

OUR VISION

To be a highly effective and well-supported champion of the environment.

OUR MISSION

To implement high impact environmental and conservation projects which promote public participation in caring for the Earth.

WESSA EDEN Newsletter November 2015

Dear Friends of the Environment,
as the year races to a close, there is still lots going on environmentally.....

WESSA proudly presents

George Open Gardens Day – Sat 31 October & Sun 1 Nov

Also Sat 7 November

A laid back garden going indigenous & sustainable.

No 8 Assegai Street, Heatherlands –

This is our garden which we only “converted” to indigenous planting a year ago. The visitors of 2014 will be amazed to see the change within 12 months. The northern part of the garden was virtually cleared in late 2014 and a digger created 2 berms up to 1,2m meters high and a pond. Indigenous plants were sourced locally and now the berms are virtually covered and giving a good show of colour.



A no-dig vegetable box garden was also started late 2014 and brings fresh salads, veggies and herbs to the table with little effort. Bananas planted in a depression which receives water from the pool backwash are already flowering and other surprises such as artichokes may also be found in the mixed flower beds. The pond is work in progress as only natural sealants have been used – but it seems as though this has at last succeeded. (Photo right taken Nov 2014 !)



WESSA (Wildlife and Environment Society of SA) Eden will be on site offering information on sustainability in the home.



Garden Etiquette for Garden Viewers during Open Garden events

Gardens are only on view on the published dates (We have a list of 10 gardens open for viewing by appointment throughout the year. They range from large smallholding/farm gardens to small town gardens; there are a number of collectors / specialty gardens. Contact Gerrie Brits tel 083 2858760 or Philda Benkenstein tel 071 441 9132) If it rains: wear practical shoes, bring your umbrella and come! There is a list of gardens on view by appointment throughout the year. * No pets



allowed * Supervise your children at all times * Do not damage plants - do not pick fruit or flowers * Do not take any 'cuttings' * Please respect the privacy of the owners homes.

Map of the gardens:- George Tourism Office, York Street and

<http://www.gardenroutegardens.co.za/george-gardens/>

More info : <http://www.gardenroutegardens.co.za/>

www.facebook.com/GardenRouteGardens

Kammanassie Geology Tour – 28 November

So far the response has not been overwhelming hence the

Bookings DEADLINE 6th November !!!!!.....

wessageorge@isat.co.za

Those of you who have already booked- please reconfirm!



Three expert geologists, **Paul Rixom, Peter Ginn and Colin Ralston**

will lead a small groups of about 20 participants. A full day trip, commencing in de Rust, the route basically circumnavigates the Kammanassie Mountains which lie between the Swartberg to the north and the Outeniquas to the south moving east towards Uniondale, south to the Langkloof and ending just before Herold. It is definitely a case of roadside-geology, mostly driving with stops at geological features en route.

The book that inspired this tour is "die ooervlakte - primordial plains Little Karoo" compiled by Louise Heckl & Leon Nell . Enjoy a preview at the following blogspot – especially the photos that Paul Rixom took <http://dieoervlakteprimordialplains.blogspot.com/>

This and all other activities organised by the WESSA George/Sedgefield Branch is only possible thanks to the energies of volunteers who give generously of their time and knowledge to raise funds for Environmental Education and Awareness.

Obligatory Donation for this tour:

R 100 for WESSA members (students and pensioners too),

R120 for non-members is for our Enviro & Education Fund. The geologists only receive petrol expenses – they contribute their time and expertise at no charge.

As always on these tours, lifts will be arranged to fill vehicles with passengers obviously sharing petrol costs. **Bookings essential** along with info whether you can offer a lift or require one, where is your home suburb and phone contacts (to facilitate lifts)!

Participants will receive detailed route instructions.

WESSA Eden Sustainability Info Stall,

Mosaic Market, Sedgefield – Saturday 5 December 08-14h00

Come and visit us at the market where we will be using an eco-doll's house to show what can be done in the home.

