



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 July 2016

Dear Friends of the Environment,

we celebrated WESSA's 90th Anniversary on a cool, misty Sunday evening on Wilderness beach. The WESSA Eden celebration was attended by about 70 persons being mostly a gathering of familiar supporters of WESSA Eden but happily a few new interested individuals also joined us. Special mention should be made of the Ward Councillor Leon van Wyk, WESSA Knysna Branch Committee members, Cobus Meiring of SCLI (Southern Cape Landowners Initiative) and 2 school representatives from Glenwood House.

Dr Steve du Toit led a short walk on the beach prior to adjourning to the restaurant for "Sundowners @ Salinas" where Prof Christo Fabricius, leader of the Sustainability Research Unit of NMMU, led a discussion centring on Earth Stewardship and "People Caring for the Earth".



His current focus is:-

- Communities of practice, adaptive co-management and social-ecological transformation in the Garden Route.
- Vulnerability, social learning and mal-adaptations to climate change
- Research interests: resilience, transformations and adaptive co-management in disorderly social-ecological systems.



He was assisted by:-

Lisa Heider - Doctoral Student, her current project being : Stewardship behaviours and the resilience of biodiversity commons- The case of South Africa's Garden Route.

Samantha Mc Culloch, Community Liaison Officer

Yashwant Rawat, Research Fellow whose current projects are:

- Adaptive collaborative stewardship for invasive alien plants control and management in South Africa.
- Perceptions and responses of local communities for forest resources use and conservation in peri-urban region, Western Cape, South Africa.

The results of the discussion are attached in a separate PDF and make for interesting reading with thought provoking conclusions

The generosity of the sponsors The Grocery Express who provided innumerable platters of delicious finger foods and Jakkalsvlei and Goose wineries sustained us all through the evening of of good cheer.



The venue of the top floor of Salinas was a delight and thanks are extended to the management and team for making this such a special event.



<http://www.jakkalsvlei.co.za>



<http://www.groceryexpress.co.za>



<http://www.thegoosewines.com>

More about the Sustainability Research Unit, NMMU

"THE CHALLENGES WE LOOK AT

The challenges that we see as critical at this time include adapting to climate change; managing invasive alien plants and animals; reversing land degradation; maintaining or improving river health and the ecological integrity of wetlands, coastal zones and estuaries; promoting good governance and decision making; implementing adaptive management and reducing inequality through benefit sharing.



We seek to understand the processes, feedbacks and interactions that cause change. Energies that occupy us include the interactions between people and their ecosystems across scales, how groups and individuals learn and adapt, how their thinking works, their barriers and bridges to adaptation, and the factors that lead to long term change in a positive direction".

Read on at <http://sru.nmmu.ac.za/>

WESSA proudly presents

Saturday, 16 July CREW Outramps Botanical double act –

Moriarty Centre, Caledon Street 10-12h00

The CREW programme was founded to harness the capacity of citizen scientists to assist professional botanists and conservationists in surveying and monitoring threatened plants, and towards this purpose the Outramps' contribution is truly phenomenal.

The Outramps is the most dedicated and hardworking group of volunteers of SANBI's CREW Programme. *CREW stands for the "Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers" Programme.* Their core-function is to search for, find and monitor Red Data listed plants that are under threat. This data is then forwarded to SANBI's Threatened Plants Programme, to update the SA National Red Data list. Over the past 13 years, they have surveyed an area of nearly 6 000 km², predominantly in the Southern Cape, between Swellendam and Nature's Valley. They have collected 2 000 records, which include more than 300 rare and threatened species. This data collection amounts to nearly a third of all the National CREW data received, to date, by SANBI. This involves two explorative excursions per week, with a once per month camping in the veld for several days. These expeditions include frequent summits to the highest peaks of the Langeberg-, Outeniqua-, Swartberg-, Kouga-, Rooiberg-. Anysberg- and Kammanassie Mountains.

