



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 May 2017

Dear Friends of the Environment,

a record number of members attended the AGM. It must have been the combination of the speaker, Enrico Gennari, and his topic of research on apex sea predators and the cheese and wine which made it a very social occasion !!! Thank you all for participating.

There are no changes in the Committee. Claude remains Chairman and Treasurer, Christine Secretary whilst Annemarie, Roz, Monica and Janet complete the team.

We are always open to new recruits!

WESSA proudly presents

Millwood – Circles in the Forest

Saturday 27 May 2017

Our next outing takes us to the Millwood Forest, near Rheenendal, for a 3km walk.

Registration will be from 09h30.

At 10h00, a SANpark Ranger will give us a talk in the picnic area on the history of the area and management of the forest. The walk will follow – we shall be doing the 3km walk, accompanied by a Ranger, who can answer your questions as we proceed. Please note that the path is narrow, and strenuous due to the tree roots on the ground. Wear good walking shoes.

It is expected that the walk will take 1,5 to 2 hours. No need to rush !

At the end of the walk, you can have lunch in the picnic area, or go to one of the small restaurants back on the Rheenendal road. You can also investigate the area further by going to Jubilee Creek.

Cost will be R 50,00 per person, member or non-member. An additional R 20,00 Conservation fee per person, unless you have a Wildcard.

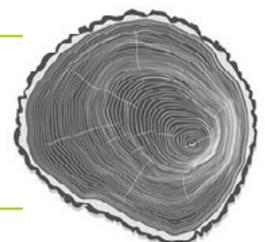
Bookings essential as limited capacity. Directions upon confirmation.



Kindly advise your attendance to Annemarie Gebhardt preferably by *e-mail* angebhar@telkomsa.net
Tel 044 870 0086

“ Between man and the forest lies but a thin veil. Like a cobweb. Like an invisible mist through which you can see if you open your eyes wide enough “

(Dalene Mathee, *Circles in a Forest*)



Please diarise the upcoming WESSA Eden attractions

note changes from last month's info !



Saturday, 24 June	Visit to Herold Wines with walk to Bushman Paintings
Saturday, 29 July	Talk TBA
Sunday !! 20 Aug	Tree Walk – hosted by Jenny & Stewart Herd, Karatara.
Saturday, 9 Sept	Gouritsmond Walk led by the Conservation Trust

Forthcoming Activities

SCLI & EDEN DM invite you to attend their

2017 Seminar on Invasive Alien Plants, Risk Management and Biodiversity Conservation



Date: Thursday 25 & Friday, 26 May

These events have been held annually and are always extremely interesting and informative with speakers (for example) from NMMU, SAN Parks, Eden DM, DAFF and MTO.

Please see separate attachments for more details. www.scli.org.za

GARDEN ROUTE BOTANICAL GARDEN



Monday, 24th April 2017 OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTRE AT THE BOTANICAL GARDEN



George Mayor Melvin Naik hailed the Environmental Education Centre as a first of its kind in the Southern Cape and a fine asset that will be of value to all the citizens of George in the years to come. He emphasised the need to intensify efforts for environmental justice and the importance of teaching children to love the Earth before they can save it.

Dignitaries attending the opening included the Western Cape minister of Education, Debbie Schafer, Trustees and staff of the Garden Route Botanical Garden, members of the building project team, councillors including Marlene Viljoen (Chair Environment Committee), WESSA Committee members and other officials from education and environmental organisations.

The occasion was marked by the planting of numerous indigenous trees generously donated by Elizabeth Boshoff.

1 Alien Invasive Plant clearing in Heatherlands

In co-operation with the neighbourhood Watch of Camphersdrift, Glenbarrie and Heatherlands WESSA Eden organised a Saturday morning of information and bush clearing in an infested area adjacent to Heatherlands.

Thanks to Ann Symons who as a qualified SAGIC expert shared her knowledge with neighbours and interested individuals who came from as far as Wilderness ! And thanks to the volunteers who went in low and hacked (bugweed) and pulled (Black wattle) and cut (Pampas grass plumes) and fiddled (with Madeira Vine) ...

Thanks to Henk Alting who brought reinforcements in the form of 2 strong young gardeners who really moved the Bugweed.



This is not the first time that we have circulated information on this topic – and will certainly not be the last time! A Layman's Guide to our most common local Invasives is being finalised and will be available with the June Newsletter. But for now ...

CARE FOR YOUR ENVIRONMENT – YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!

Alien Invasive Plants are all over the place – and probably also in your garden! But you are most probably not even aware of them and cannot identify them.

Many are subject to legislation that requires removal and disposal.

Examples of AIPs: Black wattle, Bugweed, some Cannas, Wild ginger, Blackwood, Moth catcher, Loquat tree, Australian tree fern, Madeira Vine, Pampas Grass, Elderflower, Lantana and Brambles.

Information on alien invasive plants:

www.invasives.org.za www.sanbi.org



Alien Invasive Plants and the damage they do to our environment.

