



Koos Retief

Biodiversity Area Manager: Milnerton

T: 021 444 0315 E: jacobusi.retief@capetown.gov.za

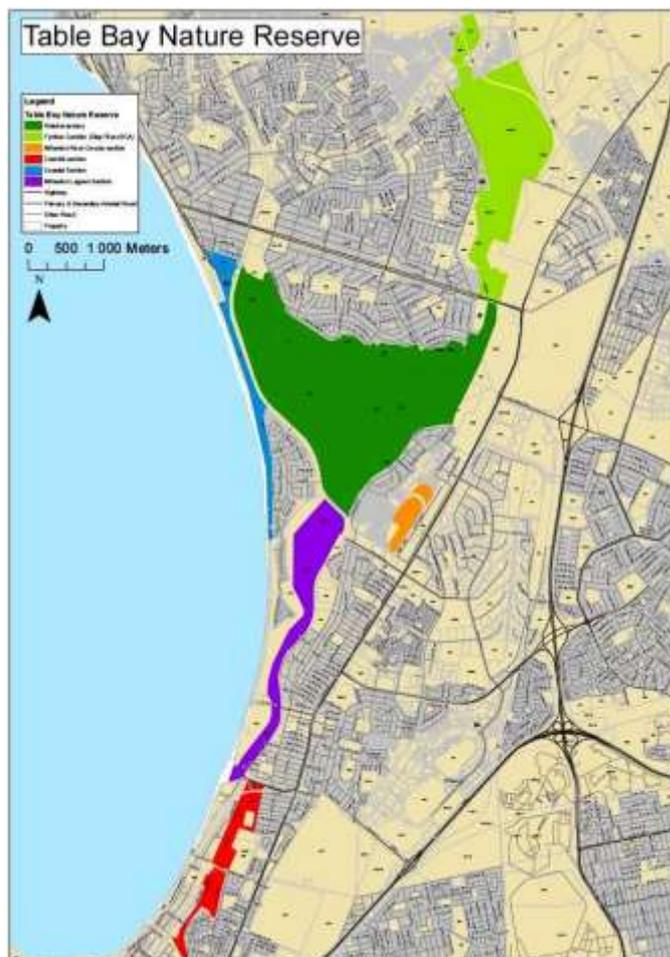
TABLE BAY NATURE RESERVE

QUARTERLY REPORT JANUARY – MARCH 2015

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For the Nature Reserve webpage, click the link or type www.capetown.gov.za/tablebaynr in your browser.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A two-year study of the **hydrology and geohydrology** of the Rietvlei wetlands was launched;
- The landing strip of the **Cape Radio Flyers Club** remains unused pending a final decision on their lease application;
- The reconstitution of the **Protected Area Advisory Committee** was advertised and applications from a wide range of stakeholder groups were received;
- A **water-bird census** counted 3,811 birds of 41 different species;
- **Trap arrays as part of a small mammal survey** found previously unrecorded Brant's climbing mouse;
- A wildlife photographer discovered a very rare **Yellow-billed stork** at Rietvlei;
- An **injured Cape grysbok** was relocated from Milnerton Racecourse to Atlantic Beach Golf Estate;
- A **swap of more grysbok** between Milnerton Racecourse and Atlantic Beach is being planned;
- The **Cape Reptile Club** assisted with a reptile and spider survey at Milnerton Racecourse Section;
- **Several wildfires** were fought in the Nature Reserve and other protected areas;
- Nature Reserve staff assisted at three **prescribed ecological burns**;
- A **prescribed ecological burn** is being planned for a portion of the Zoarvlei Section;
- **Education and outreach** benefited over 260 children;
- **Visitor income** this quarter was the highest ever recorded at Rietvlei;
- Two new **Nature Conservation Work-Integrated Learning students** started this quarter;
- The number of **Learnership candidates** employed at the Nature Reserve increased from six to nine;
- Our **Environmental Intern Karen Merrett** was named "Most Outstanding Intern" of 2014/2015.

2 HIGHLIGHTS & CHALLENGES

2.1 Highlight: The tender for the study of the Rietvlei hydrology and geohydrology was awarded to a research team from the University of Stellenbosch. The intention is to study the movement of water through the soil profile as well as above ground, and to model this water movement in order to inform decision making on the ground. The study was recommended in the Diep Estuary Management Plan of 2011.

The project inception meeting was held on 26/03/2015 and was attended by the research team as well as staff from the ERM Department. The study will be conducted over two years.



Figure 1. Water from the Diep River mixing with water on the seasonal pans at Rietvlei.

2.2 Challenge: The Cape Radio Flyers' application for a new lease at Rietvlei remains unresolved. At a recent meeting of Subcouncil 1 on 19/03/2015, a report on the matter served before the Subcouncil. The report recommended that the lease application be refused. The Department's intention is to restore the site of the landing strip back to natural vegetation.

During the Subcouncil meeting, representatives from the Cape Radio Flyers Club delivered a presentation. Subcouncil then resolved that the matter be deferred to another subcouncil meeting.

Presently the landing strip has not been used since 31/05/2014, pending the final decision from Full Council on the club's future at Rietvlei.



Figure 2. Natural salt marsh vegetation growing on the Cape Radio Flyers' landing strip at Rietvlei.



Figure 3. Impact area of the Cape Radio Flyers' operations in Rietvlei.

3 CONSERVATION PLANNING

3.1 The establishment of protected area advisory committees at City of Cape Town nature reserves and natural areas was advertised in the media from 4 to 13 February 2015, in terms of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, Act 57 of 2003 (see below Figures 4-5). Interested parties had to visit www.capetown.gov.za/paac for further information and to download application forms. Applications had to be sent to Natanya Dreyer at paac@capetown.gov.za before 10 March 2015. All applications were reviewed by the Branch on 23/03/2015. The members of the new committees will be advised in writing.

ESTABLISHMENT OF PROTECTED AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The City of Cape Town intends to establish protected area advisory committees for 17 nature reserves and protected natural environments across the city in terms of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, Act 57 of 2003.

The protected area advisory committees will be constituted in terms of the Regulations for the Proper Administration of Nature Reserves published under Government Notice R99 in Government Gazette 35021 dated 8 February 2012.

The nature reserves for which advisory committees will be established, include Blaauwberg, Bothasig Fynbos, Botterblom, Braeken (including Perdekop), Durbanville, Edith Stephens, False Bay (including Rondevlei, Zeekoewlei, Pelican Park, Slangtjiebos, Zandwolf and Strandfontein birding area), Helderberg (including Silwerboomkloof), Harmony Flats, Lourens River, Steenbras, Table Bay (including Rietvlei, Diep River, Milnerton Racecourse and Zoarvlei), Tygerberg, Uitkamp Wetland, Witzands Aquifer, Wolfgat and Zandvlei Estuary.

The objectives of the committees will be to facilitate interaction, communication and engagement and the development of partnerships with stakeholders and surrounding communities to promote the objectives of the nature reserves.

Committees will be mandated to give advice and input on strategies, management plans and reports, as well as monitor progress of implementation, promote involvement in decision-making and facilitate linkages and integration of nature reserves with surrounding communities.

All government organisations, user groups, community organisations, non-governmental organisations, academic institutions and residents' associations of neighbouring communities with a real interest in nature reserves are invited to apply for membership of the advisory committees.

The constitution for the establishment of protected area advisory committees within the City of Cape Town, as adopted by the Energy, Environmental and Spatial Planning Portfolio Committee on 5 November 2014, determines how these committees will be operated. The constitution can be viewed online at www.capetown.gov.za/paac.

Membership application forms can be downloaded from the above website, and must be accompanied by a written, scanned mandate from the organisation on its official letterhead. Nominations must indicate a primary delegate and may indicate a secondary delegate to represent the member at meetings and act as a contact person.

Applications must be e-mailed to Natanya Dreyer at paac@capetown.gov.za, and must reach the City of Cape Town by 10 March 2015. For further information contact Natanya Dreyer at 021 514 4188/9.

Members of any existing advisory committee or management forum related to any of the above nature reserves must re-apply for membership of the new advisory committees. Membership will be confirmed in writing by the management authority, for a period not exceeding three years. Members will be expected to interact with advisory committees according to the constitution, disseminate information to their constituencies and attend quarterly meetings of the advisory committees when possible.

ACHMAT EBRAHIM
CITY MANAGER
20/2015



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD

Making progress possible. Together.

Figure 4. Advertisement in the Cape Times of 4 February 2015.

STIGTING VAN ADVIESKOMITEES VIR BESKERMDE OMGEWINGS

Die Stad Kaapstad beoog die stigting van advieskomitees vir beskermde omgewings ten opsigte van 17 natuurreservate en beskermde natuuromgewings regoor die stad ingevolge die Wet op Nasionale Omgewingsbestuur: Beskermde Omgewings, Wet 57 van 2003.

Die advieskomitees vir beskermde omgewings sal saamgestel word ingevolge die Regulasies oor die Behoorlike Administrasie van Natuurreservate gepubliseer onder Goewermentskennisgewing R99 in Staatskoerant 35021 van 8 Februarie 2012.

Die natuurreservate waarvoor advieskomitees gestig sal word, sluit in Blaauwberg, Bothasig Fynbos, Botterblom, Braeken (insluitend Perdekop), Durbanville, Edith Stephens, Valsbaai (insluitend Rondevlei, Zeekoewlei, Pelican Park, Slangtjiebos, Zandwolf en die Strandfontein-voëlkykgebied), Helderberg (insluitend Silwerboomkloof), Harmony Flats, Lourensrivier, Steenbras, Tafelbaai (insluitend Rietvlei, Diepriet, Milnerton-renbaan en Zoarvlei), Tygerberg, Uitkamp-vleigebied, Witzands-waterdraer, Wolfgat en die Zandvlei-riviermonding.

Die komitees se doelwitte is die fasilitering van interaksie, kommunikasie en betrokkenheid en die ontwikkeling van vennootskappe met belanghebbendes en omliggende gemeenskappe ten einde die natuurreservate se doelwitte te bevorder.

Die komitees sal die mandaat hê om advies en insette oor strategieë, bestuursplanne en verslae te lewer asook vordering met implementering te monitor, betrokkenheid by besluitneming te bevorder en natuurreservate se skakeling en integrasie met omliggende gemeenskappe te fasiliteer.

Alle regeringsorganisasies, gebruikersgroepe, gemeenskapsorganisasies, nieregeringsorganisasies, akademiese inrigtings en inwonersverenigings of omliggende gemeenskappe met 'n werklike belang by natuurreservate word genooi om aansoek te doen om lidmaatskap van die advieskomitees.

Die grondwet vir die stigting van advieskomitees vir beskermde omgewings in die Stad Kaapstad, soos op 5 November 2014 deur die portefeuljekomitee oor energie, omgewings- en ruimtelike beplanning goedgekeur, bepaal hoe hierdie komitees bedryf sal word. Die grondwet is aanlyn beskikbaar by www.capetown.gov.za/paac.