Di Turner, CREW Outramps, - A Fynbos Year with the Outramps CREW Group

An introduction to the Outramps Team and the work that they do in finding and monitoring Rare and Endangered Wildflowers. There will be some explanation of what the CREW (Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers) programme is all about and iSpot which is the website used to obtain id's.



It is also a visual journey through the magnificent Southern Cape with its coast and mountains. The emphasis will be on the beautiful plants that grow there.

Knowing Di's capacity for humour as well as serious reporting on the travels of this group in the infamous Buchu Bus as recorded in her Monday Outramps Diaries, and her general unwillingness to give talks, this opportunity to hear her should not be missed!

This is a recent extract from her weekly Diaries...

Of Newies and Dwarf Chameleons

“ “Het Julle Head Torches?“ “Ja. Maar hoekom Jannie”, I asked? The reply, “Ons gaan vanaand soek vir Dwarf Chameleons ?” In disbelief I repeated, “Dwarf Chameleons” ? My voice reached a high falsetto squeak on the very edge of hysteria. This was the third evening of a field trip, which included about 50 rares, most of them entirely new to us. We were exhausted both mentally and physically. Not even a world first would have tempted me to leave my glass of red wine and go stumbling around in the dark looking for any sort of chameleons, dwarf or otherwise. “Getting soft”, I can hear in the background. Maybe, but by this time I felt every day of my 77 years (and counting) and proved it by sleeping for 11 hours that night.”



Priscilla Bourgoyne, Curator Herbarium -



From Fossils to Fynbos - The evolution of plants on the African plate.

Africa has always been at the centre of the shifting tectonic movements. In order for us to appreciate the diversity of plants we have here today we have to take a look into the past at how plants have adapted to changing environments. We will be going back in time to the very first glimmer of plant-life and looking to see what that might have been and how this changed and adapted over the eons, what factors influenced this to what we have today.



WESSA's Wave of Change



This year's World Oceans Day (<http://www.worldoceansday.org/>)

urged people around the world to make a wave of change in their everyday lives to lessen the waste burden we place on our oceans. This can be done by taking the “Better bag Challenge” – a challenge to stop using disposable shopping bags, recycling, or by organizing a coastal clean-up.

When one considers that 8 million tonnes of plastic ends up in our ocean each year the call for change is loud and clear. Plastic is the main offender and constitutes most of the litter and waste found in our oceans. A growing concern is the impact of micro-plastics (small plastic pieces < 2.5 cm). A horrifying thought seeing that most plastics are recyclable.



To create much needed awareness and be the wave of change in Knysna, WESSA Knysna, in association with the Knysna Basin Project, is hosting the Artful Waste Challenge during this year's Knysna Oyster Festival. Teams will take on the challenge by collecting litter along the Knysna Estuary. The litter collected will then be used to create pieces of art with a focus on ocean conservation. The teams with the best art stand a chance to win some wonderful prizes sponsored by Knysna Elephant Park, Ocean Odyssey and Metelerkamp.

The Artful Waste Challenge will take place on the 6th of July at 9:30. For more information or to register please e-mail Louw Claassens at kyss.louw@gmail.com

Be the Wave of Change and help to protect our beautiful oceans!

Forthcoming Activities

Conservation in a War Zone - Thursday 30th June , 6.30 for 7.00pm.

at the Wilderness Hotel and Spa (opposite the Village Green),

Don't miss conservationist DAVID BRADFIELD's fascinating talk on his nine years in AFGHANISTAN, researching and helping to establish and manage vital National Parks and Wildlife Reserves.

He grew up on a mountain farm in northern South Africa and ran away from school to become a game ranger, speaks fluent Xhosa, Afrikaans and Persian, lived in deeply rural Afghanistan for seven years advising and managing the country's national parks, in particular one called Band-e-Amir.

I grew up on a farm; wild life hunting, fishing and living in the mountain. I became a game ranger in Mpumalanga before moving abroad 12 years ago. I've worked in Malawi and Cambodia. For the past seven years I've found myself in rural Afghanistan.