After climate change, alien invasive plants pose the most serious threat to our habitats by destroying bio-diversity. Bio-diversity is the link between all organisms on earth, binding each into an inter-dependant ecosystem.

Intact eco-systems ensure the sustainable productivity of soils and provide the genetic resources for all plants and animals on the plane and have a direct impact on all our lives.

The loss in biodiversity means millions of people face a future where food supplies are more vulnerable to pests and disease, poor growing conditions and probable water shortages.

Here are just some of the reasons;

What AIPs do to our water resources :

It is estimated that nationwide invading plants use 3.3 billion cubic meters of water per year beyond what native plants would require. Total annual run-off from mountain catchment areas and high yield riparian zones could eventually be reduced by at least 16% if alien plants are allowed to continue to spread.

What AIPs do to our animals :

Habitat destruction leads to the extinction of all animals depending on a specific eco-system. In the Western Cape e.g. the declining diversity of e.g. the birds and insects is noticeable.

What AIPs do to our soil;

Approximately 20 million hectares (17%) at different densities of our agricultural land has been invaded resulting in loss of arable land. If one could condense it to a 100% density stand it will cover 1.9 million ha, bigger than the Kruger National Park, excluding the private conservation areas.

Fire damage

Normal grassland fires generate heat of between 200 to 5000 kW/m². Invasives can generate heat of up to 50 000 kW/m² which results in physical damage to the soil. This in turn reduces the viability of indigenous seeds in the soil and causes physical damage to plants/roots. The damage done to the soil by these fires contributes to flooding, soil erosion, siltation of dams and rivers.

Just a few tips on eradication of Invasive Alien Plants :

Ena and Bob McIntyre (Bot Soc) compiled 20 PDFs on identifying and removing some of our local invaders:

www.botanicalsociety.org.za/BranchesAndGardens/SitePages/Garden%20Route.aspx



Pampas grass

Place a black bag over the plumes, cut them off and burn !!! Then cut the grass as close to the ground as possible and apply (eg) a mixture of diesel and garlon [3%] about 4 x with a wide brush.

Madeira Vine - SAN Parks April 2017

- Every piece of plant material removed is "double bagged and incinerated".
- SANParks is planning to release a biological agent to combat Madeira when it starts flowering.
- If you have this pest in your garden you will need expert advice and assistance in clearing it. It should definitely not be used as compost or discarded with other garden refuse, as this simply helps to facilitate it spreading even further.
- Should you require assistance with the removal of Madeira vine, please contact SANParks for guidance on how to go about it. Carlo de Kock, SANParks Biodiversity Social Project carlo.dekock@sanparks.org

Report sightings on :

<http://www.ispotnature.org/projects/spot-madeira-vine-garden-route>



Madeira Vine - Nuusblaadjie van AGRI EDEN : 05 May 2014

We are pleased to share what we've learnt about dealing with *Anredera cordifolia* to date:

1. The method - Locate and cut all the creeper stems at their base. Resist the temptation to remove the cut climbing stalks – this will result in numerous tubers dropping to the ground - simply leave them to die off and dry out over time.
2. Apply the registered herbicide as a foliar spray only on emerging plantlets under the trees and shrubs and to continue with regular follow-up sprays of regrowth every four months.
3. Weeding of the plantlets is discouraged as this accelerates germination (maybe not such a bad thing when you are using herbicide) and also creates the problem of disposal. These plants are extremely robust and tubers will take root and sprout wherever they fall.
4. Please note that the herbicide will affect any other broadleaf (non-grassy) plants, therefore spot-spraying the target plants may be more appropriate in areas where there is a mixture of vegetation types.
5. The herbicide "Garlon" is registered for use on this plant – the mix is .5% (5ml to 1litre of water).

Poison for Bugweed - Kaput



While Timbrel and its genetic equivalents have traditionally been used for cut stump treatment on this species, I wish to remind users that the herbicide must be used in conjunction with Actipron or similar wetting agent and applied as a coarse spray to all freshly low cut surfaces.

However, I wish to draw your attention to a relatively new "ready-to use" herbicide gel specifically registered for the above, which requires no mixing or dilution and contains everything required to do the job including a marker dye. Because the product is painted rather than sprayed onto cut stump surfaces, there is considerably less risk of environmental contamination and off-site damage.

If anybody required more information on this product, they may contact me on this email or by phone 0826557585. I would be happy to share my information for the greater good.

Carl Stoltz noweeds@absamail.co.za

Black Wattle

Black wattle is removed in a number of ways, however each has their economic and environmental challenges. The largest challenge common to all methods of removal is the stimulation of the seedbed. Any flowering black wattle tree has the ability to produce millions of seeds over its life span and although biological control methods are proving successful, the seeds have the ability to remain dormant in the ground for up to 90 years. The follow up on the germination of these seeds is more important than the original eradication.