Aansoekvorms om lidmaatskap kan op die webwerf hierbo afgelaai word en moet van 'n skriftelike, ingeskandeerde mandaat van die organisasie op sy briefhoof vergesel word. Nominasies moet die naam van 'n hoofafgevaardigde bevat en kan ook 'n sekondêre afgevaardigde insluit wat die lid by vergaderings kan verteenwoordig en as 'n kontakpersoon kan dien.

Aansoeke moet per e-pos aan Natanya Dreyer by paac@capetown.gov.za gestuur word en die Stad Kaapstad teen 10 Maart 2015 bereik. Nog inligting is beskikbaar by Natanya Dreyer by 021 514 4188/9.

Lede van enige bestaande advieskomitee of bestuursforum wat met die bogenoemde natuurreservate verbind word, sal weer aansoek moet doen om lidmaatskap van die nuwe advieskomitees. Die bestuursowerheid sal die lidmaatskap vir 'n tydperk van uiters drie jaar skriftelik bevestig. Daar sal van lede verwag word om volgens die grondwet met advieskomitees te skakel, inligting in hul kiesafdelings te versprei en kwartaalike vergaderings by te woon wanneer moontlik.

ACHMAT EBRAHIM
STADSBESTUURDER
20/2015



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD

Maak vooruitgang moontlik. Tesame.

Figure 5. Advertisements in Die Burger of 4 February 2015.

4 FLORA

4.1 Invasive and/or alien vegetation workload assessments were conducted by the Nature Reserve staff together with the Invasive Species Unit of Westlake. The assessments help with the planning, scheduling and funding of alien clearing projects in the Nature Reserve.

During this quarter, invasive species were removed by the Nature Reserve team from the Bird Hide Block, Coastal Section and the Milnerton Lagoon Section. Expanded Public Works teams also removed invasive species from the Diep River Section, the Fynbos Corridor and Milnerton Ridge. A Working for Wetlands contractor was also appointed to clear invasive vegetation in the Diep River Section.

4.2 Water hyacinth removal was conducted in the Diep River, Milnerton Ridge canal and the Milnerton Lagoon during this quarter. This work is still ongoing.

Biological control agents (Water hyacinth plant-hopper, *Megamelus scutellaris*) were released on the water hyacinth at Zoarvlei.

4.3 Herbicide treatment of bulrush (*Typha capensis*) reedbeds was undertaken by HENCHEM at reed beds in Waves' Edge, Dolphin Beach, and Zoarvlei Section. This work is intended to alleviate the social impacts of seed dispersal from the reed beds.

The City of Cape Town paid R300,000 towards the chemical treatment of the reed in Waves' Edge and Dolphin Beach, and the Paardeneiland City Improvement District (PECID) paid R100,000 for the chemical treatment of a portion of reeds in Zoarvlei.

A burn permit application was submitted for the burning of the reed beds in the Zoarvlei Section. It is planned to burn these reed beds in the next quarter. The outcome of the permit application is still being awaited.



Figure 6. HENCHEM working in Waves' Edge Wetland.

5 FAUNA

5.1 Wildlife photography at the Rietvlei wetlands often captures wonderful sights in nature. Frieda Prinsloo graciously agreed that some of her photographs may appear in this report (see Figures 7-8).

Very rare sightings of a Yellow-billed stork and a Marsh owl were submitted to the Nature Reserve by Frieda. These sightings help the Reserve Management to record the presence of species that are either very rare or very difficult to detect.

Visitors are encouraged to submit their photographs to Reserve Management.



Figure 7. Yellow-billed stork by Frieda Prinsloo (4 February 2015).



Figure 8. Marsh owl by Frieda Prinsloo (12 September 2012).

5.2 An integrated bird census was conducted on 16/01/2015. The census was done by the Nature Reserve team and volunteers and covered 11 survey sections (see Figures 9-10 for details).

The water birds numbered a total of 3,811 birds comprising of 41 species. This is 1419 more birds than in the previous quarter.

These included 1 Great crested grebe, 11 Little grebe, 367 White pelican, 55 Whitebreasted cormorant, 38 Reed cormorant, 8 African darter, 15 Grey heron, 5 Blackheaded heron, 3 Purple heron, 15 Little egret, 21 Yellowbilled egret, 29 Sacred ibis, 8 Glossy ibis, 7 African spoonbill, 572 Greater flamingo, 150 Lesser flamingo, 524 Egyptian goose, 55 Yellowbilled duck, 21 Cape teal, 63 Cape shoveller, 454 Spurwinged goose, 1 African fish eagle, 16 Common moorhen, 593 Redknobbed coot, 3 African black oystercatcher, 103 Blacksmith lapwing, 1 Common sandpiper, 12 Greenshank, 2 Curlew sandpiper, 120 Pied avocet, 7 Blackwinged stilt, 6 Water thicknee, 32 Kelp gull, 332 Hartlaub's gull, 3 Caspian tern, 9 Swift tern, 120 Common tern, 3 Pied kingfisher, 1 Malachite kingfisher, 20 Cape wagtail, and 5 Mallard hybrids.

Any keen birders who want to participate in the bird censuses are welcome to volunteer their time between 09:00 and 12:00 on the predetermined dates. The next bird censuses will take place on 17 April, 17 July, and 16 October 2015. Please call the office to confirm.

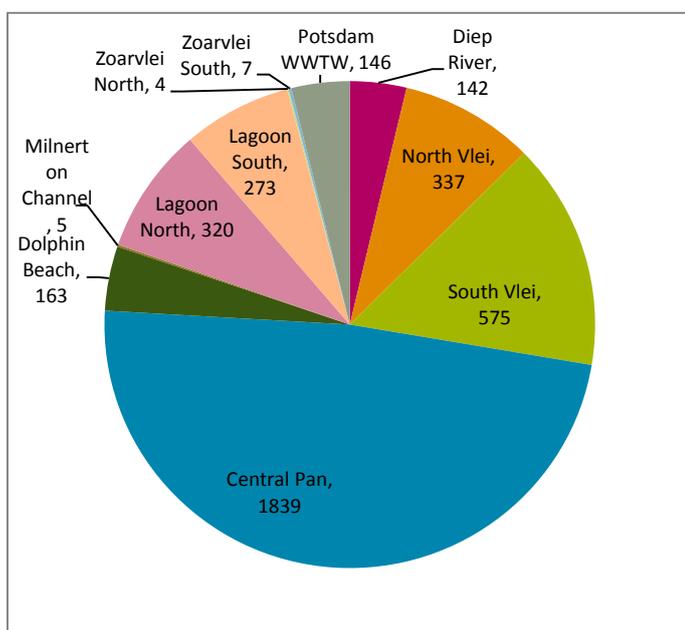


Figure 9. Pie chart of the numbers of birds per survey section.

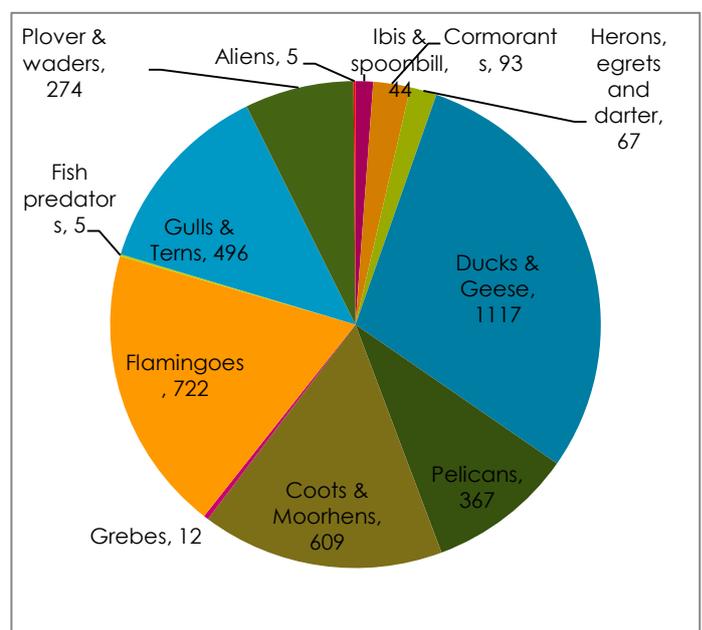


Figure 10. Pie chart of bird groups recorded during the bird census.

5.3 A reptile and spider survey was conducted by the Cape Reptile Club and staff from the Table Bay NR at the Milnerton Racecourse Section on 28/02/2015. Below are some of the spiders that were found.



Figure 11. Band orb spinner.



Figure 12. Garden orb web spider.

5.4 Trap arrays were used by student Hester Pentz to sample small mammals and reptiles. Species that were found in the Rietvlei Section included:

- Olive house snake;
- Brant's climbing mouse (new species record for the Nature Reserve);
- Forest shrew;
- Striped field mouse;
- African pygmy mouse; and a
- variety of scorpions and spiders.



Figure 13. Olive house snake.



Figure 14. Forest shrew.



Figure 15. Brant's climbing mouse.



Figure 16. Unidentified scorpion.

5.5 Additional fauna sightings were made during this quarter, including Sand Prawns and a very rare snake called an Egg-eater (see Figures 17-18 below).



Figure 17. Sand prawn.



Figure 18. Egg-eater.

5.6 A Cape grysbok was injured by a horse on the sand track around the Milnerton Racecourse Section on 24/03/2015. The grysbok was concussed and a veterinarian from the Baker & Mcveigh Equine Hospital treated the grysbok near the Racecourse after the accident.

It was thereafter taken to the SPCA's Wildlife Unit for further treatment. The grysbok recovered from the concussion and was micro-chipped. A decision was made to release this grysbok at the Atlantic Beach Golf Estate, rather than at Milnerton Racecourse.

During the next quarter, two more grysbok will be removed from the Milnerton Racecourse in a game capture operation and swapped with two other antelope from Atlantic Beach to prevent genetic inbreeding in these isolated populations.



Figure 19. The same grysbok being released after recovery.



Figure 20. The injured Cape grysbok.

6 SOIL

Nothing to report.

7 WATER

7.1 Water samples were taken at 15 sampling points in the Rietvlei wetland system by Scientific Services technicians on 27/01/2015, 24/02/2015, and 31/03/2015. The analysis reports from these samples are received on a monthly basis.

8 FIRE

8.1 Wildfires occurred in several locations in the Nature Reserve, especially in the Diep River Section and Zoarvlei Section. All the fires were mapped and post-fire litter clean-ups were conducted. The Nature Reserve team assisted the Fire Department to control some of the fires.

Table Bay Nature Reserve also assisted with the extended Peninsula Fires at the beginning of March, and spent a day on the fire line at Constantia on 05/03/2015.

8.2 Fire prevention measures were put in place at various locations, including firebreaks along portions of the Diep River and Zoarvlei Sections.

