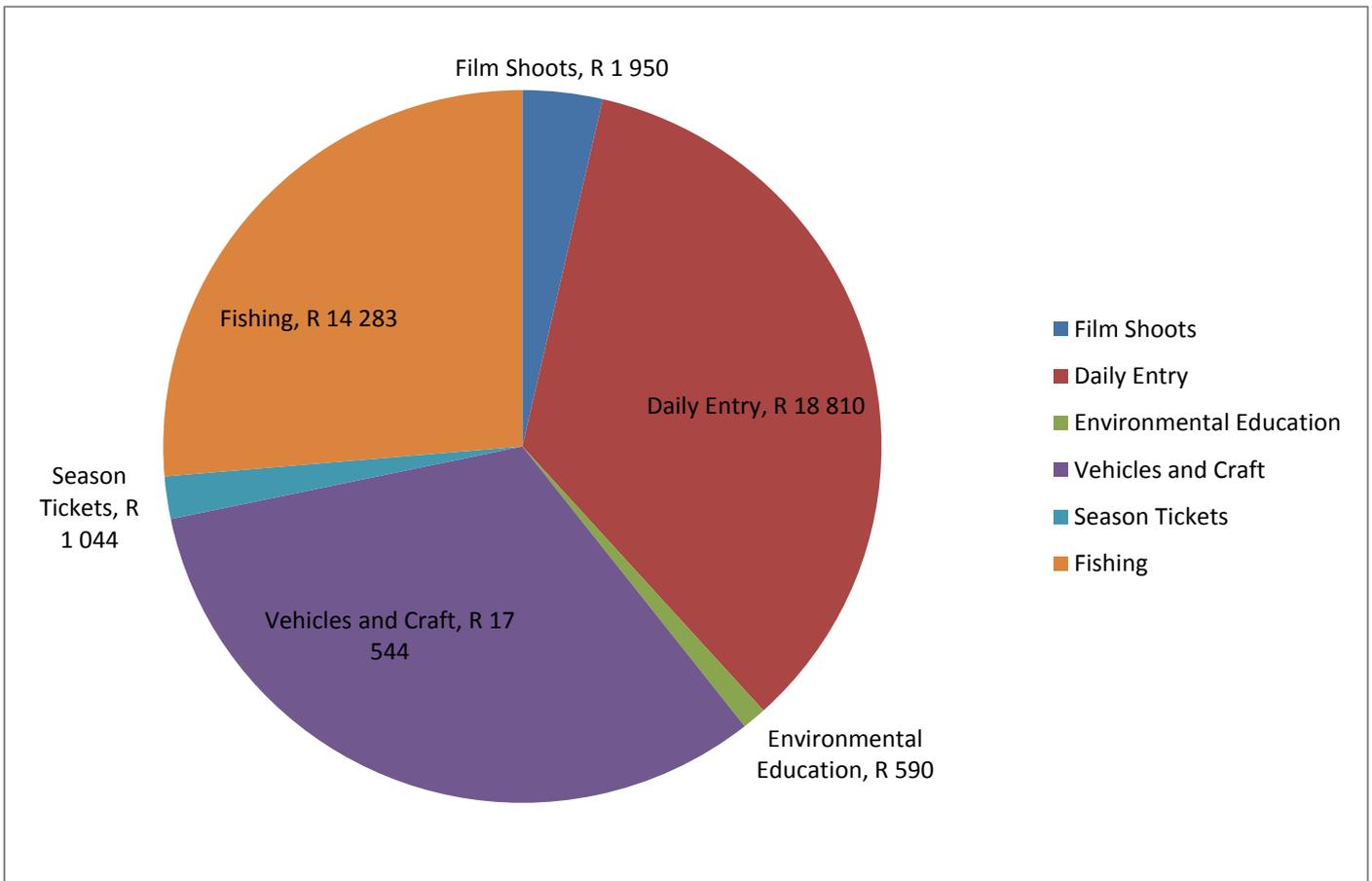


Figure 71. Pie chart of income to Rietvlei during this quarter.

1.2 Trends in monthly records of income and visitor numbers have indicated a steady increase over the last three years as indicated by the linear trend lines in Figures 72-73 below. (Note: The records exclude Milnerton Aquatic Club members.)