There will also be info on recycling and environmentally friendly cooking methods. Rocket stoves will be demonstrated

<http://www.rocketworks.org/> as well as solar alternatives and Wonderbags.



The ChrissieCanDraw Seabirds Colouring Book (the first in the series) is more than a colouring book; it aims to introduce various seabirds and related conservation issues to young children through humorous and informative pictures and activities.

Published in association with BirdLife South Africa, 20% of the proceeds go towards helping them to continue with important research and conservation initiatives for the preservation of birds in South Africa and our coffers, too will receive a little commission – thanks Chrissie ! Available at our stall for R65.

<http://scenicssouth.co.za/birdlife-south-africa-launches-a-seabirds-colouring-in-book-by-chrissie-cloete/>
<http://showme.co.za/plett/news/chrissiecandraw-seabirds-colouring-book/>



And whilst in a generous, desperately looking for Christmas presents mood, give either yourself or someone close to you a WESSA membership! From R 145 – R415 p.a.

News from WESSA S.Cape Project Co-ordinator, Lorraine McGibbon

WESSA and the Youth Environmental Services trainees celebrated Arbor Week by planting indigenous trees at schools in Knysna and Sedgefield. Ephraim Frackson had an enthusiastic group of learners from Fraaisig Primary in Knysna plant a row of trees. Knysna Municipality provided the trees.



The YES participants were intrigued to learn about solar oven cooking and the use of wonderbags in saving electricity. Lezette, Ashley, Geneva, Thabisa check the sun stove

The YES participants were surprised at how hot the pots remained in the wonderbag. Fredoleigh serves the rice and lentils.



The Department of Environmental Affairs & Development Planning ran a workshop for the YES participants. They learned about waste management and had discussions with the guest speakers from Knysna Municipality, Interwaste and fellow students involved in the SwopShop at Sedgefield Primary School. A Rap song competition was held and the groups had to compose an original rap song with an environmental message and each person had to sing and perform. Here the winning group celebrates with 'High Fives'



Teachers and learners from Nonyiniso School in Middelburg, Eastern Cape, visit the GR Botanical Garden each year. This group of visitors enjoyed walking through the 'tunnel' in the forest section.



Environmental updates

Firstly a correction :- The facebook link for the Garden Route Biosphere reserve:-

<https://www.facebook.com/Garden-Route-Biosphere-Reserve-819958888123569/timeline/>



Below is a Dropbox link to the Garden Route Biosphere Reserve documents and newsletters circulated to date:

Dropbox link: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/bbajdz82f8m39va/AAAwJzqQSVHc2jnMeBN9VxPYa?dl=0>

Please note that we would like to align our strategies with existing strategies in the following areas:

- 1 **A socio-economic strategy:** To identify potential jobs and SMME's linked to the Garden Route Biosphere Reserve (GRBR) and its environmental resources and needs.
- 2 **A marketing and communication strategy:** To incorporate existing stakeholder platforms such as Tourism, Municipalities, conservation agencies, NGO's, etc and to encourage buy-in, participation and understanding of the GRBR & its objectives
- 3 **An education strategy:** To harness and support existing umbrella environmental education policies and strategies to ensure an area- and age-wide understanding of biosphere reserves, human needs and impacts, etc.
- 4 **A funding strategy:** To identify and prioritise biosphere-wide projects and to identify potential funding sources and implementation bodies.

PLEASE E-MAIL ANY SUCH STRATEGY DOCUMENTS TO US BEFORE THE WORKSHOPS (ASAP) IF POSSIBLE. THIS WILL SAVE TIME ON THE DAY.