8.3 Three prescribed ecological burns took place during this quarter that Table Bay Nature Reserve staff assisted in. A management block of Tygerberg Nature Reserve was burned on 09/02/2015 with a crew from Table Bay NR assisting. Two management blocks of Helderberg Nature Reserve were burned on 25/02/2015 and 31/03/2015. During both these burns a crew from Table Bay NR also assisted. Koos Retief was a Sector Boss on the latter date at on one of the three sectors at Helderberg burn (see below images).



Figure 21. Prescribed burning at Tygerberg Nature Reserve.

Figure 22. Prescribed burning at Helderberg Nature Reserve.

8.4 An application for a permit to burn a portion of reed beds in Zoarvlei was submitted to the Air Pollution Control Department. A site inspection was held with the Air Pollution Control Department on 18/03/2015. Fire break cutting was done during this quarter to prepare the site for a burn in the next quarter.



Figure 23. Portion of Zoarvlei that is being planned for burning during the next quarter.

9 PEOPLE, TOURISM & EDUCATION

9.1 Stakeholder Engagement

- Table Bay NR staff attended no less than 27 official meetings with stakeholders;
- The reserve facilities were used to benefit no less than 335 people over 20 event days; and
- Environmental education and outreach benefited no less than 273 people over 5 event days.
- The Nature Reserve was visited by 4,573 visitors in this quarter, bringing in R84,909 in income.

9.1.1 Internal Meetings

Table Bay Nature Reserve staff attended no less than **15 internal meetings** during this quarter:

- 29/01/2015: Environmental Internship Awards (Green Point);
- 30/01/2015: North Region Health and Safety Committee (at Blaauwberg NR);
- 30/01/2015: North Region Management Committee (at Blaauwberg NR);
- 18/02/2015: Planning of the Fynbos Corridor development through Parklands;
- 18/02/2015: Site meeting at planned burn block at Helderberg NR;
- 23/02/2015: Monitoring and evaluation review with Cliff Dorse and Leighan Mossop;
- 26/02/2015: Branch meeting (Kenilworth Racecourse);
- 27/02/2015: North Region Management Committee (at Table Bay NR);
- 02/03/2015: Environmental Authorisation for Stormwater Maintenance (Civic Centre);
- 13/03/2015: Student research proposal presentation (Kristo Pienaar Centre);
- 18/03/2015: Zoarvlei burn permit application site inspection;
- 23/03/2015: Review of applications for Protected Area Advisory Committees;
- 25/03/2015: North Region Health and Safety Committee (at Table Bay NR);
- 25/03/2015: North Region Management Committee (at Table Bay NR); and
- 26/03/2015: Students' competence assessments.

9.1.2 External Meetings

Table Bay Nature Reserve staff attended no less than **12 external meetings** during this quarter:

- 13/01/2015: Nature Conservation Learnership interviews;
- 24/01/2015: Subcouncil 15 nature reserve site visits;
- 27/01/2015: Nature Conservation Learnership induction day;
- 28/01/2015: *Typha capensis* control discussion;
- 28/01/2015: Milnerton Aquatic Club commodore regarding club issues;
- 02/02/2015: Launch of the False Bay Nature Reserve's Ramsar designation;
- 13/02/2015: Learnership mentors meeting;
- 19/02/2015: Friends of Rietvlei evening talk by Ulrike Irlich about invasive species;
- 04/03/2015: Dr Radloff from CPUT about WIL student progress;
- 24/03/2015: NQF level 5 Learnership briefing meeting;
- 26/03/2015: Geohydrology study launch meeting; and
- 27/03/2015: Milnerton Racecourse Environmental Management Committee meeting.

9.2 Partnerships and Benefit to People

9.2.1 Rietvlei Education Centre Usage

The usage of the Rietvlei Education Centre, excluding visiting school groups, generated about 43 person days of benefit to people over four event days.

| DATE | GROUP | ACTIVITY | PERSON DAYS |
|--------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 06/02/2015 | Learnerships | Exams | 6 |
| 19/02/2015 | Blaauwberg development area ELC | Meeting | 12 |
| 19/02/2015 | Friends of Rietvlei | Evening talk | 15 |
| 12/03/2015 | NCC Environmental Services | Learners support day | 10 |
| TOTAL | | | 43 |

9.2.2 Rietvlei Boma Usage

The usage of the Rietvlei Boma generated 292 person days of benefit to people over 16 event days.

| DATE | GROUP | ACTIVITY | PERSON DAYS |
|---------------|--|---|-------------|
| 13/01/2015 | CTEET | Learnership interviews | 6 |
| 24/01/2015 | Subcouncil 15 & ward committee | Nature reserve visit | 33 |
| 26-30/01/2015 | BMB WIL students | Induction week (20 per day) | 100 |
| 13/02/2015 | CTEET Learnership | Learnership mentors workshop | 12 |
| 19/02/2015 | CTEET Learnership | How to Conduct Yourself in an Interview | 12 |
| 23/02/2015 | CTEET Learnership | How to Compile a CV | 12 |
| 25/02/2015 | ERMD | Environmental compliance training | 10 |
| 06/03/2015 | NCC Environmental Services | Environmental ethics training | 10 |
| 11/03/2015 | Provincial Department Environment Affairs and Development Planning | Provincial biodiversity strategy & action plan: Stakeholders participation & presentation of draft document | 21 |
| 13/03/2015 | Invasive Species unit | Drug and Substance abuse & Foetal Alcohol Syndrome | 30 |
| 20/03/2015 | IOSM | Safety meeting | 15 |
| 28/03/2015 | WESSA | AGM | 31 |
| TOTAL | | | 292 |

9.2.3 Environmental Education and Outreach

Environmental Education and Outreach, including the now famous school holiday programmes, generated 273 person days of benefit to people over 5 event days.

| DATE | GROUP(S) | LEARNERS | TEACHER +ADULTS | PERSON-DAYS | PROGRAMME |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 07/03/2015 | Table View High School – Eco club | 6 | 1 | 7 | Guided walk, bird ID, miniSass |
| 09/03/2015 | Parklands College | 74 | 4 | 78 | Joined SANCCOB programme |
| 23/03/2015 | Table View Primary School | 53 | 2 | 55 | Joined SANCCOB programme |
| 24/03/2015 | Table View Primary School | 63 | 2 | 65 | Joined SANCCOB programme |
| 26/03/2015 | Table View Primary School | 66 | 2 | 68 | Joined SANCCOB programme |
| TOTALS | | 262 | 11 | 273 | TOTALS |

9.2.3.1 A “stuffed” crocodile was donated by Pat Downing from the Milnerton Aquatic Club to the Rietvlei Education Programme.

This specimen was inherited from John Gray, a member of the Ship Society of S.A., who was a Marine Engineer. The croc was apparently obtained in the Congo, and he wanted it donated to Nature Conservation.

John, who was diagnosed with pancreatic and liver cancer, passed away in the Helderberg Hospice on Monday 12 January 2015.

This crocodile is now used to as an exhibit for visiting school groups.



Figure 24. Pat Downing handing over the "stuffed" crocodile.



Figure 25. Student David Copley helping Parklands College kids with fish dissections.



Figure 26. Site manager Landi Louw teaching Parklands College kids about medicinal plants.



Figure 27. Table View Primary kids exploring the waters at Rietvlei.



Figure 28. Student Hester Pentz helping Table View Primary kids to find aquatic invertebrates.

9.3 Visitors and Income

9.3.1 Income from visitors at the Rietvlei Water Area during this quarter was R84,909 from 4,573 visitors. This is the most income ever recorded in any quarter at Rietvlei, and is over R13,323 more than the previous quarter. Figure 29 indicates the first quarters (January to March) over the last five years.

During this quarter the electronic cash register broke twice. Repairs are underway, and currently manual transaction slips are used to record the information. The Nature Reserve is considering investing in an on-line Point of Sale system to replace the old electronic cash register.

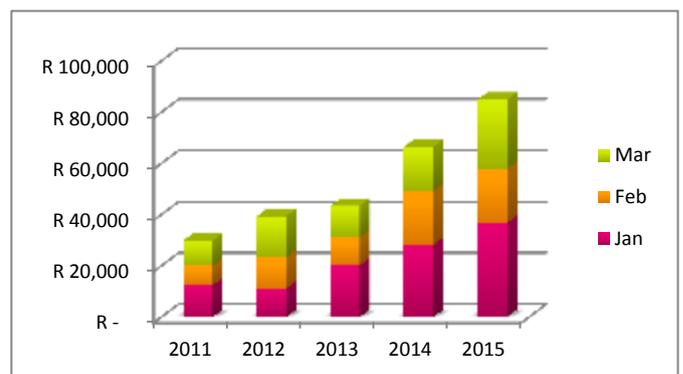


Figure 29. Comparison of income from the first quarters of each year since 2011.

10 STAFF

10.1 An induction programme for all Work-Integrated Learning students was held at the Rietvlei Boma from 25-30/01/2015. The induction programmes covers various aspects of conservation management in an urban context, as well as the importance of community involvement in nature reserves.

10.2 Two Nature Conservation students from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) have started their Work-Integrated Learning programme at the nature reserve. The students are Hester Pentz and David Pickering-Copley.

Dr Frans Radloff from the CPUT visited the students on 04/03/2015 to monitor their progress. Competence assessments were done on 26/03/2015.

All the Work-Integrated Learning students on the City's nature reserves had an opportunity to present their proposals for the research component of their year programmes to managers in the Branch. The presentations were done at the Kristo Pienaar Centre at Tygerberg Nature Reserve on 31/03/2015.

Hester will be researching the Australian tube-worms in Milnerton Lagoon Section and David will be researching the impact of illegal cattle grazing in the Diep River Section.



Figure 30. Hester Pentz and David Pickering-Copley.

10.3 Nature Guardianship Learnerships at Table Bay Nature Reserve, include three candidates from 2014 on NQF level 2 that have completed their courses. These candidates are Viwe Maposa, Ntombesithathu Mathontsi, and Pamella Mrebe. All three these candidates have also passed qualification tests to join the NQF level 5 Nature Guardianship, which started in this quarter in 2015.

Three additional NQF level 2 Nature Guardianship Learnership candidates for 2015 have started this quarter. These candidates are Neliswa Siyotula, Ndileka Siyotula, and Nonzuzo Ginyana (see across).

Three permanent staff members are also on NQF level 5 Nature Guardianship Learnership courses that are run over three years. These candidates are Clinton Roux, Kyle Kelly and Christopher Singo.

This means that there are nine people on various Learnerships employed at the Nature Reserve: three temporary candidates on NQF 2, three temporary candidates on NQF 5, and three permanent staff members on NQF 5.

The training courses are coordinated between the City of Cape Town, the Cape Town Environmental Education Trust (CTEET), and the NCC.

Landi Louw supervises the six temporary candidates that are employed through CTEET.



Figure 31. Neliswa Siyotula, Ndileka Siyotula, and Nonzuzo Ginyana.

10.4 Environmental Intern Karen Merrett, who was based at Table Bay Nature Reserve, was named “Most Outstanding Intern of 2014” in a group of more than 30 candidates in the City’s Urban Sustainability Internship programme.