And this last sentence is the important one: **Follow up, follow up.....every time you are out and about!**



2 Recycling do's and dont's

Source George Herald www.georgeherald.com

GEORGE NEWS - These days all milk and juice cartons are recyclable and must be put in the recycling blue bags and put out on the pavement on the morning that it is to be collected.

Below is a basic guide of products that are recyclable:



1. Aluminum & steel cans
2. PET plastic bottles (all soft drink bottles)
3. Newspaper
4. Cardboard
5. HDPE plastic (detergents, bleach, shampoo, milk bottles and all bottle tops)
6. Glass (all glass bottles - no windscreens, windows or porcelain)
7. Magazines
8. Mixed paper (books, office paper, school papers etc.)
9. Tetra (all milk and juice boxes)
10. Plastics (This includes all plastic; from plastic wrapping to shopping bags or clear bags)

Lynde Minnie, depot manager at Interwaste George, said no medical waste like syringes and needles are recyclable, irrespective of whether it is made from plastic or glass.

"Medical waste is a strictly controlled specialised section of the industry and can only be handled by an accredited medical waste disposable company. In some parts of the country polystyrene trays are collected, but in the Southern Cape we do not have the facility to compact the product and transport it to Gauteng where it can be recycled. Please, please - no nappies, whether disposable or old fashioned cotton, are recyclable," said Minnie.

Interwaste will collect all hazardous waste materials, but this works strictly on a quoting system.

Contact them on 044 878 0688 or visit the depot at 10 Extension Road, Pacaltsdorp Industria for more information.

CREW Outramps News



In the Rough

TWe received an invitation from Chris Gomersall (Fancourt Horticulturalist in charge of all the gardens) to attend the annual Audubon Bioblitz at the Links Golf course last Thursday and we decided that it wasn't a bad way to spend Freedom Day. The Bioblitz is a worldwide competition for Audubon Golf courses, www.auduboninternational.org where all the species seen on the golf course/estate are counted. Audubon is the equivalent of a Blue Flag Beach. We very much enjoyed it last year and we were keen to do it again. We are however, at a disadvantage in terms of our competitiveness. The event is timed to coincide with the Northern Hemisphere Spring and is the leanest time of the year for plants, birds etc in the Southern Hemisphere.

We met Chris for a briefing and then set out to walk the Links, hunting for plants, birds, bugs, reptiles etc. All in all, we had a pretty good haul and we are busy co-ordinating our lists, which we will send to Chris in a couple of day's time. It was a glorious day, with temperatures in the high 20's and a very light breeze to cool things off a bit. There was some haze around and some smoke, which is an ominous sign of things to come. There was a strong bergwind forecast for Friday with temperatures high in the 30's. Everything is tinder dry, which creates a frightening scenario for runaway fires. We haven't had significant rain for ages.

We took loads of photos, some of which are reflected in our weekly album that accompanies the Reportback. The highlight of the day was finding *Erica unicolor ssp georgensis* (Rare) and a Spotted Eagle Owl (*Bubo africanus*)

The Links Audubon Bioblitz

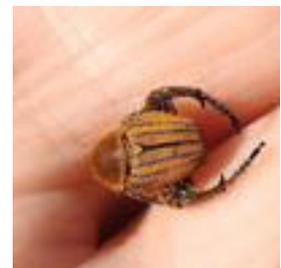
<http://www.ispotnature.org/projects/fancourt-links--george>



perched on a wooden fence just outside the kitchen door of Halfway House. He was not in the least perturbed by the presence of people and clicking cameras and looked as if he was about to fall asleep. Sally includes a fabulous animated photo of "Spotty". It was a welcome break for coffee



and the most scrumptious biscuits, before we made our way to the wetlands where the star of the show was a huge Grass Carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*) This is hybridised so that it can't breed, but keeps the reeds at bay. Thank you Chris and The Links for giving us the opportunity to join this very worthwhile initiative.



Commercials

Flight for Birders identification & conservation course at Hartenbos on 19 & 20 May 2017



We unfortunately had to postpone the course scheduled for Grootbrak during March. The course will now be presented at Municipal Library, Hartenbos on 19 & 20 May 2017.

This course is specifically aimed at developing the vast birding potential of the Mossel Bay & Hessequa regions.

The contents of this specific course have been adapted in the following way:

1. Each individual course now focuses on local and regional species and conservation issues in the area where the course is being presented. The result of this is that roughly 65% of the Hartenbos course contents will be adapted to address regional issues. This should give previous participants new insights into the wonders of birding in the area. Kindly consider participating.
2. Also note that a comprehensive overview of birding in the West Coast National Park, together with a focus on the waders of the Western Cape is included in the programme.
3. The course now places heavy emphasis on the growth of birding tourism, and therefore people working in that industry, as well as nature conservation staff should be encouraged to participate.

Registration with Elaine at mwjasser@mweb.co.za or 082 455 8402.

Other course are being presented at Langebaan in collaboration with CapeNature on 21 & 22 April and the Agulhas National Park in collaboration with SANParks on 11 & 12 May.

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

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