



May 2012 eBULLETIN

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Southern Tip Day

In 1488 Bartolomeu Dias turned back after he failed to reach the East in search of a trading route. On his return journey he passed a certain flat piece of land on the 16 May. He named it after an Irish monk, St Brendan, whose festival day it was: 'Ponte de Sao Brendao'. Agulhas NP identified this date around which a programme is presented annually to commemorate Bartolomeu Dias's sea voyage round the southern tip of Africa and the shipwrecked victims who lost



their lives along the Cape Agulhas coastline. The programme is organized during the weekend closest to the 16th May. There will be a talk and meal on the Friday evening and a relay race on the Saturday. A new item – an art display from the Saturday until the next Friday which falls on International Museum Day, 18th May – will be included this

year.

11 May 2012, Talk and Meal

Suiderlig Dienssentrum, Struisbaai

Talk by Jimmy Herbert: *Brederode (1785): her resting place, artifacts and possible role in future tourism to the Overberg*
Meal prepared by the Suiderlig Dienssentrum, R70,00 pp, bring own drinks, 19h00.



12 May 2012, Suidpunt-Zoetendals Vallei Relay Race

Bosheuvel Precinct, Struisbaai-Elm Road

Running and mountain biking relay race, R150,00 per team or individual, registration from 6h00, start at 8h00. Special programme at Bosheuvel for spectators and visitors.

12 to 18 May 2012, Mariner and Shipwreck Art Exhibition

Suiderlig Dienssentrum, Struisbaai

Exhibition of marine and shipwreck art, 10h00 to 16h00; refreshments on sale between 12h00 and 14h00.

Coastlines and Shipwrecks – Ora Laubscher, 2007

Six centuries ago Portuguese mariners, the first of the Europeans, came ashore from their caravels to establish themselves on the land around Cape Agulhas. However, in the 18th century, the *Duineveld* farms in the area – furthest from the *Caepse Wagenweg* – were the last to be colonized. It is not known who the first seafarers were to circumnavigate the southernmost coastline; it has, however, been established that the 15th century Portuguese seafarer, Bartolomeu Dias, was the first to chart the south coast of Africa.



Dias's coastal survey had one serious defect – he underestimated the nautical importance of the flat spit of land he called St Brendan's Point in May 1488. The first map to depict the continent of Africa as a whole, drawn by a German cartographer Martellus, in 1489, shows the southern end of Africa as an inverted triangle. The apex of Martello's triangle, that is, the point he shows lying furthest south, is *Cabo de boa Esperanza* and *Ponta de Sao Brendao* lies north-west of it.

Dias cannot be blamed for this mistake, nor was he to know that contrary winds and reefs would make the Agulhas Bank the most dangerous passage of the whole voyage to India and the greatest threat to the Eastern sea trade of the Europeans. The stormy Cape had proved to be a signpost of Good Hope, but the Agulhas Bank became and has remained a graveyard of mariners, the Coast of Shipwrecks.



Golgotha of the Oceans

Read more in *Golgotha van die Oseane* by Jeanette Grobbelaar on how the southern oceans around Cape Agulhas became known as Ocean Golgotha on 11 July 1840 when the necessity of building a lighthouse at Cape Agulhas was debated. *Golgotha van die Oseane* is on sale at the Bredasdorp Shipwreck Museum for R200,00 a copy.





South African
NATIONAL PARKS

AGULHAS PARK eBULLETIN

SANParks connecting to Society

May 2012, Volume 26

Connecting to Society

Southern Tip Society, who are they?



Anglers on Cape Agulhas coast



Fishermen on chukkies



Agulhas National Park – Park Forum

Continued from the April eBulletin.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PARK FORUM

The Park Forum facilitates constructive interaction between the Park and surrounding communities and stakeholders and serves as a channel for communication and managing conflict. It assists the Park to engage with neighbouring communities and stakeholders to give effect to strategic issues identified in the Park Management Plan and to areas of mutual interest, and to work towards finding equitable solutions that benefit both the community and the Park. The Park Forum serves as a vehicle towards developing strategic partnerships with stakeholders and as a vehicle towards monitoring and assisting with progress made with the implementation of the ANP management plan.

The Park Forum is NOT A DECISION-MAKING BODY, but contributes towards effective decision-making by Park Management. However, this does not diminish the importance of the rights and responsibilities of the Park Forum Members.

The rights and responsibilities of Park Forum members include having a mandate to represent a particular constituency, to participate in accordance with the Charter (which includes the SANParks Terms of Reference and the SANParks Guidelines for Stakeholder Participation), to report back to the Park Forum on Park Forum recommendations, to report back timeously and accurately to the constituency being represented regarding Park Forum proceedings, and to report back to Park Forum on constituencies concerns and recommendations. The members should be prepared to commit time and energy, to build capacity and transferring skills, and to establish an effective working relationship between members to ensure continuity. (To be continued).



22 May 2012
INTERNATIONAL DAY
FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Marine Biodiversity

Agulhas Biodiversity

Biodiversity of Agulhas National Park

The management planning process identified the following goal for the Park:

To ensure the proper management of the natural patterns and processes of nationally important ecosystems on the Agulhas Plain and the associated marine environment, with emphasis on the lowland fynbos, renosterveld and wetlands, and the maintenance or restoration of environmental processes to enable natural spatial and temporal variation in structural, functional and compositional components of biodiversity.