Karen reported to Elzette Krynauw in the North Region and her focus was environmental education. She worked at both the Rietvlei and Blaauwberg environmental education centres.

Karen is currently studying at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology in order to complete the B.Tech degree in Nature Conservation.

Karen’s contract has come to an end, but we wish her all the best for her future and hope that her career in conservation will take her to new heights.



Figure 32. Karen Merrett at the Internship Awards Ceremony.

10.5 Training of staff at the Table Bay Nature Reserve amounted to no less than 11 person days over four event days, including the following:

- Annual training needs analyses were submitted for all staff;
- 23/01/2015: SAP Chairperson and Initiator training (1 person day);
- 30/01/2015: Excel training (3 person days)
- 30/01/2015: Occupational Health and Safety Training for Groen Sebenza Interns (1 person day);
- 12/02/2015: Snake identification (6 person days);

10.6 The Groen Sebenza Intern Mashudu Sikhwivhilu, who is responsible for the management of the Zoarvlei and Coastal Sections of the Nature Reserve, is currently on maternity leave and will return to work on 03/08/2015. The Nature Conservation students will be taking over some of her responsibilities during her absence. Mashudu gave birth to a baby girl named Ndimuhulu on 30 March. We wish her all the best.

11 LAW ENFORCEMENT

11.1 Illegal structures and litter were removed from the Coastal Section along the R27. General litter clean-ups were also conducted at Rietvlei Section along the R27 as well as the Milnerton Lagoon.



Figure 33. Littering in a braai area at Rietvlei.



Figure 34. Illegal structure in the Coastal Section.

12 INFRASTRUCTURE & EQUIPMENT

12.1 The traffic lines at the Rietvlei Main Entrance Gate were upgraded by an internal road line painting team from Killarney. The new lines are intended to channel traffic and limit conflict with pedestrians.



Figure 35. View of the gate house from inside the reserve.



Figure 36. View of the gate house from the public entrance.

12.3 The Old Friends Bird Hide's roof and woodwork was upgraded and repaired by the Friends of Rietvlei.



Figure 37. Bird hide before repairs.



Figure 38. Bird hide after the repairs.

12.3 Repairs and maintenance was undertaken on the Nature Reserve vehicles, portions of the boardwalks, the buoys in the Rietvlei Water Area, and fencing in the Diep River and Coastal Section. The Nature Reserve asset register was checked and scanned by Barbara Sadler on 10-11/03/2015.

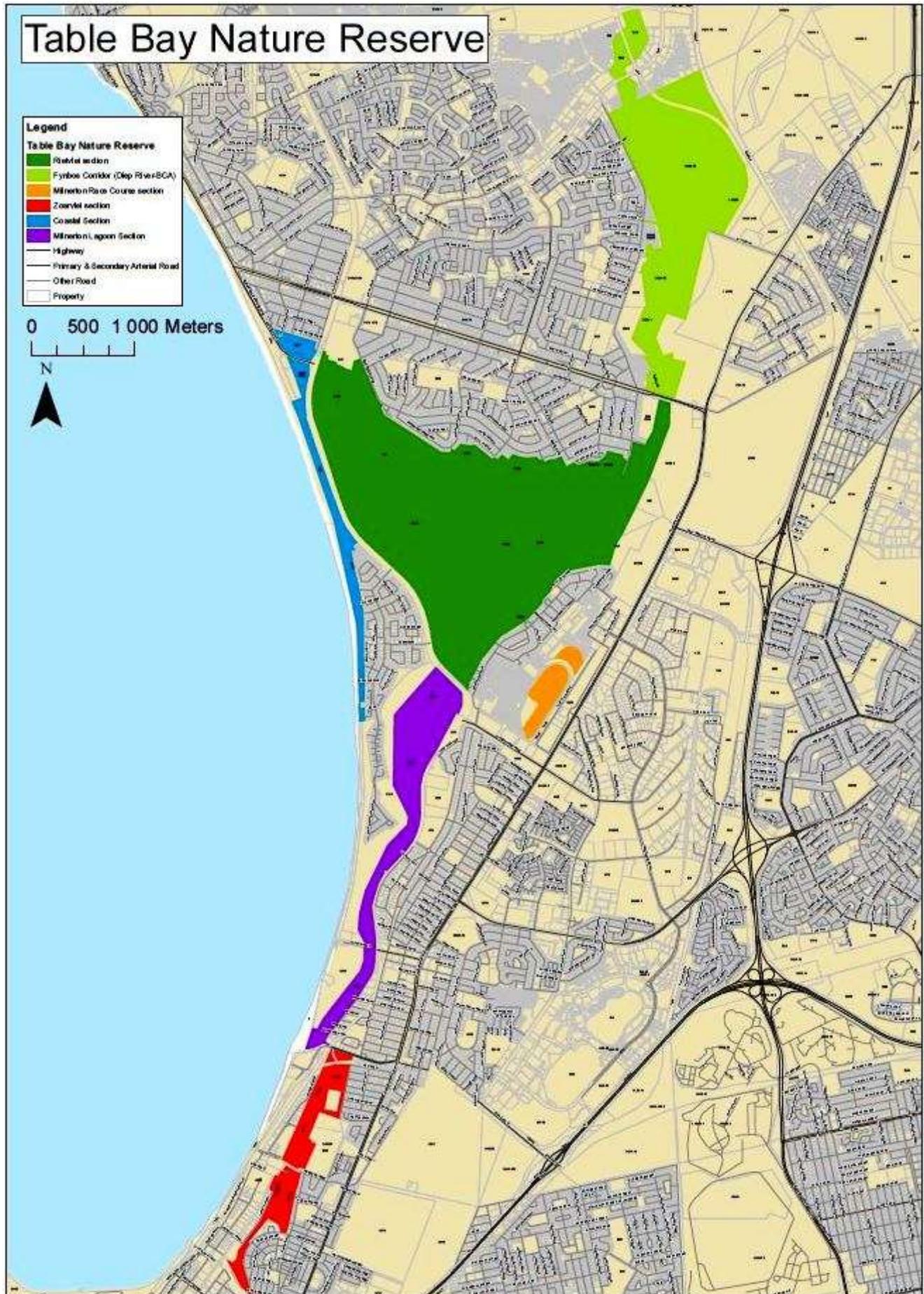


Figure 39. Repairs to a section of the boardwalk.



Figure 40. Repairs to fencing along the R27 at the Coastal Section.

APPENDIX A: MAP OF RESERVE



APPENDIX B: PRESS ARTICLES

Table Bay Nature Reserve gets a croc

A stuffed crocodile that has "seen the world" has been donated to Table Bay Nature Reserve's Rietvlei Educational Centre by John Gray.

Gray was a chief marine engineer and sailed the seven seas.

Pat Downing, one of the Friends of the reserve, elaborates: "The story told is that on a trip to the Congo, John was harassed by a couple of youngsters wanting him to buy a baby crocodile they roped. John, being a lover of conservation and animals, bought the crocodile, not knowing what he would do with it. Due to its injuries, the crocodile ended up at a taxidermist. Thereafter, John had a travelling companion which attracted many stares and laughter."

Gray apparently loved challenges. According to Downing he hiked, fished, ri-

ver rafted, sailed, played hockey, was a Western Province hockey umpire and climbed mountains such as Killimanjaro.

"He dined out on the story of how he 'wrestled the crocodile' in the Congo, which his friends loved to hear, just to see the expressions on people's faces. I had told John about the Table Bay Nature Conservation Rietvlei Educational Centre, which teaches the youth about conservation matters and he said that he would like to donate his crocodile to the education centre so that youngsters could be taught about crocodiles.

"He still laughed and said that Australia had Crocodile Dundee so why can't South Africa have a Crocodile John Gray."

Gray "sailed his last voyage" on Monday 12 January this year, due to pancreatic cancer.



Pat Downing, Ezzette Krynauw, Koos Retief and Bongani Mlisi with the crocodile.

Collapsed boardwalk bars reserve visitors

SUMMER JACOBS

A section of a boardwalk leading to one of the bird hides at Rietvlei Nature Reserve has collapsed, making it inaccessible to bird enthusiasts.

The section of boardwalk was constructed in 2007 and collapsed due to flood damage sustained during the past two winters.

Koos Retief, manager at the reserve, said repairs have already begun.

Mr Retief explained that sections of the boardwalk, which is one connected system of about 720 metres, suffered damages as high waters lifted and displaced certain sections.

"Different portions of this boardwalk were built at different times. The oldest piece was constructed before I started working here.

"The 'Old Friends' Hide" was also built at that time. Ever since then the Friends of Rietvlei have contributed to the maintenance of that bird hide, which is also why we named the old bird hide this way. This year the Friends of Rietvlei have spent over R20 000 to maintain the roof and timber structures of the Old Friends' Hide," said Mr Retief.

The new bird hide, built at the end of the collapsed boardwalk is named "Sunset Hide".

Mr Retief said the boardwalk was built by a contractor appointed by the City of Cape Town. After completion, the structure was handed over to the City's Environmental Resource Management Department to maintain. He said when such projects are

completed and handed over, there is no warranty period. Repairs and maintenance requirements are thereafter done by the City of Cape Town's official responsible for this area, and funded out of the Nature Reserve's operational budget.

In this case, the area manager of the Table Bay Nature Reserve is responsible for the repairs and maintenance of this structure. The funds and staff that are required to effect this repairs come from the municipality of the City of Cape Town.

"We are using in-house field staff to do the repairs, therefore no funds will be spent on contractors," he said.

Although over 400 metres of damaged boardwalk has already been repaired, staff had to wait to repair this particular section as it is situated in a very wet area.

Tabletalk received an email from a bird watcher who visited the reserve and complained about the collapsed boardwalk as well as the state of the Sunset Hide but Mr Retief said cleaning of the hide had been delayed due to the structure being inaccessible.

"People were not supposed to enter the hide until the repairs to the boardwalk are completed.

"Once the boardwalk is repaired, the cleaning of the hide will continue," he said.

Apart from the two bird hides and the many metres of boardwalk, the Rietvlei reserve also has water sports, bird watching, fishing and environmental education facilities.

"There are also picnic sites with braai areas, an ablution block, and boat launch slipways and jetties for

use by water-sports enthusiasts. Environmental Education facilities and programmes are also on offer during school terms and holiday periods. The combined value of this infrastructure is probably over R10 million," said Mr Retief.

"Flooding damage is a feature in wetland areas, and therefore future repairs may be necessary again, if more flooding occurs," he said.

He added that various rare birds have been seen from the



■ A section of the boardwalk at Rietvlei Nature Reserve has collapsed.

Rietvlei bird hides. The most common-billed stork that does not normally occur there.



■ Frieda Prinsloo of Parklands took this picture of the Rietvlei part of the Table View Nature Reserve where the pans are drying up and big swarms of Pied Avocets are cleaning up in the process.