— David Bradfield, SA-born conservationist

Organised by **WRRRA** (Wilderness Ratepayers and Residents Association),

Entry is R10 for WRRRA members and R20 for non-members. A cash bar is available before and after the talk so come early (and stay late)!

Go to <http://wrrra.co.za/index.php/2015-07-18-10-22-03/newsletters-archive> and catch up on the WRRRA Newsletters you have missed and read all the new articles posted !



Conservation@Work is hosting our next open info/training day in Bredasdorp on 5 th July.

The venue is at the Dept Agriculture offices in Bredasdorp.

Please do attend, and send on to your network as there is really important and useful information being shared.

We are very fortunate to have these incredible speakers with many years of experience, and these events have proven to be great networking and sharing opportunities.

One of the day's highlights is the showing of the award winning DVD "Symphony of the Soil" which was the inspiration for the United Nations declaring 2015 as the "International Year of Soil". Even if you have seen this film before, it definitely justifies a further and even more viewings because of the depth and scale of information being offered.

Do bring along your USB memory sticks as previous days have shown us how many people want a copy of the film to share back home.



We close the day with another film which tells the amazing story of how a desert-like and degraded area the size of France is created through overgrazing and de-forestation, and how it is brought back to life again- showing us how to re-generate and heal destroyed landscapes. We hope to see you there.

Warm regards

Liz Eglington Chairperson: Conservation@Work 028 5812014 0836533635

<http://www.conservationatwork.co.za>

Fynbos Forum 2016

The annually held Fynbos Forum, will take place from **25 - 28 July** at the Pine Lodge in Port Elizabeth. The CAPE Partnership will be hosting a session at the Fynbos Forum on the afternoon of 25 July, reflecting on what this 20 year partnership achieved to day and what should be our priorities areas moving forward. For more information on the Fynbos Forum, please contact fynbosforum2014@gmail.com .

Mark Dixon: "Citizen Science: Using Open Source Apps to Transform a Hobby into Applied Conservation":

Wednesday 27 July U3A Monthly meeting 10:00 = Tea, 10:30 = Meeting starts, at Emmaüs.

Mark Dixon (son of Judy) epitomizes a Citizen Scientist. His office is Nature, and his passion is contagious. Fortunately he lives in an era where technology is an essential asset so his interests and knowledge make him sought after throughout South Africa.

His presentation will focus on applications available to record information from hobbyist excursions which provide data for interpretation by study groups and conservation organizations.

His wife, Amanda, shares his interests and together they have established their reputation as leading consultants in conducting pre and post construction avifaunal surveys on wind farms in South Africa. Their six years of experience in this controversial field will form the basis of Mark's talk.

Contact Sue: 044 877 1180. Non-members R10

Vanwyksdorp Sustainable Living Weekend

29 Sept to 3rd October 2016

"Dear All,

Our town (village) is repeating our very successful Sustainable Living weekend/workshop held in September 2015.

See the attached preliminary notice. We are sending this out now because the Go Platteland magazine team were here and their Winter edition has just hit the shelves. We are featured in a stunning 14 pages!! This includes a lovely advert for our event, so bookings are already coming in.



So do buy the magazine - a fabulous showcasing of our country towns and villages and characters! If you did not know it already, the magazine reminds us that we live in an amazing country- and highlights the positive aspects of South Africa on which we should be focusing rather than the sensational and crazy political arena.

And do think about visiting us for the event. We showcase organic farming, value adding of products, growing your own food naturally, seed saving, worm farming and compost making, sustainable living, natural building, how to be off-grid, grey water recycling, and how to live in Community- all essential ingredients for surviving in this changing world.

There is a limit to available accommodation so do book early..... and please send on to whoever you think would be interested.

Warm regards, Liz Eglington" lizeglington@netconnect.co.za

Environmental updates

Opportunity for public input:

Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment on shale gas mining in the Karoo

The CSIR is coordinating the Strategic Environmental Assessment process on shale gas mining in the Karoo.

The first draft of the assessment document is available for public commenting. Please submit your comments and information by 15 July to seashalegas@csir.co.za.