Kind regards, Julie Carlisle

Garden Route Biosphere Reserve ecovive@mweb.co.za

044 535 0064 or 044 535 9258 or 082 322 2209

www.facebook.com/pages/Garden-Route-Biosphere-Reserve

www.grbr.org.za

Decomposition times of waste & items

Lynee Thompson was researching this topic recently and here is what "googling" brought up:- Here's the lifespan of your average household waste:

- Train Tickets: 2 weeks
- Paper Towel: 2-4 weeks
- Orange Peel: 2-5 weeks
- Newspaper: 6 weeks
- Apple Core: 2 months
- Cotton Shirt: 2-5 months
- Cotton Gloves: 3 months
- Waxed Milk Cartons: 3 months
- Thread: 3-4 months
- Ropes: 3-14 months
- Canvas Products: 1 year
- Plywood: 1-3 years
- Wool Clothing: 1-5 years
- Non-Waxed Milk Cartons: 5 years
- Cigarette Butts: 10-12 years
- Lumber: 10-15 years
- Painted Board: 13 years

- Plastic Film Container: 20-30 years
- Leather Shoes: 25-40 years
- Nylon Fabric: 30-40 years
- Foamed Plastic Cups: 50 years
- Rubber Tires: 50-80 years
- Rubber Boot Soles: 50-80 years
- Foamed Plastic Buoys: 80 years
- Batteries: 100 years
- Hairspray Bottle: 200-500 years
- Plastic Beverage Holders (Six Pack Rings): 400 years
- Plastic Beverage Bottles: 450 years
- Engine Blocks: 500 years
- Sanitary Pads: 500-800 years
- Monofilament Fishing Line: 600 years
- Polyurethane Seat Cushions: 1,000 years
- Automobile Windshield: One million years or longer
- Tinfoil: It does not biodegrade.

Toxic e-waste materials such as barium cause brain damage as well as heart, liver, lung, and spleen damage. Nickel and silver cause a range of medical problems including birth defects, brain damage, heart, liver, lung and spleen damage, and nervous and reproductive system damage. Cadmium causes everything but brain damage and causes harm to the skeletal system.

- Banana Peel: 3-4 weeks
- Paper Bag: 1 month
- Cardboard: 2 months
- Wool Sock: 1 year
- Tinned Steel Can: 50 years
- Aluminum Can: 200-500 years (But if recycled, it can be reused within 6 weeks!)
- Disposable Diapers: 550 years
- Plastic Bags: 20-1000 years
- Plastic Jug: 1 million years
- Glass: 1-2 million years
- Styrofoam: 1+ million years

....this gives food for thought....

Growing plastic recovery and recycling

Last year, Plastics|SA set the pace for the recovery, recycling and diversion of plastics from the country's landfill sites with its aspirational vision named "Zero Plastics to Landfill by 2030". According to Plastics|SA's Executive Director, Anton Hanekom, the most recent recycling survey has shown that plastic diverted from landfill increased by 12.8% from 2013.

"The plastics recycling industry is showing positive movement and due to the increase in the use of waste plastic as an input material in the conversion process, the demand for plastic waste locally has increased," Hanekom said. The total plastic tonnage recycled was 20.3 % of all plastics manufactured in 2014. 22 % of plastics was diverted from landfill, 90.2% was mechanically recycled and 9.8% was exported for recycling elsewhere.

Source:- Newsletter Plastics SA 27 October 2015

Is this a sign of things to come ???????

“Dunes destroyed by high seas” “Sandbags to prop up Wilderness homes”

If you have been to Wilderness beach recently you will have noticed the heavy attrition of the beach and the measures currently (legally) underway to stabilise the dunes....

The George Herald reported on this....

<http://www.georgeherald.com/news/News/General/148729/Dunes-destroyed-by-high-seas>

8 Oct 2015

<http://www.georgeherald.com/news/News/General/149289/Sandbags-to-prop-up-Wilderness-homes> 16 Oct 2015

Here a few photos taken on 25 & 26 November 2015



Please note that this topic is a case of WESSA Eden simply providing information.