Be forewarned about snakes

ORIELLE BERRY

It's that time of the year again when all things bright and beautiful are enjoying the warm weather. All creatures great and small – and that means one of the most misunderstood: snakes.

The Cape is home to several species of snakes and while they instill a great sense of fear and even superstition, relatively few people get bitten by snakes and those that do, mostly live to tell the tale.

A healthy dose of respect and knowledge are the two things needed more than anything else to avoid getting bitten by a snake.

In the Cape the three most venomous and dangerous snakes are the Cape cobra, the puff adder and the boomslang.

While you may encounter any of these snakes out in the bush, to start with: the Cape cobra. It is, on average, about 1.4 metres in length and its body colour varies from a black to brown, orange, yellow or mottled, which makes it sometimes difficult to identify. If you spot one, huddled under a tree or slithering towards water, leave well alone and start backing away slowly: if threatened or cornered, the snake will rise up, spread a hood and not hesitate to bite. The snake sends out a highly neurotoxic venom, the most potent of an African cobra. If bitten, artificial respiration should be administered until enough anti-venom has been injected by a professional person.

Like the Cape cobra, the puff adder is about 1.4 metres in length. But that's where the similarity ends. Unlike the rather slim cobra, the puff adder is stubby and its variable yellow, yellow-brown, orange-brown, light-brown to grey colour has distinct chevron-like dark markings over its back and dark bands over its tail.



■ The Cape cobra.

The puff adder is slow-moving and if disturbed, can be bad-tempered and may hiss or puff (hence the name). It usually hides in thick grass or under bushes, down holes and under any form of ground cover. Because it relies on camouflage for protection, and has long fangs with potent venom, it is considered Africa's most dangerous snake and accounts for most snakebites. It is cytotoxic, giving off a cell-destroying toxin. Symptoms include extreme pain and excessive swelling and sometimes blistering at the site of the bite – most victims are bitten on the lower leg. But the good news (if there is any) is that the venom is slow-acting, usually taking 24 hours to cause death. If the bite is fatal, victims usually succumb to complications associated with swelling or kidney failure – but less than 10% of bites result in death.

The final one of the terrible trio you are most likely to encounter is the boomslang. It's about 1.5 metres in length with its most noticeable feature being enormous eyes that are a brilliant emerald green when the snake is a juvenile. The female boomslang is light to

olive brown with a dirty white to brown belly, whereas males are green to olive green or bright green with black-edged scales. To confuse matters, they can also be dark brown to black with a bright yellow belly or black with dark grey scales that are black-edged. The boomslang is unobtrusive and shy, spending most of its time in trees and shrubs. It descends to the ground to feed, especially along streams.

If provoked, the snake will inflate the neck region to more than twice the normal size.

Eventually the whole body will be inflated at which stage the snake will strike sideways and forwards with a jerky motion.

It's a widespread fallacy that a boomslang will drop from a tree onto anyone who walks beneath.

And although the venom is deadly, this shy snake very seldom

bites – with most victims being snake handlers or park attendants. Its fangs are located at the back of its mouth, meaning it will have to get a good grip on you before biting even though its mouth can open as wide as 170 degrees.

If bitten, its venom is haemotoxic, attacking the blood system, which causes severe internal bleeding from the mucous membranes.

But although the venom is extremely potent it takes about 24 to 28 hours to produce serious symptoms.

Mole snakes are often mistaken for cobras but are completely harmless and can do good by catching rodents. They range from 1.4 metres to 2 metres and can be anything from light brown to light grey, greyish brown, brick red to black or yellowish.

However, their heads are much narrower than cobras and they do

not have a hood when in attack mode. If you are in doubt, do not mess with them! While all of the above may instill fear and revulsion, the general consensus among snake handlers and experts, is that snakes at best can be regarded as a nuisance to be removed. While fear increases the misconception in some people that they need to be destroyed, they play an essential part in maintaining a balanced ecosystem. Says Western Cape snake handler Shaun McLeod: "Snakes must be among the most misunderstood and unfairly treated of all God's creatures. They are commonly regarded as vermin which should be killed on sight, yet they occupy a most important niche in the ecosystem.

"Without them, the balance of nature would be severely upset with no control on the population of rats, mice and other pests."

Protect yourself

Precautions

Always leave snakes alone.

If you are in the bush wear closed shoes and long trousers.

Do not step over large logs and rocks, rather step on them as snakes may be sunning themselves on the other side. If you do come across a snake, stand still. No snake will come up and attack you. Retreat slowly. Snakes never chase people. Never tamper with a seemingly dead snake – some of them feign death to protect themselves.

Make your garden snake-safe

Keep the immediate area around the house clear of debris, clutter, woodpiles and temporary storage. Your garden should be cleaned and trimmed to avoid overgrown vegetation and low-growing shrubs and bushes. Reduce your local

rodent population through regular baiting programmes. Avoid allowing pest birds to nest in your roof and bushes. Waterfalls, ponds and rock walls provide added attractions for a snake visit.

What to do if a snake is sighted

It helps to have some kind of plan.

Does the snake present some kind of threat to you or family, including pets? It is quite common to see snakes investigate a few holes then disappear back into the reserve or open field next door. If the snake enters the house what will you do? Once a snake is sighted examine its behaviour.

Is it still, is it moving around or basking? Always have an eye on the snake – try to remember the direction it was heading in. Always get back to the snake or area the snake was last seen as soon as you can and remain vigilant.

If you are bitten

Call for help immediately or go to the hospital. Explain your symptoms and if you can, identify the snake.

Expose the bite and remove any restrictive clothing. Wipe excess venom away with water or a piece of material. Do not cut or squeeze the wound. Avoid applying suction. Keep yourself or the victim still. Apply a pressure bandage.

Never attempt to kill the snake – a second bite will make it worse. If for some reason the snake has been killed take it with you to the hospital for identification. Anti-venom, if administered, must only be given by a medical professional in a medical environment.

● You can call Shaun McLeod on 082 532 5033 or the 24-hour toll-free poison information hotline on 0800 333 444 for more information..

Shifting sands of time

For those who have been living in Table View for a few years, the sight of seeing this green platform covered with sand is not a surprise. They would tell visitors that it isn't, in fact, a platform, but rather a roof. And underneath the roof is a fully-functioning ablutions facility. The dunes, under guidance of a dune management strategy, have since claimed the building, and only reveal it to the world on occasions. Read more on page 2. PHOTO: DAVE COLINS



Councillor shares plans in store for Ward 4

SUMMER JACOBS

The next in our series which focuses on councillors' plans for 2015, features Dr Joy McCarthy, councillor for Ward 4, which includes Summer Greens, Joe Slovo Park/ Phoenix, Montague Gardens, Killarney Gardens, a portion of Sunridge, eastern Flamingo Vlei, Sunset Beach, Sunset Village and Sunset Links, Milnerton Ridge, Royal Ascot and a portion of Milnerton property up to Broad Road.

Dr McCarthy divided her business plan into geographical areas as well as into short term goals and long term goals to provide a simplified overview of her plans for the year.

Short term goals

Dr McCarthy said apart from Phoenix not having the large informal settlement that Joe Slovo has, the areas' needs were similar.

"To truly have a handle on what is happening and a hope of affecting the outcome in Joe Slovo Park, we must have the buy-in and confidence of the community," she said.

"We need to re-launch a development forum in Joe Slovo Park to include all the community-based organisations, and hopefully the street committees as well.

"The illegal erection of dwellings and churches on City land remains a problem as there is now little available land for housing in Joe Slovo Park or anywhere close by. Most of the shack owners are interdicted and aware that the ille-



gal dwellings can and will be removed at some point".

Solid waste removal is also top priority, she said. "Cleansing is repeatedly necessary for both areas. Education programmes by Solid Waste and Water and Sanitation are planned to educate people and school pupils not to litter or to use the sewage manholes as a dump," said Dr McCarthy.

Informal settlements have a dire need for extra toilets and taps, but this is difficult to do as the shacks are so close together, which presents a fire hazard.

"Shacks need to be relocated to facilitate this. Folk are willing but where to put them is the issue," she said.

In Summer Greens the challenge is illegal businesses operating from residential premises.

"They reduce the appearance and tone of the area. Most are fronts for drug dealers and drugs are a major problem in the area."

Dr McCarthy is battling to close down illegal businesses in Summer Greens. She said house shops, hairdressers, and spaza shops operating on residential properties are "reducing the appearance and tone of the area".

Dr McCarthy said the drug issue is receiving attention from the narcotics squad, assisted by the rapidly



Ward 4 councillor, Joy McCarthy

growing neighbourhood watch.

In Milnerton Central, Milnerton Ridge and Royal Ascot, main priorities include "cleaning and greening", especially with regards to the gutters and verges and removal of weeds on the hardened surfaces with regular herbicide spraying. Identifying and acting on problem buildings which are derelict, poorly maintained and overcrowded is also planned for this year.

"Traffic calming measures will also be put into place to prevent speeding especially on long roads with few stop streets such as Pienaar Road, Milnerton Drive.

"A long awaited four-way stop will also be put up at the Bridge Way/ Milnerton Drive intersection".

There will also be ongoing maintenance of parks and equipment.

In Sunset Beach maintenance of vacant plots is a priority as well as traffic calming measures at problematic intersections. Cleaning gutters and verges as well as removing weeds with regular herbicide spraying will also take place. "We are attempting to link the Sunset Beach Home Owners Association OCTV network to piggy-back on our new network and 'talk' to the City's system" she said.

In Eastern Flamingo Vlei, Dr McCarthy said, apart from maintenance and cleaning, they are also investigating the possibility of an Integrated Rapid Transit (IRT) system along school routes in the area.

Long term goals

In Joe Slovo Park and Phoenix, Dr McCarthy plans to revitalise the suburb by cleaning, greening and reducing the number of shacks through "reblocking" which is a process that reduces the risk of fire.

She has plans to create an informal, serviced business hub using the container businesses and informal traders along Freedom Way and close to the new IRT bus station.

"I'm in negotiations with Human Settlements for land to create a design of housing and mixed use buildings on the City-owned land on Freedom Way with commercial opportunities on the ground floor, and rental units on the two-to three storeys above.

"This will hopefully form part of

next year's Integrated Development Plans on the Human Settlements budget," said Dr McCarthy.

Sinenjongo High school "bursting at the seams with this year's intake" will also receive a bricks and mortar building with proper facilities, including a school hall, a science laboratory and a computer skills unit by 2016.

Dr McCarthy said there are no recreational or educational facilities in Summer Greens.

"Children are ferried by parents to neighbouring suburbs for sport and youth activities. Gangs and drugs are moving into the area as a result.

"I have identified and requested a sport field be built on the ground adjacent to the community hall with the support and hopefully financial backing of the provincial Department of Sport and Culture.

"The open lot on the corner of Ploughman's Crescent has been earmarked for a possible play park, with a climbing wall," she said.

Emerald Way park, currently a drug haven, will be fenced and upgraded, using R28 000 of this year's budget allocation.