Biodiversity management is the primary mandate of the Park. Agulhas has, in line with SANParks policies and the principles of adaptive management, developed a number of biodiversity management programmes with the aim to effectively manage the diversity, patterns and processes of the Agulhas Plain. The achievement of the Park's growth aspirations depends on understanding the relationships and inter-dependencies between various strategic planning processes in the region. These range from the bioregional planning, through to the district and local IDPs and SDFs, into the Park's consolidation and conservation development frameworks. Key management strategies were identified to reach the desired state in terms of biodiversity. (To be continued)

(SOURCE: Agulhas National Park Management Plan, Draft 4.4 – 2012; Information files.)



South Africa boasts an astonishingly high biodiversity – Prof Gavin Maneveldt, Department of Biodiversity & Conservation Biology, University of the Western Cape

South Africa lies in a unique geographical location. As a consequence of this unique location, and of a host of resulting and other characteristics (incl. its geology, microclimate,



surrounding oceans, evolutionary history, etc), it is not surprising that South Africa boasts an astonishingly high biodiversity. After Indonesia and Brazil, South Africa is the third-most biologically diverse country in the world. Occupying less than 1% of the world's terrestrial land area, we are home to an astonishing array of organisms including some 10% of the world's plants, 5% of the world's reptiles, 8% of the world's birds, 6% of the world's mammals, and 33% of the world's tortoise species. We are the only country in the world that encompasses three biodiversity hotspots, one (the Cape Floristic Region) of which falls entirely within our political borders that also happens to contain the smallest of all known plant biomes namely the Fynbos biome. Within the Fynbos Biome of the greater Western Cape, there exists the highest concentration of plant species in the world. Remarkable still is that our seas straddle three oceans (Atlantic, Indian and Southern Oceans) and as a consequence, South Africa is home to about 16% of the known coastal marine species across the planet.

(SOURCE: *The marine environment of the south Western Cape is special* by Prof Gavin Maneveldt, Department of Biodiversity & Conservation Biology, University of the Western Cape)

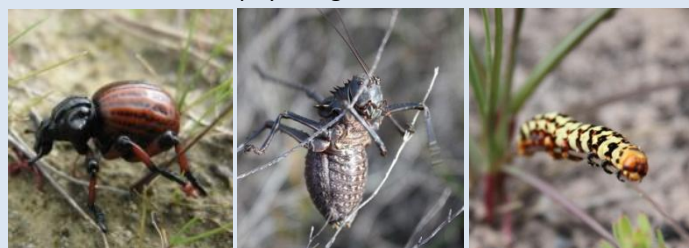


Insect Biodiversity: a research project in Agulhas National Park conducted by Prof. Renzo Perissinotto, University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)

The research project started in September 2006 and ran until December 2011. The final report was received in January 2012. Three surveys were undertaken in accessible areas of the Agulhas National Park with the overarching objective of improving knowledge on the insect biodiversity of the Park. Fifteen species of butterflies, seven of fruit chafers and five of longhorn beetles were recorded in the Park during the investigation. Of these, one butterfly species is new to science (*Cassionympha agulhas*) and a second (*Thestor montanus*) was recorded, in the Park, at its lowest altitudinal range so far in its restricted area of distribution. The occurrence of the flower chafer, *Stripsipher* cf. *braunsi*, within the Park is also remarkable, as this species was previously known only from a few semiarid localities of the Great Karoo.

This study found that the Agulhas Park exhibits one species of butterfly new to science (currently in description) and endemic to the southernmost tip of Africa. Furthermore, a number of

new records were established in the distribution of species of butterflies, fruit chafers and longhorn beetles with extremely limited geographic ranges. This has improved significantly the knowledge of insect biodiversity within the current protected area. Unfortunately, one of the main potential targets of the investigation, the recently described cetoniini, *Trichostetha calciventr* (Holm & Stobbia 1995), was not found in the Park during this study. There is, however, circumstantial evidence suggesting that it may occur here, at least in the Soetansberg area. The species is currently known only from a few specimens collected in the 1990s in the lowlands of the De Hoop Nature Reserve and it would be important, therefore, to establish conclusively whether its range includes the Agulhas National Park. Species endemic to this area, or with very restricted biogeographic range outside it, are vulnerable to climatic changes, because they are likely to exist close to their thermo-physiological limits.



(SOURCE: Final Report_Renzo Perissinotto_Insect biodiversity ANP, 2012)

Reference: Holm E. & Stobbia P. 1995. *Fruit Chafers of Southern Africa* Appendix I Giornale Italiano di Entomologia 7:289-300.

Events Calendar

May 2012	
11	Southern Tip Talk & Meal
12	Southern Tip-Zoetendals Vallei Relay Race
12 – 13	Hoëwal-Die Dam Hike (Picnic at the Jessie shipwreck site), Elim
12 – 18	Mariner & Shipwreck Art Display
16	Southern Tip Day
17 – 20	Christusfees, Bredasdorp
18	International Museum Day – Changing role of museums in the 21st Century
22	International Day for Biological Diversity
June 2012	
4 – 8	Environment Week
5	World Environment Day
8	World Oceans Day
17	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

2012 Theme of the Year