Two of the points arising – authorisations and costs

Information received from SAN Parks :-

“The Integrated Coastal Management Act (ICMA) makes it very clear that if a landowner wishes to put protective measures to protect their properties on coastal public property it must;

- 1. Be authorised by the competent authority*
- 2. At the expense of the landowner(s)”.*

Garden Route BOTANICAL GARDENS

Update from the Garden Route Botanical Garden Trust

GATE FEES INTO THE BOTANICAL GARDEN

Most people are under the impression that the Garden Route Botanical Garden is a Public Park. The Botanical Garden is managed by a Trust, the Garden Route Botanical Garden Trust (GRBGT) which, with limited resources, manages the garden to keep it up to National Botanical Garden standards. We are dependent on donations from generous benefactors & need this money for up keep, maintenance & wages.

Due to ongoing vandalism & theft by unknown persons who enter the gardens freely without paying a cent, the GRBGT has decided that, from Monday 2 November 2015, we will be charging gate fees. These fees will, hopefully, deter the majority of undesirable visitors and make a visit to the Gardens far more pleasurable for the majority of law abiding visitors.

There will be 2 security persons at each of our 2 gates. Visitors will have to sign in & the entry fee will be R10 per person. Paid up Members of the GRBGT will be entering free of charge.

If you have not yet signed up to be a member of the Trust now is the time. Contact Kristen Hoek at our office from 8am to 5pm Monday to Thursday & Fridays from 8am to 2:30 pm.

We have put a lot of thought & effort into this & believe we have reached the best solution for all. There will be teething problems at first, but we will sort these out with time.

If you have not yet visited our Gardens, come & have a look at the most beautiful garden in the Garden Route.



**Garden Route
Botanical Garden**

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS ...

We are in desperate need of your expertise in supervising alien invasive clearing. We have a work force of approximately 150 unskilled labourers available for alien clearing. Anyone that could assist us with supervision, even if it is just for an hour or two, please contact Kristen (see below).

YOUR TRUSTEES ...

We welcome **Prof Adré Boshoff** on to the Garden Route Botanical Garden Trust, he brings extensive knowledge on Organisational Psychology and has been involved with the Botanical Garden since the beginning.

The rest of the trustees are as follows:

Robin Clark	Ken Gie	Lorraine McGibbon
Brian Musto	Chris Neethling	Colin Ralston (Chairman)

Thank you for your continued support!

[GARDEN ROUTE BOTANICAL GARDEN TRUST](#)

Tel: 044 874 1558 Email: info@botanicalgarden.org.za

Website: www.botanicalgarden.org.za

Summer Food Festival

Although now living in Bloemfontein, Chris Godfrey is still passionate about and active on behalf of this groundswell movement. Here an update.....

“As you will be aware, the George Herald ‘adopted’ the Kos en Fynbos programme as their Mandela Day Project, and supplied gardeners of the Winter Competition with seedlings and various tools and materials with which to ease their efforts. There was considerable publicity around this initiative, and huuuuge enthusiasm amongst the Winter gardeners.

One of the major outcomes of the recently held a decision-making workshop, facilitated by a team from NMMU under the leadership of Ms Aneri Roos, was that the ENTIRE community was very keen to have a Summer Food Festival as soon as possible.

This year’s Summer Fest will be run in ALL suburbs where we have volunteer gardeners....a very extensive network stretching virtually all across the Eden District Municipal area from West to East and South to North, comprising Blanco/Heatherlands, Pacaltsdorp and all environs, Thembelethu and all sections, La Vallia/Conville/Rosemoor/LoeriePark, Touwsrante, Kleinkrantz/Sedgefield --- and this is merely within the immediate Garden Route vicinity. There are also gardens as far afield as van Wyksdorp, Ladismith, Zoar , through many towns as far as Uniondale and Harlem.

As you can see from the above, despite EVERYONE being a VOLUNTEER, significant strides have been made to give encouragement to folk in all suburbs and at most levels of the LSM whether 1-4, 5-6 or occasionally 7-8, although the majority fall within the lower sectors.

The efforts of the initial handful of passionate folk have been amply recognised by many official and unofficial organisations, national provincial and local government departments, and many private individuals who have seen the benefits of the Kos en Fynbos methodology and have extended news coverage of the group’s activities as far as USA/Canada, UK/Europe, and to the Oceania region as well as fairly broadly within our own country.