Dr McCarthy will also be spending funds in Table View and Sunridge. She will be looking at large vacant plots to establish ownership and propose appropriate uses.

Besides cleaning and maintenance, traffic calming measures will also be put in place to prevent speeding along roads such as Gie Road.

Councillors share their vision for 2015

SUMMER JACOBS

A brand new year provides a clean slate to tackle new projects and also brings about renewed energy to tackle old problems. This week the City's elected ward councillors in Tabletalk's distribution areas share some of their plans and vision for the year ahead.

Heather Brenner, ward councillor for Ward 107, which includes Parklands West Riding, Sunningdale, Table View and Flamingovlei said "ward business plans are dynamic processes that develop and evolve over a five-year term of office".

"They are based on the ideals of the City's five pillars as incorporated in the Integrated Development Plan for 2011/16 The Opportunity City, The Well-run City, The Safe City, The Caring City and the Inclusive City.

In 2011, she said, in Ward 107, they identified safety and security, traffic flow, the control of the invasive reed *Typha-capensis*, the provision of a community hall for Parklands as some of their major concerns.

"We are grappling for budget for the community hall, but I am not giving up on this and even if it doesn't happen in my time I will at least have laid the foundation. Certainly the flow of traffic has significantly improved with the construction of Malibongwe Boulevard as an east/west link to the N7. And of course the IRT has transformed the



Ward 104 councillor Lubabalo Makeleni

area," she said.

While R200 000 was put towards a management Plan for the invasive reeds during that first year, Ms Brenner has realigned budgetary provision for this to deal only with the reed growth along the stormwater canals in her ward.

"More recently annual provision for a Rent-a-Cop for Ward 107 has contributed towards our safety and security needs and I have committed to a further two years for this purpose. The multi-ward surveillance cameras project for wards 4, 23 and 107 is in its first phase of installation and will see Ward 107's contribution to this project total R1million by the end of this term of office in 2016," she said.

She also pointed out that she had asked for some lighting in parks, but due to budgetary constraints this may only be possible in 2016.

"Part of Blaauwberg Road falls



Ward 107 councillor Heather Brenner.

into Ward 107 and there is a proposal for a planning overlay for this main thoroughfare through our three wards - 4, 23 and 107 - to allow for more co-ordinated development planning for this focal part of our community.

"Council's approval of the Informal Trading Plan for Blaauwberg later this year will enable us to exercise better control over that aspect of economic development in Sub-council 1.

"I am working towards an alternative to the indigenous shoulder height vegetation currently planted along public spaces to cut down on maintenance, that catches all the litter and harbours vagrants - something ankle height with some varied foliage and spring colour would be more appreciated. I'm sure and finally we are almost there with a fairly new project in the form of a dog walking park to be established in Parklands - hope-



Ward 55 councillor Bernadette le Roux.

fully by about June this year.

"I have also initiated a new sports area - very much in its infancy, but at least I have planted a seed and we are moving in that direction. Linked cycle paths and pedestrian thoroughfares are going to be developed throughout my ward to link access to the IRT".

She said other projects, not specific to Ward 107 but for the southern part of Sub-council 1, include a night shelter and a Community Court.

According to Ms Brenner, both are tricky to realise as the City does not have the mandate to provide night shelters while Community Courts are established by the Justice Department and not the City.

"In both cases we are liaising (and) trying to make it happen. We are told informally that we are next on the list for such a court," said Ms Brenner.

Lubabalo Makeleni, ward coun-

cillor for Ward 104, which includes Dunoon, Parklands, Doornbach, Westriding, Zonnekus and Racing Park, said there are a lot of new and exciting developments in store for Dunoon in 2015, among them, a sports complex and two new primary schools.

"About 70% of the ward allocation is spent on the youth and sports. Sport attracts the youth so we have invested in a sports complex valued at approximately R16.5 million," said Mr Makeleni.

The complex will include a soccer field, netball field, cricket field, basketball pitch, skatepark, spray park and a playground for the children.

Two primary schools are also on the cards for the township. Mr Makeleni said one of the schools, Sophakama Primary, will be completed within the next two months.

"It is going to be a big beautiful school. For far too long our children have been battling with temporary structures for schools," he said. "The second school will be complete towards the end of the year. Some issues the councillor will be tackling this year include crime, solid waste and problems with backyard dwellers. We are going to strengthen the street and area committees in order to combat crime. Business communities, NGO's church groups and foreign nationals are going to join forces to fight crime.

Continued on facing page

New oystercatcher chicks sighted on walks

Under the auspices of the Friends of Blaauwberg Conservation Area (FoBCA), walks for youth to count Oystercatchers take place

every second Saturday throughout the summer months. The last of the two December Oystercatcher

Count (OCC) walks along Blouberg Beach yielded not only sightings of new oystercatcher chicks, but also some new eggs and a seal pup.

Despite the high spring tides having reached right into the vegetation fringes in some places, it's thought that no eggs had

been washed from their nests.

The seal pup would likely have been one of several which annually at around this time of year make their way across to Blouberg Beach from Robben Island and other islands in the area. Sometimes, exhausted by the swim, they land up on the beach and may spend a couple of days resting and recovering their strength before returning to the sea to swim back again.

Their presence is a good reason for dog-walkers to ensure their pets are on leads on the beach. It's important that members of the public don't interfere with the seal pups unless they are physically injured or entangled by fishing line/plastic - in which case they should contact the SPCA on 021 711 4158/9 or after hours on 083 326 1604).

Youth - local and visiting - are invited to join the next OCC on the morning of Saturday 24 January.

Contact Helriz on hrzgelger@gmail.com or 073 225 3174 for more information.



Don't miss the Oystercatchers Count this Saturday.

From previous page

"We feel like hostages in our own area. It's time to take back the area from the hands of the criminals. We are not going to beg them to back off, we are going to force them and we will do it with the help of the police, law enforcement, and the CPF," he said.

Mr Makaleni said there will also be a strong focus on solid waste programme to ensure the area is cleaner. He explained that the excessive waste comes from backyard dwellers and informal business which are not being serviced.

"The waste is out of control. It poses a great health hazard and it is definitely something to look into this year," he said.

● Bernadette le Roux, councillor for Ward 55 which include Century City Residential West, Sanddrift, Printers Park Montague Gardens, Milnerton South, Milnerton Coastal Developments, Cambridge Estate, Tygerhof, Rugby, Brooklyn, Ysterplaat, Paarden Eiland, Lower Salt River, Woodstock, V&A Waterfront, and Granger Bay, said of the R700 000 allocated to each ward councillor for top up services, hers has gone towards upgrading parks, sports activities for the elderly and the disabled, as well as a dog walking activity park.

"Funding for parks through-

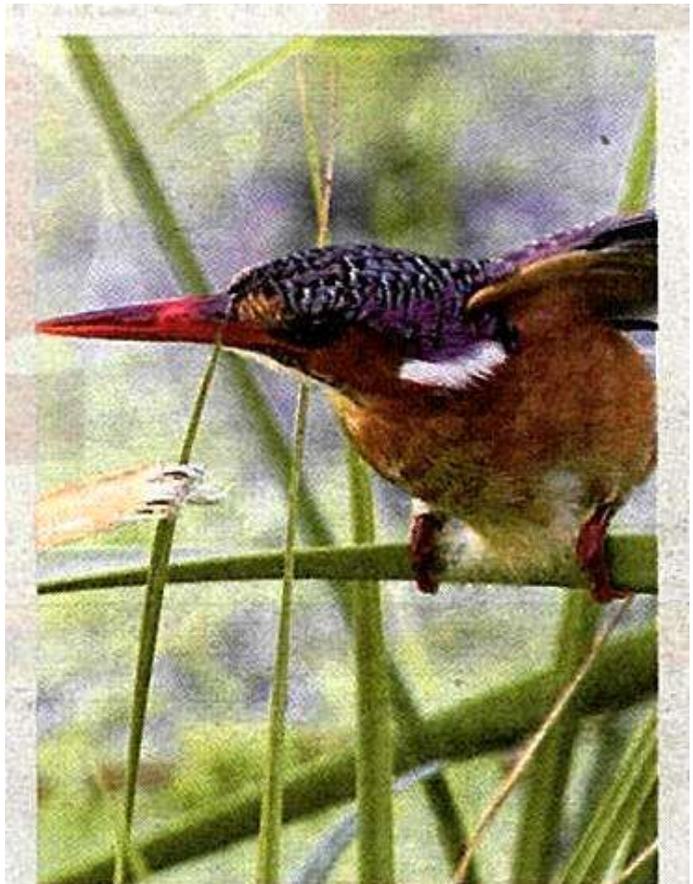
out the area will include hop scotch courts, and snakes and ladders and chess engraved on tables. This is to enable a greater choice of play within our parks and, wherever possible, parks situated near libraries will have Liberians come to the park to read to the children as many of the children live in small homes and flats," said Ms Le Roux.

She said to date six more parks have been upgraded and fenced and greater improvements will be seen this year.

Funding has also been allocated for sports activities for the disabled and elderly. The councillor aims to make this a yearly project, besides hosting the annual Women's Day Tea for Disabled Women at Cheshire Homes.

"Many request have come through for a Dog Walking activity park and funding has been allocated for the first one in Tygerhof. Already we have members of the community willing to oversee that each user brings along their doggie scoop," she said.

She further adds that "two top-up law enforcement officers" will patrol in ward 55. Traffic calming measures as well as traffic lights have also been put in place near schools and clinics. "Hopefully in the near future money will be allocated for top up traffic officers," she said.



Soek vis: Hierdie pragtige, klein kuifkopvisvangertjie is onlangs tussen biesies deur 'n TygerBurger-leser afgeneem wat die Rietvlei-area van die Tafelbaai-natuurreservaat oor die vakansie besoek het.

FOTO: FRIEDA PRINSLOO



Seasoned sailors and eager youngsters sailed for 24 hours around Rietvlei lake in the MAC24 this weekend. PHOTO: DAVE COLINS

Spirit keeps wind in sails

ANDRÉ BAKKES
@andrebakkes

On the embankment the crowd sang songs and cheered the sailors on while a drone hovered over Rietvlei and recorded some of the action.

In the middle of a mirrorlike lake, the sailors sat on their motionless dinghies.

The ever-reliable Cape Doctor called in sick, and for large parts of the even turned the Vasco Taverna MAC 24-Hour sailing contest into a painfully slow steering exercise.

But the motivated sailors and eager spectators didn't let this stand in their way of enjoying every hour of the 24 hour challenge this weekend.

Great spirit

Over 30 teams consisting of between eight and ten members sailed continuously around the dam at the Milnerton Aquatic

Club (MAC).

Braaiivleis fires added to the great spirit on land that not even a Stormers defeat could dampen.

MAC's Pat Downing said the event was a huge success, particularly considering the number of young participants.

Youngsters

"It's so nice to see so many youngsters sailing! It was brilliant," she exclaimed.

The station commander of Melkbosstrand National Sea Rescue Institute (the NSRI maintained the safety of the sailors), Rhine Barnes, echoed Downing's statements.