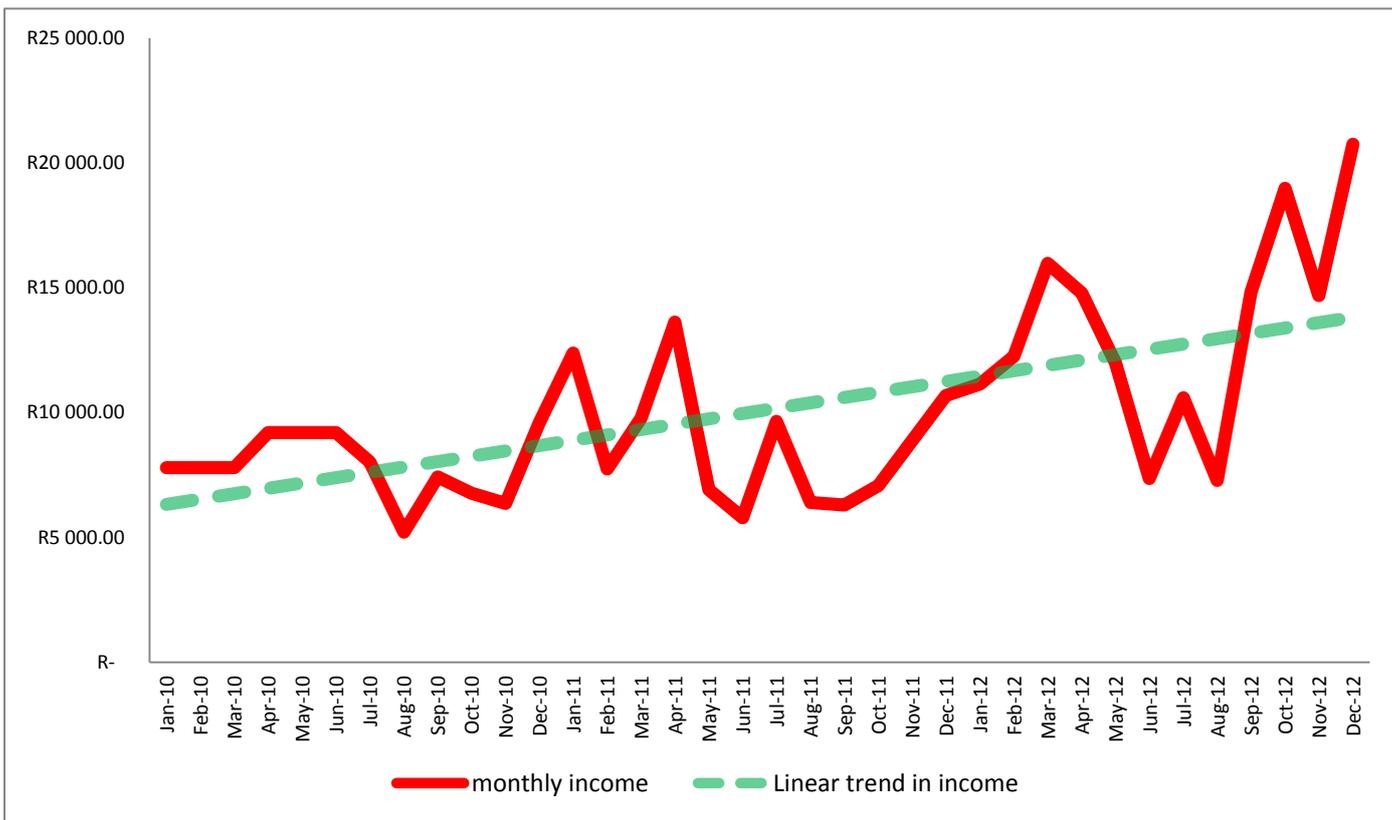


Figure 72. Trends in monthly income at Rietvlei over the last three years.