Amongst those mentioned above are the WC Landbou Department, WC Premier’s 110% Green project, NMMU campuses in George and PE, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in USA, Duesseldorf University in Germany, from all three of which universities we have hosted

research visitors working at various levels of tertiary education – mostly at Masters and Doctoral levels. Also included in the list are WESSA-Eden, the Garden Route Botanical Garden, the George Municipality, the George Herald, the African Centre for Biodiversity, the SA Food Sovereignty Group, CANSA, Reach for Recovery, and many others who have lent physical hands-on or similar support.

We hold our monthly open public meetings at the Civic Centre in York Street on the 2nd Wednesday of every month, at which everyone with any interest in self-sufficiency and independence from the standard food-supply chain or in health-related matters such as unpolluted food are welcome to join and bring along interested parties. Our final meeting for 2015 will be on Wednesday 11 November, and thereafter we will be hosting various gatherings around the EDM area – mostly to make non-financial awards to leading lights of the Summer Food Festival, and chat about the proposed Green Gardens tourism initiative that appears to be in the throes of development through our members.”

Chris Godfrey can be reached - chrisgodfrey3@gmail.com

More info - www.facebook.com/kosenfynbos

To help kick start the Kos en Fynbos Summer Festival, the WESSA Eden Committee contributed R2000 to purchase seeds for the ever expanding number of participants.

As mentioned last month, the George Herald featured a double spread full comprehensive planting guide. Everything you need to start food gardens at home.

It is also available as a downloadable pdf. see below:

<http://www.georgeherald.com/img/uploads/20150930123207939.pdf>

If you wish to contribute or get involved contact Hester Greef

hcgreeff@gmail.com

Forthcoming Activities

SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER TIME: 10h00

CIRCLES IN THE FOREST in the Goudveld Forest

DIRECTIONS 8km west of Knysna on the N2 take the Rheenendal turnoff.

Follow this road for 12.6km and take the Bibby's Hoek/Millwood Goldfields

turn-off to the right, becoming gravel. You will reach a boom at a 4-way crossing. Use your Wild Card or pay the conservation fee. Follow the road for 4km to the Dalene Matthee Memorial at the Krisjan-se-Nek picnic site.

TOPICTree identification on the short trail (+/-3km – easy) with Georg and, hopefully, a Sanparks researcher.

BYO picnic lunch at Krisjan-se-Nek picnic spot..

LEADER/ORGANISER GEORG VON DEN BUSSCHE – Cell: 082 415 4321

REMEMBER TO BRING ALONG YOUR PICNIC BASKET & CHAIRS TO ALL OUTINGS.

WEAR GOOD SHOES FOR WALKING, SUN SCREEN & HATS.

VISITORS FEE - R10 PER ADULT (CHILDREN FREE)



Nature Conservation in the Wilderness Section of the Garden Route National Park:

It's more than just a pretty beach!

The Wilderness Ratepayers and Residents Association will be hosting what we intend to be a series of public presentations on subjects of particular interest to Wilderness residents. The first will be held on Tuesday 10 November at 6:30 for 7:00 pm in the Wilderness Hotel. We will be hearing from Jonathan Britton about the Wilderness Section of the Garden Route National Park. As the Section Ranger, Jonathan is involved with the many conservation activities carried out by the Park. He'll be telling us about management of the indigenous forests; rehabilitating former state plantations; water catchment area management; the important and positive linkages among activities; initiatives on private land to support conservation efforts; stakeholder engagement strategies, and **get this -- modern conservationists displaying polygamous behaviour as a survival mechanism managing the challenges of a National Park in an urban environment.**

With academic credentials in nature conservation, Jonathan started his career in the Cape Peninsula and the Boland Mountains. We have been fortunate to have him here in Wilderness for the last ten years, managing a number of initiatives: Working for Water and Working for Coast Programmes; the Mountain Catchment Areas of the Outeniqua Mountains; Beervlei Indigenous Forests; and more. Jonathan is currently in the Wilderness Lakes conservation office responsible for the management of the coast and estuarine lakes areas of the Wilderness and Sedgfield Areas.