"I love seeing how many youngsters were sailing and taking the sport into the future. I have always been behind youth development and MAC are doing a great job in this area," he said.

Barnes might have tried to divert the attention from the NSRI team's Enterprise dinghy...

According to Downing they spent the better part of the 24 hours "bailing" due to the boat developing a crack shortly after the race commenced.

One of the sponsors, Mike Abrahamse from Rawson Properties Blaauwberg, addressed the youth when he said: "Remember, life is not always about winning. Even the top sportsman and sports teams never win all the time. It is after all in failure that we find we grow most. It is in failure and overcoming failure that builds character in us! The mere fact that you are courageous enough to take part in this event already makes you a winner."

The youngest girl and boy to compete were both seven years old – Elisa Falcon and Alex Baldwin.

Some noteworthy prizewinners include Brent Gray (Sailor of the Challenge), NSRI (Best Team Endurance), the Scouts (Best Team Spirit) and Electroglide (Highest placed MAC Team).

Friends of Rietvlei talk on invasive aliens

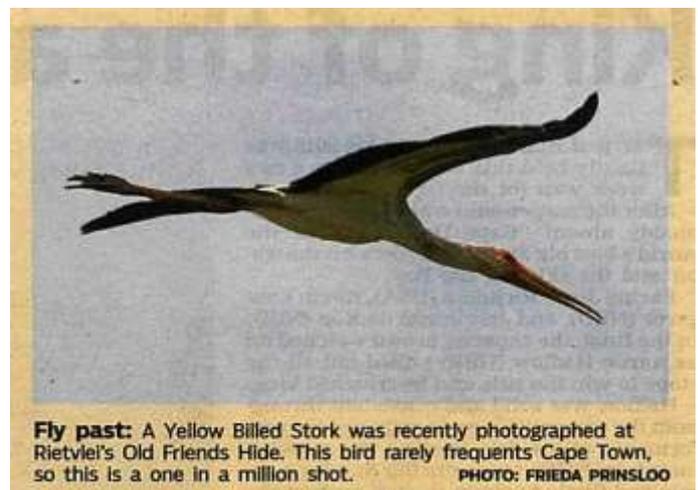
The Friends of the Rietvlei will be holding an evening talk at 19:30 for 20:00 on 19 February at Rietvlei Education Centre in Table Bay Nature Reserve (off Sandpiper Road in Table View).

The talk will touch on the subject of the early detection and eradication of invasive species in the Cape Peninsula and the important role played by the public in identifying and reporting

on invasive species. Ulrike Irlich, project manager with the City of Cape Town, will discuss the challenges involved and give people an insight into the achievements of the spotter network programme.

Visitors are welcome.

Contact Pauline on 083 255 2537 or Pat on 083 701 4318 for further information, or check the events diary at www.friendsofrietvlei.co.za.



Fly past: A Yellow Billed Stork was recently photographed at Rietvlei's Old Friends Hide. This bird rarely frequents Cape Town, so this is a one in a million shot. PHOTO: FRIEDA PRINSLOO

Search for birds with Friends of Rietvlei

Join the Friends of Rietvlei on a walk to the “Friends” bird hide in the Table Bay Nature Reserve on Sunday 22 March.

Visitors are welcome and advised to bring along binoculars for bird watching, as well as a hat and a cold drink – especially if the weather is hot.

All those interested in attending should meet at Rietvlei Education Centre in Table Bay Nature Reserve (off Sandpiper Road) at 15:00.

▶ Contact Pauline on 083 255 2537 or Pat on 083 701 4318 for further information, or check the events diary at www.friendsofrietvlei.co.za.

Keeping all sheets to the wind

The ever-popular Vasco Taverna MAC 24-Hour challenge was held at the Milnerton Aquatic Club on Saturday and Sunday. Teams of between eight and ten members alternated time spent on the water as dinghies sailed around and around Rietvlei – for 24 hours non-stop. Read more on page 5. PHOTO: DAVE COLINS



Fence to rehabilitate Lagoon Beach dunes

Have your say
SMS TALK with your message, name and area you live in to 30003 (2263)
SMSes charged at R1 each

ATHINA MAY

Recently Lagoon Beach residents noticed wooden poles being hammered into the ground along the perimeter of the sand dunes bordering the Leisure Bay flats.

There were immediate concerns about the legality of the structure – largely because Leisure Bay had previously been taken to task about unauthorised developments.

In 2013 the owners of the beachfront flats created a sand bag barrier, leading from the wooden walkway on the beach towards the block of flats. The City of Cape Town condemned the structure because it contravened numerous regulations, including illegal mining of sand on the beachfront (“A sandy saga at beach” Tabletalk, June 19 2013).

Today, wooden poles are going up rapidly on the beachfront, and Leisure Bay residents are voicing their concerns about the aesthetics of the structure.

Although, body corporate member Gerhard Beukes refused to comment on the sand bag structure

It does not violate any environmental legislation



■ Wooden poles being hammered into the Lagoon beachfront outside the Leisure Bay flats.

in 2013, which still appears in patches on the beach, the body corporate consultant, Richard Rundle, confirmed that the current netting being created has received approval from relevant parties.

“In terms of an environmental management plan that was lodged with the City of Cape Town, the trustees of the Leisure Bay Body Corporate have approved the erection of a protective fence along the

perimeter of our dunes,” said Mr Rundle.

Mayor committee member for energy, environmental and spatial planning, Johan van der Merwe, confirmed that the planting of the poles and diamond mesh fence did not constitute a “structure” in terms of the national building regulations and therefore, did not require building plans.

“The planting of the poles does not entail activity resulting in the movement of more than five cubic metres of sand or rock, which does not constitute the placing of any material on dunes or exposed sand



■ Leisure Bay residents are concerned about the aesthetic appeal of the mesh fence that will be erected alongside the poles.

surfaces. It does not violate any environmental legislation,” said Mr Van der Merwe.

Mr Rundle explained that the erection of a protective fence along the perimeter is the first stage in the rehabilitation of the dunes. “The Leisure Bay dunes are, in places, already less than the minimum width of 30 metres as recommended by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in their report.

“Leisure Bay had initially followed best practice guidelines of the CSIR and made use of sandbags to protect the dunes during winter

wave attacks. At the time this was considered to be the most cost-effective method as it would’ve required 160 truckloads of sea sand to restore the dunes to the original profile wave damage,” said Mr Rundle.

He explained that the fence is similar to those at neighbouring developments, Woodbridge Island and Spinnakers, which has seen success at dune rehabilitation.

“Spinnakers have suffered no loss of dunes from the beginning as a direct result of their fence, whereas Leisure Bay continues to lose dune profile,” said Mr Rundle.



'n Lugfoto van die beplande Sandown-ontwikkeling op die voorgrond.

SANDOWN

Nuwe buurt in gevestigde deel

Waarheen kan Kaapstad en sy voorstede nóg uitbrei? Buiten die Kaapstad-stadion is daar nie baie onderbenutte, oop ruimtes wat vir voorstedelike uitbreiding geskik is nie. In Durbanville word al wat plaas is toegebou met veiligheidskomplekse, maar nader aan Kaapstad is daar beslis 'n behoefte aan meer kommersiële en residensiële eiendomme.

Nuwe ontwikkeling

Dus is dit met onderdrukte afgewagting dat 'n splinternuwe buurt genaamd Sandown verlede maand bekend gestel is. Dit is hoofsaaklik 'n residensiële ontwikkeling tussen die R27 en die N7, naby Bloubergstrand. Dit is noord van Sandownweg geleë en strek ooswaarts van Woodrylaan tot by die Rivergate-ontwikkeling, wat onlangs bekend gestel is.

Dit sluit 'n gevestigde private skool, maklike toegang tot MyCITY-busroetes, uitgebreide ontspannings- en oop ruimtes in, en ook kommersiële eiendomme vir gemengde gebruik.

Dit is groot

"Die totale beleggings sal na verwagting R3 miljard oorskry," sê Tony Clarke, die bemerkingsbestuurder van Aska Property Group. Milnerton Estates is die ontwikkelaars van die buurt.

Die totale geprojekteerde beleggingswaarde is ongeveer R2,7 miljard in die residensiële gedeelte, en ongeveer R350 miljoen vir die 7,7 ha kommersiële grond wat tans beskikbaar is.

Na raming sal Sandown oor sowat 190 ha strek, wat groter as Pinelands sal wees. Soos sy bure, het Sandown 'n pragtige



i Dak vir jou sak

Komersiële eiendom

R1 400/m²: 93 000 m² kommersiële grond is reeds langs Sandownweg beskikbaar. Dit is gepas vir grootskaalse ontwikkeling soos vertoonlokale en winkelsentrums, kleinhandel- en kantoorgeleenthede. Sonering is vir gemengde gebruik.

Private eiendom

Die verkoopprijs is nog nie gefinaliseer nie, maar ontwikkelaars verwag dat kleiner erwe van ongeveer 300 m² teen ongeveer **R500 000** en groter erwe van ongeveer 600 m² teen **R1 miljoen** verkoop sal word. Na verwagting sal vir huise later

R1,5 miljoen tot R3 miljoen gewa word.

Die ontwikkelaars meen dit sal in verhouding wees met eiendomspryse in die omgewing.

Pryse in omringende buurte

- R750 000: tweeslaapkamerwoonstel in 'n veiligheidskompleks in Parklands.
- R1,5 miljoen: drieslaapkamerduplex met twee badkamers in Parklands, met 'n jacuzzi.
- R1,5 miljoen: drieslaapkamerhuis met twee badkamers in Sunningdale.
- R2,5 miljoen: vierslaapkamerhuis met vier badkamers, 'n motorhuis en 'n swembad in Parklands.

uitsig op Tafelberg en die Durbanville-heuwels. Sandown sal tot 2 000 huise bevat, met erf-groottes wat van kleiner intreevlak-erwe (300 m²) tot groter erwe (750 m²) wissel.

Hoewel die ontwikkelaar 'n hoër inkomste-woonagewing wil verskaf, sal die reeks residensiële geleenthede nuwe huis-

eienaars in staat stel om in die ontwikkeling te koop, en ook duurdur beleggingsgeleenthede aan gevestigde huiseienaars bied. Dié geleenthede sal veiligheidskomplekse insluit, waarvan een reeds in 'n gevestigde beplanningstadium is.

Die ontwikkelaars meen hierdie waarde behoort te verdrie-

Dit is hoofsaaklik 'n residensiële ontwikkeling tussen die R27 en die N7, naby Bloubergstrand. Dit is noord van Sandownweg geleë en strek ooswaarts van Woodrylaan ...

dubbel namate meer kommersiële grond langs Sandownweg beskikbaar word.

Infrastruktuur

Die Sandown-kampus van Parklands College is reeds hier gebou as die eerste fase van die ontwikkeling. Die kampus sal uiteindelik 1 300 leerders hê, en dit verskaf reeds 'n verskeidenheid van sport- en ander geriewe op die 15,5 ha wat beskikbaar is. Parklands College is reeds goed gevestig en onder die topkole in die omgewing.