For more information and to view the draft report and guideline document for submitting comments, please visit <http://seasgd.csisr.co.za/scientific-assessment-chapters>

Kind Regards,

The Team at Treasure Karoo Action Group

Kaaimans-to-Touw (KTT) Eco-Restoration Forum

PASSIONATE PEOPLE PROMOTING SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION AND INVASIVE WEED MANAGEMENT IN THE GARDEN ROUTE, SOUTH AFRICA

<https://kaaimans2touwktt.wordpress.com>



Garden Route BOTANICAL GARDENS

New Trustees for the Garden Route Botanical Garden

At the recent Annual General Meeting of the Garden Route Botanical Garden Trust (held on Monday, 6 June 2016) six new Trustees were elected:

Roger Bath, Adré Boshoff, Titania Mutchie Dambuza, Peter Ginn, Claude Marechal and Brian Musto.

Congratulations to all.

The Trust would like to thank Lorraine McGibbon, a former Trustee, who has moved to Cape Town, for her excellent service to the Trust over the last few years and we wish her the very best in her future endeavours.

The rest of the Trustees will still continue on the board of the Garden Route Botanical Garden Trust: They are: **Robin Clark** **Chris Neethling** **Colin Ralston**



**Garden Route
Botanical Garden**

We look forward to a good year under the able stewardship of our trustees and ask that, as members, you continue to support their efforts to develop and promote the Garden as a place of recreation and enjoyment for all.

MISSING FROM PHOTO: Robin Clark and Chris Neethling

Garden Route Botanical Garden Management



And whilst on the topic of Botanical Gardens, we recently walked in the late afternoon.....



Kos en Fynbos - Healthy food in your own garden

Ilingeletu Creche in Zabalaza Street

In Zone 6, Thembalethu.

From Monica :-“We initiated multiple demos at this crèche. This is linked with a plan to empower crèches to create a hub of food in their gardens. We plan to use this little crèche as a leader for change, Eunice, the principal, welcomes the concept that children need to eat healthy food. The parents will too become involved on weekends and a new community vibe will begin, a tradition of investing in the well-being of their children and their surroundings. Ownership will be instilled and a strive to have the best crèche in the area a priority. Gone are the days when you just drop off your baby at the crèche and pick it up and not wonder if there was water for them during that day or whether the gutters which have been lying on the floor for weeks will ever get fixed. The parents will become involved in all the aspects of their children's education. It will mean everyone working together on weekends and celebrating their hard work with the fruits from their garden. We think it can work. Eunice thinks it must start soon.

We have began the process by inviting the community to see how food gardens are established.

Here is a fabulous group that came to see because they feel the need for change. Landmark Foundation is guiding the education process within the KOS EN FYNBOS COMMUNITY GARDENS PROJECT as well as this Crèche's Project.

We will keep you posted on this project.

In education,

Monica Vaccaro, Landmark Foundation Education



<https://www.facebook.com/kosenfynbos/>

Report from Michele Schubert:-

“The KnF monthly demo/event on 22 June was held at Ilingeletu Creche in Zabalaza Street in Zone 6, Thembalethu. We did a compost heap demo and a propagation demo for spekboom and herbs. Cuttings of lavender, perennial basil, artemisia, klip dagga, a couple of sages (indigenous), rosemary etc were handed out and we spoke on how diversity helps with pest control as well as being tasty treat in food and medicine. There was an enthusiastic crowd of about 20. It was a joint effort between Aneri Vlok (NMMU), Jama Mashela (NMMU agricultural Department, local expert on organic farming) and I.

On the 23rd Monica, Magda, Zama, Henry and others from KnF went to same crèche and did the raised beds demo. “

(Photo credits George Herald)



And whilst on the topic of food gardens....all visitors the Garden Route Dam must surely admire the efforts that the gardener there makes with his little plot.....



Interesting websites

What dragonflies say about our ignorance of the natural world

Many of the Cape Times readers will have read an article in the 3rd June edition titled " Ignorance of natural world must be rectified, 86% still uncharted" by Klaas-Douwe B. Dijkstra.