Jonathan's presentation is open to the public at a nominal cost of R10. There will be an open cash bar available as well as coffee and tea. This will be an instructive and entertaining evening, as well as a good opportunity to meet neighbours.

Mark the date now, Tuesday 10 November, 6:30 for 7:00 pm.

And please take a moment to pass this on to others who may be interested.

John Miller 044 877 0213 084 959 4243

Interesting websites

Exxon Knew Everything There Was to Know About Climate Change by the Mid-1980s—and Denied It

<http://www.thenation.com/article/exxon-knew-everything-there-was-to-know-about-climate-change-by-the-mid-1980s-and-denied-it/>

Commercials



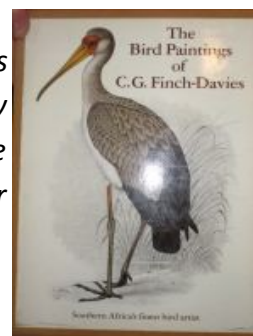
2014 marked 35 years of *EnviroKids* – WESSA's award-winning publication. *EnviroKids* is an invaluable, reusable educational resource for children, parents and teachers interested in the environment, wildlife and environmental issues. Children are wonderful ambassadors for the environment, and many take what they learn into their homes and communities.

EnviroKids magazines are full of amazing facts and fun activities that promote more sustainable lifestyles and caring for the Earth. Each issue has a different theme and supports the National curriculum, making *EnviroKids* a perfect source of ideas and information for school projects. Most readers keep their magazines as a reference library.

With Christmas coming up...or as a Birthday present, avail yourself of the special offer of 4 issues for just R150. Subscription form available on request.

A copy of *"The Bird Paintings of C.G.Finch-Davies – Southern Africa's finest bird artist"* has been donated to St Mark's Cathedral and was valued at between R800 - R1200 by the Strydom Gallery in 2013. We would like to sell it, however, since it is a collectors' item, we thought it would be a good idea to ask you to send this request to your members in case one of them would be interested.

Kind regards, Marie Scherrer
Parish Council Member, St Mark's Cathedral
marie.scherrer55@gmail.com



Fynbos Plant Identification Courses 2015

Course 5: Identifying fynbos plants: an introduction

Cost R2600

Monday 9 to Friday 13 November 2015 8h30-16h00

Venue: George Garden Route Botanical Garden, George

Pre-requisites: nothing other than a keen interest in fynbos plants

About the 'introductory' fynbos courses

"I have run close to 40 different plant identification courses and no two courses have ever been exactly the same. Each course starts by finding out what the group knows and the course evolves from there. I reflect on what I have done before and develop new ways to explain about plants. Through trial and error, I gain insight as to how best to present to different audiences who have different kinds of background knowledge about plants and systems of classifying them. I use suggestions and comments from participants to change and hopefully improve the next course. The basic material that is covered is similar but the exact content of each workshop depends on the existing knowledge and experience of the participants and the sorts of questions that they ask."

Contact Wendy Hitchcock Hitchcock@mweb.co.za or 021-7123966 or 084-681 4385

Cruising around the Klein Karoo recently, south of the Swartberg we were hoping for lunch before we reached Calitzdorp and by chance stumbled upon **Aloe Aloe**

And happily lunch – very delicious – was still available. This stoep has a stunning view of the Swartberg and is actually the starting point of the Donkey Trails into the Gamkaskloof.

Open Saturdays & Sundays from 13-17h00, reservation recommended.

Call Erika Calitz on 083 628 9394. www.donkeytrail.com



As always, feel free to forward to others. And as always, all errors are entirely mine!

If you wish to unsubscribe – just let me know.

Regards, Christine Ridge-Schnauffer