Sandown sal oop en ontspanningsruimtes hê, met beplande sportvelde. Hierdie oop ruimtes, wat die fynboskorridor, die Table View-natuurreservaat en die vloedwater-bestuurstelsels insluit, sal die biodiversiteitsnetwerk in die gebied uitbrei.

Wat toegang en vervoer betref, verskaf Sandownweg aan die suidekant van Sandown 'n belangrike padverbinding tussen die R27 (Weskuspad) en die N7. Dit is binne loopafstand van Virgin Active, die Food Lover's Market en die Checkers Hyper in die aanliggende Parklands-

Huisbesoek

Ek en my gesin woon al vyf jaar in die gebied.

Dis naby die see, skole, winkelsentrums en die gimnasium. Wat meer het 'n mens nodig?

Daar is so te sê 'n splinternuwe Netcare-hospitaal net om die draai. Met die nuwe MyCITY-busstelsel is dit net soveel geriefliker vir mense om van openbare vervoer gebruik te maak.

Ons het sowat twee jaar gelede 'n nuwe huis gekoop. Ons woon in 'n doodloopstraat met 'n parkie in die middel. Maar daar is parkies om elke hoek en draai, wat die kinders natuurlik tereë geniet.

Een van die groot voordele is die styging van my eiendom se waarde binne twee jaar. Geen bank gaan dit vir jou gee nie.

Maar wat die lekkerste is, is die someraandstappies saam met die gesin.

- Ricky Mitchell



Noord-ontwikkeling

Sandown, wat op die MyCITY-busroete is, is 5 km van Big Bay, 4 km van die strande en 21 km van die Kaapstadse Internasionale Konferensiesentrum geleë.

Vir 'n stukkie ontwikkeling

Vir meer inligting, skakel Aska Property Group by 021 556 2333 of besoek die webwerf www.sandown.me.

‘There is so much gees’ – fire fighter

ANDRÉ BAKKES
@andrebakkes

The breeze picked up and changed direction.

The fire fighters from Table View and Melkbosstrand were stationed at a holding point next to Sandhurst Mountain Estate and the naval training college. They stopped talking and cast apprehensive glances to the top of the mountain.

Up until then they have been reflecting on a job well done, but the changing wind could spell disaster.

Minutes later they would find out just how challenging their Sunday night will be.

“All hell broke loose. The fire started to run down towards Boyes Drive,” says Milnerton Fire Station’s Andrew Stott (37) from Sunningdale.

“We were sitting there and then a massive firestorm came running down on top of us.”

Stott, who mans one of the fire engines, had the perfect view of the crew raging against the fire ahead of him.

Sharing water pressure

“At one stage there were about six or seven pumps and water tankers stationed along the line.”

Always fighting against the intimidating roar of the fire, Stott had to ensure that his vehicle had enough water pressure for the crew and, when possible, share the pressure with the other adjacent vehicles.

“I’m the driver of a specialised 4x4 water tanker with 6 000 litres and compressed air and foam systems. It basically throws foam

all over the show. It sounds silly, but it actually makes the water wetter. There are about five or six of these vehicles in the city. It’s an evil fire fighting machine. It even has a deck gun at the top. I operate the pump at the back and control the amount of pressure that my crew member or another assisting crew member is using. I basically supply water to them and to other fire engines. Six-thousand litres might sound like a lot, but you can empty one of those tanks in just under two minutes!”

Stott will then refill the tank with fire hydrants, which hopefully have sufficient pressure. Stott and the crew were, of course, stationed on higher ground and quite a few fire engines were pumping from the same supply, so the pressure was very low.

“At one stage I thought I lost three guys... I had three guys to my far right, one guy protecting the vehicle, and another to my far left. We hoped the main bulk of the fire didn’t come towards us, but with the intensity of the wind it came down pretty much on top of us. I honestly thought the three guys standing to my right were going to be tickets. There were only two or three times in my life where I went: ‘Oh crap!’ and this was one of them! Luckily the three fire fighters came running back and the main bulk of the fire passed us.”

They never, however, give up. Stott might as well have called the courageous crew together and, in true Shakespearean form, shout: “Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more!”

They fiercely kept at it, day and night. During the day the stifling heat suffocated

them in their suits and at night their uneasy shadows continuously flickered safely behind them and the fire.

They were constantly fighting to keep the property of strangers safe.

No time for shut-eye

There was almost no time for sleep from Sunday to Thursday, and no time for family. “I slept about seven hours in five days,” continues Stott.

His wife, Nadene, and 16-month-old baby boy, Colby, never saw him in that time, but they knew he was performing a vital role in one of the biggest fires to have hit Cape Town in recent times.

The people in the street also knew how invaluable these heroes are. Stott says people were showing their support wherever they went. “Everyone in Cape Town has been just so awesome! You feel like you won the Rugby or Cricket World Cup. Everybody is like showing thumbs to us. There is so much gees. It makes you feel like you are doing something that makes a difference!”

As to why someone would go out of their way to help or protect others, Stott’s answer is straight out of the book of benevolence.

“It’s in my nature... If I can help someone along the way and make a difference in someone’s life – doesn’t matter how big or how small – then it makes me feel like a better person. If you need help crossing the road I will stop and help,” he concludes.

Hopefully Stott’s exemplary enthusiasm spreads like a wild fire – or rather like a wild fire with no Cape Town fire fighter in sight.

Fire fighting hero in our midst

There are heroes all around us. Andrew Stott, who works at Milnerton Fire station and lives in Sunningdale, deserves praise for his valiant effort in protecting the property of others. He is not the only one. Hundreds of fire fighters recently fought against the Cape Town blaze. Read more about Stott on page 3. PHOTO: ANDRÉ BAKKES



Dunes dog urban planning

ANDRÉ BAKKES
 @andrebakkes

On some beaches, children might dig up a shell, or an old shoe, but on Table View beachfront, children dig up buildings.

Every once in a while, the once forgotten buried cement structure reminds one of the unrelenting process of time.

People don't even need to go looking for it.

When the mercurial wind howls, and the dune feels generous, then the roof of the cement structure makes a reappearance.

Many years ago these toilets on Table View beach front used to be above the sand.

"That is old news," says ward councillor Heather Brenner.

"The sand movement eventually got the better of everything and has completely covered the toilets. To try to rescue it is not desirable from an environmental point of view," said Brenner.

She says the City of Cape Town and envi-

ronmentalists are fighting for the preservation of the beach front.

"Man has already interfered with the natural dune dynamics, because of the narrowness of the beach and the hard structures near it. What we have to decide is what is the best approach to minimise the impact."

A few years ago the City's Ian Neilson made a few road proposals in the "area of consideration", which include Otto du Plessis Drive, Beach Boulevard and Coral Road.

These proposals would lead to a reconfiguration of the Table View beachfront.

"Everyone was really excited about this, since it would give the beach more width. We haven't forgotten about this proposal. In fact, just last year in November there was a big public meeting about it," she continues.

The reason why it has not yet been implemented is the same reason why the buried building has not been removed yet.

"One needs to try to keep the dune dynamics intact," said Brenner.

'Oom Bees' dies tragically in helicopter crash

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Helicopter pilot Hendrik Willem "Bees" Marais lost his life when his helicopter crashed while fighting the wildfire at Cape Point on Sunday March 8.

The 71-year-old Blouberg resident was killed while trying to make a forced landing in the Olifantsbos area at Cape Point.

Working on Fire spokesperson Evelyn Holtzhausen said Mr Marais was killed "when his Huey helicopter was grounded in a forced landing at about 11.30am".

Police spokesman Captain FC van Wyk said that it is not yet known what caused the crash, but an unconfirmed report said that Mr Marais's helicopter picked up water, then suddenly experienced a rapid loss of lift and dropped. An inquest docket had been opened.

Police and SANParks secu-

rity closed all the routes to the crash scene and only emergency vehicles were allowed access.

Mr Marais, fondly known as Oom Bees, had flown for more than 10 000 hours doing more than 2 000 water drops, each of about 1 100 litres. He was described as a "legendary" pilot.

"Bees was a man with a quiet wisdom. A solid gentleman and he was a friend," said Trevor Wilson, general manager for Working on Fire.

Mr Marais started his career in the SA Airforce and graduated in 1968 from University of Pretoria. He clocked 10 813 flying hours in both fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, including Havards, Pumas, Super Frelons and Hueys. He was the pilot in command for 9 422 of those hours.

Mr Marais's helicopter was part of a team of three choppers and a spotter plane fight-



■ Hendrik Willem "Bees" Marais lost his life at the weekend.

ing the Cape Point fire. After his aircraft crash-landed, another pilot, Fred Viljoen, landed and rushed over to his friend, but it was already too late. Marais's death is the first fatality in the recent fires.

Mayor Patricia de Lille said the public safety and aviation fraternity had lost a great pilot. "We salute him and pay tribute to him for the contribution that he made in saving lives and protecting property," she said - Cape Times

WHAT TO DO WHEN A FIRE BREAKS OUT

- Dial 107 (Landline) and 021 480 7700 (Cell) for fire emergencies.
- Remain calm.
- Turn the electricity or gas supply off. If you cannot turn the gas off, get out.
- Use a blanket or wet towel to smother the fire.
- Close all windows and doors behind you to cut off the air supply.
- Use water to put out wood, paper and material fires. Use sand to put out paraffin or oil fires.
- Crawl below the smoke and hold a wet cloth over your mouth and nose.
- If your clothing catches fire - stop, drop and roll on the ground.
- Help those who you can to get out. Forget about your belongings. Once you're out, stay out.

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Cape Town declares war on killer birds

APHIWE DEKLERK

HITCH-HIKING birds have become a pain in the neck for City of Cape Town officials.

The birds, Indian house crows, hitch rides on ships from foreign ports to the Mother City, where they cause havoc by attacking indigenous birds and destroying their eggs.

The birds, one of the 100 most invasive species in the world, are particularly fond of areas such as taxi ranks, where there is a lot of food.

City of Cape Town official Louise Stafford said she had received several complaints about the birds terrorising locals and snatching lunch from pupils.

She said the birds had a negative effect on biodiversity because they ate indigenous birds, reptiles and other animals.

They also pose a health hazard to people.



STOWAWAY: Indian house crows are destructive

They are carriers of intestinal diseases, as they feed in unhealthy environments such as dumpsites.

She said the municipality was tracking the birds' movements using cameras, then poisoning them.

Stafford said numbers had dropped from 10 000 birds in 2009 to 500.

"They had quite a destructive impact. If you have two or even 10 birds eating snakes and lizards or small birds in one area, that's one thing, but if you have 10 000 of them, the impact is much bigger," she added.

Stafford said the birds sometimes attacked hawkers selling braai meat in Nyanga.

Last month, the BBC reported that the birds were causing havoc in the Kenyan city of Mombasa, where they grabbed food off tourists' plates.