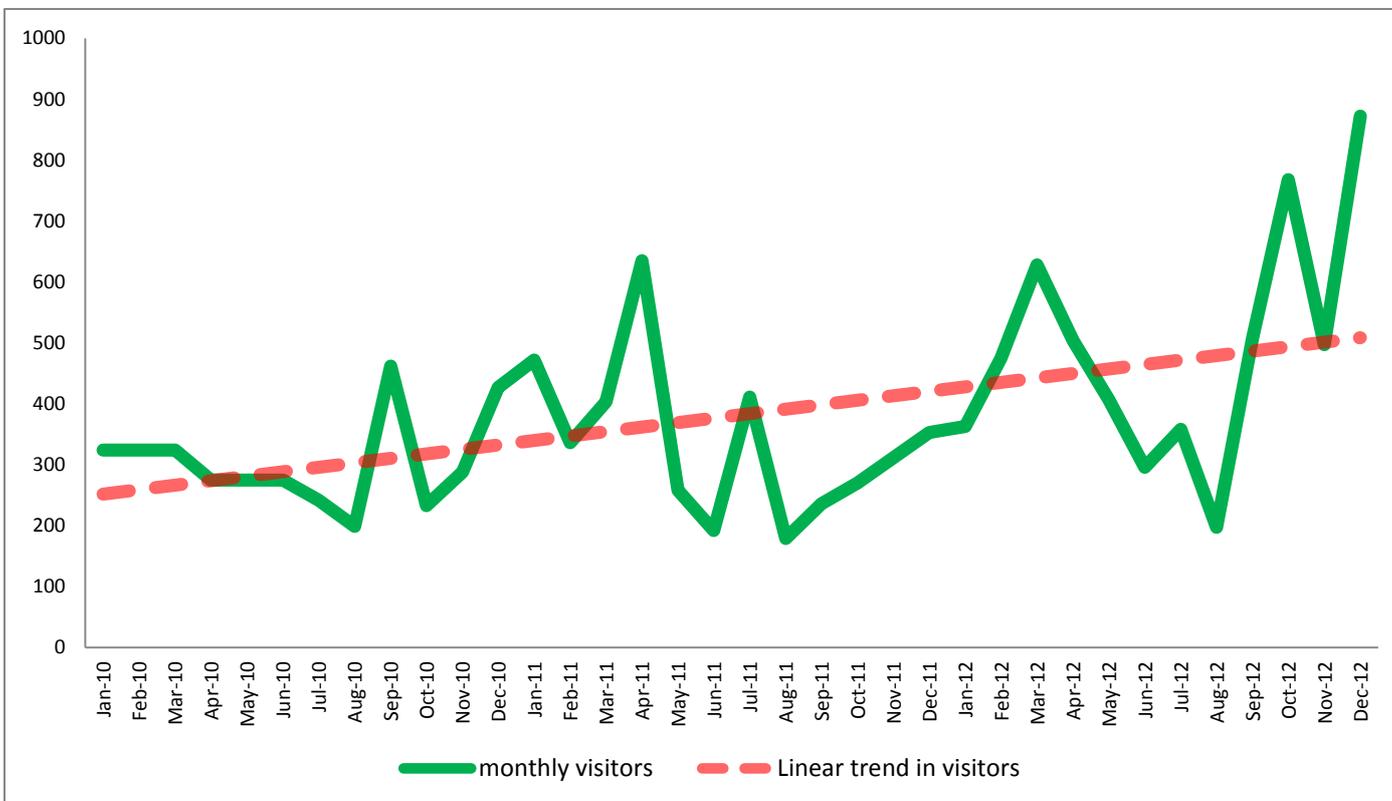


Figure 73. Trends in monthly visitors to Rietvlei over the last three years.

11 INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

11.1 Fence line repairs took place along the TBNR Coastal Section, as well as the R27 on the Western edge of the Rietvlei section. At the coastal section and internal redundant piece of fencing was removed (see Figures 74-75). Along the R27 the Provincial Roads Department replaced a section of the standard stock fence with new stock fencing.



Figure 74. Removal of redundant internal fence at Coastal Section, as well as firebreak cutting in the background (photo: Clinton Roux).



Figure 75. Removed redundant internal fence at Coastal Section.

12 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

12.1 Boardwalk construction started on 2012/11/13 with the National EPWP team. The construction of the new boardwalk will link the present footpath to the existing boardwalk, as well as link the two bird hides as one continuous walkway. This development will allow more access to bird watching facilities in wet seasons when footpaths are normally under water (see Figures 76-77 below).



Figure 76. Planning of boardwalk.



Figure 77. Construction of boardwalk starting.

12.2 The Rietvlei office power connection was done on 2012/10/23 and all the circuits were tested the following day (see Figures 78-80). The City's IS&T department started with installing the offices' computer and network infrastructure on 2012/10/24. MSD Construction also worked on waterproofing of the sky-light in the reception area of the office complex (See Figure 81). The offices are now fully functional and accessible to the public.



Figure 78. Trenching for the Eskom power cabling.



Figure 79. Eskom cabling being laid.



Figure 80. New upgraded Eskom substation on Sandpiper Crescent.



Figure 81. Contractors repairing waterproofing at Rietvlei office.

12.2 New contact details for the Rietvlei office of the TBNR: As a result of the office being brought on-line, new data-line phones were installed. These are not Telkom phones, but they rather run on the City's computer network instead. The general contact number for the Table Bay Nature Reserve is now **021 444 0315** and the email address is tablebay.naturereserve@capetown.gov.za.

12.3 See a Map of City of Cape Town nature reserves in Figure 83 below.

City of Cape Town Nature Reserves



Figure 82. Portion of map indicating Nature Reserves in the City of Cape Town.