The article led me to google the original article.....

<http://theconversation.com/what-dragonflies-say-about-our-ignorance-of-the-natural-world-60215>

Commercials



We recently wandered around the 3 Saturday markets at Sedgefield and spotted a sign inviting us to visit the **Scarab Spiral Garden**.....so we did! And we wandered around these verdant mounds with all sorts of delicious veggies and herbs. And then you can order a juice from David Oldfield. The veggies are pulled from the ground in front of your



eyes and juiced – Can't be fresher!

But if you would rather buy the veggies walk back to the Mosaic market where you will find



in the building immediately to the right of Engen.

Our Story

Imagine the people in a community in direct conversation with their own farmer – asking him or her for certain produce and committing to buying that produce once ripe and ready to eat. He or she would be able to plan and farm more effectively, reducing waste and creating a better living standard for him or herself.

You already have a local farmer – the farmer using organic farming methods with healthy seeds and plants to produce healthy food on a patch of land nearby. If this food can just take a short cut to the family kitchen to reduce waste . . .



There is no need to use genetic modification to grow healthy plants.

Organic methods of growing food are about producing optimally healthy plants with no need for pesticides, fertilizers or herbicides. Growing healthy plants from healthy soil also ensures higher nutrient levels, resulting in a variety of healthy foods which is significantly preferable to protein-enhanced sweet potatoes or vitamin A-enhanced rice.

We have grown accustomed to having all types of fruit and vegetables on the shop shelves all year round. To make this possible, food is genetically modified to



grow out of season or to survive long storage and shelf life. Local food systems make shelf life less of an issue. Besides, do you really want to eat fruit that could last for a month? When the farmers are the ones who are starving, there is something seriously wrong in our food supply chain.

Why buy the items required by your recipe? How about finding a good recipe matching the food in season which can be produced by your own local farmers?

Because the food is produced locally, it takes a shorter route to get to you – a short supply chain.

Assist with the training, support and development of farmers by becoming a Green Road Member.

How it works - The Green Road website enables you to easily select & order your preferred bags for delivery. Once you have placed your order/sequence, we will assemble your bags with fresh local produce straight from our farmers.

Join Us - By joining The Green Road, consumers play an essential role in helping farmers to significantly enhance the health of their farms and the quality and flavour of their food. Together with the farmer we can look at agriculture, food production, food distribution and nutrition.

PGS Green Road is a voluntary association of growers, retailers and consumers supporting organic agriculture and local food production based on the principles of ecology, health, fairness and care. As a proud member of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) and IFOAM PGS, we support the development of organic agriculture in its full diversity worldwide.

Furthermore, PGS-GR is involved in the formation of a regional representative body for PGS. This regional body will create a network for small-scale organic assurance, and will also develop a regional distinctive mark that will be used to identify PGS-endorsed organic products. This will improve the credibility and reduce the level of confusion and even misrepresentation taking place in the organic sector. In this way, third-party certification and PGS assurance can operate together for the benefit of the sector, its supporters and the consumers.

PGS needs the support of everyone who holds the organic sector – and our planet – dear. We are now perfectly positioned to take the PGS to a new level, to move its energy from the management office into the walkways of local markets into the consciousness of the wider community.

- Because all growers are part of the process, the PGS also becomes a support and “skills transference” system, where growers and public can share information, offer advice, and identify customer needs.
- It is important to note that PGS is essentially an assurance system for local markets: it cannot, and should not be expected to serve as an assurance system for international organic trade. Third-party certification is still the most effective way to deal across borders.

More information Janet Gracie, PGS coordinator 063 114 1908 pgs@greenroad.co.za

www.greenroad.co.za

I occasionally have queries regarding **Bat boxes**.

At the Scarab Market in Sedgefield, Werner Rosch has them for sale at R400.

Contact 082 556 6646 mayaarosch@gmail.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*

Honorary Secretary, WESSA EDEN

e-mail: wessageorge@isat.co.za www.wessa.org.za www.facebook.com/wessa.eden