



South African
NATIONAL PARKS

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July 2012 eBULLETIN

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Southern Tip Society, who are they?

Agulhas Working on Land – Simone Koert, Working for Wetlands

The Invasive Species Control Unit (ISCU) of SANParks was established in the year 2000 to act as implementer of the Working for Water programme which deals with the removal of invasive alien plants. This formed part of the greater Expanded Public Works Programme that was initiated by government to tackle job creation. Before long wetlands rehabilitation (Working for Wetlands) and coastal management (Working for the Coast) projects were also included in the unit. With the realization that the focus of the projects is on social development whilst caring for biodiversity in parks, the ISCU underwent a name change to become *Biodiversity Social Projects*.

This year the *Working on Land* (WoL) projects are also being implemented by the BSP. The deliverables of this project involve all activities linked to biodiversity management such as the removal of unwanted structures, erosion control and maintenance work on fence lines, roads, footpaths and fire breaks. They are not involved in any form of infrastructure construction. The project works on the same model as Working for Wetlands, Working for Water and Working for the Coast, where the activities are as labour intensive as possible to ensure that the biggest percentage of the budget is allocated to wages. There are currently four teams from the WoL Agulhas project in field; they are removing old fences at Waterford and Ratelrivier. In total 48 beneficiaries is part of the Working on Land project.



The two teams of the Infrastructure Development Project currently involved with the construction of the new boardwalk development between the Southern Tip and the Cape Agulhas Lighthouse.

Environmental Monitors

12 Environmental monitors were appointed as from 14 June 2012 on a three-year contract until 31 March 2015. They will assist the Conservation Department with general conservation activities and

duties like the monitoring of indigenous and invasive fauna and flora projects, footpaths, soil erosion and rehabilitation management systems. They are also part of SANPark's social development projects while caring for biodiversity in parks.



New Admin Officer for Agulhas National Park

We are very glad to announce that Jessica Engel from the Elim village has been appointed as the new Admin and HR Officer for Agulhas Park as from the 1st July 2012. Jessica has been the Admin Officer for the Infrastructure Development and Special Projects programme for the last four years and is thus well known to all at the Park, and she to the Park's administrative management.



Agulhas Infrastructure Development

The Infrastructure Development programme of Agulhas Park is progressing well. The Lighthouse Precinct Development's plans are undergoing final scrutinizing by Heritage Western Cape. The public participation process for the Southern Tip Icon structure was distributed via a press release in local newspapers, posting of site notices and letters to identified stakeholders and Interested and Affected Parties. The Park also received the go-ahead for a boardwalk to be built between the Southern Tip and the Lighthouse. A boardwalk from the gravel road between L'Agulhas and Suiderstrand to Rasperpunt fish traps is also on the table. The official entrance gate to the Rest Camp is in the final planning stage. There are plans for Waterford and Ratelrivier in the west, but we will update you with those at a later stage.





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Agulhas National Park – Park Forum

Continued from the June eBulletin.

Principles of stakeholder conduct

All stakeholder participation processes in SANParks will, *inter alia*:

- Define and communicate levels of decision-making and stakeholder involvement.
- Seek to obtain commitment from all stakeholders to a participatory process based on relevance, integrity, mutual respect, transparency and inclusiveness in order to seek the best possible solution.
- Ensure that the process provides the opportunity for input from all stakeholders within reasonable timeframes, emphasising the sharing of information, joint-learning and capacity building.
- Ensure that processes recognise all knowledge, indigenous and ordinary, as well as the diversity of values and opinions that exist between stakeholders.
- Promote participation by stakeholders through timeous and full disclosure of all relevant and appropriate information.
- Provide feedback on the outcome of the process to stakeholders and demonstrate how their inputs have been considered in the decision making process.

Biodiversity Management

To reach the ultimate goal of proper management and the desired state of biodiversity the following objectives were put in place:

1. Functional Ecosystems



Agulhas National Park seeks to maintain and manage the long-term persistence of biodiversity patterns and processes and the continued healthy functioning of the interlinked aquatic systems is seen as a high priority. The wetlands and other fresh water systems on the Agulhas Plain are critically dependent on water quality and quantity of interlinked pans, wetlands, seasonal streams, flow, and interchanges that occur under natural conditions. This programme has interlinked components, i.e. Fresh water quantity and quality, Park related water management, and Rehabilitation focusing on alien plant control. Fresh

water quantity and quality concerns include Extraction of water from aquifers that may have adverse effects on fresh water ecosystems, Activities that will have an impact (mining, farming) on land above the aquifers thereby negatively affecting water quantity and quality, Surface water extraction, and Pollution due to effluent from tourism and residential developments. It is acknowledged that further programmes will have to be developed for other ecosystems. *(to be continued).*

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

Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative launches its next conservation phase

The Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (ABI) officially launched the second phase of its operations on Thursday 7 June 2012. The launch brought key partners in ABI together, from private land users and conservation groups to government departments. The launch took place in Baardskeerdersbos. Through ABI, partners involved in conserving the region's biodiversity can work closely together to strengthen their collective efforts.



The Agulhas Plain and broader Overberg face increasing threats to natural and agricultural land. The region has been labelled a biodiversity hotspot, with many rare, vulnerable and endangered plant and animal species found here, but which have already been impacted on by climate change, invasive alien plants and unsustainable use of resources, among other concerns. ABI will also now involve partners and projects across the entire Overberg area (it had focused on the Agulhas Plain during its first phase). Its new goal is: 'To foster biodiversity through sustainable and integrated socio-cultural, economic and environmental development in the Overberg'. ABI will also now focus on five key themes. These are: integrated land-use planning; nature-based tourism; environmental education, skills and awareness; climate change adaptation; and mitigation and energy for sustainable development. For more information, visit: www.agulhasbiodiversity.co.za.

Sugarbirds, roads and traffic

Traffic noise on our roads has a major influence on sunbirds and their feeding habits. While doing research on the interaction between animals and plants Dr. Sjikr Geerts and Dr. Anton Pauw of the University of Stellenbosch found that traffic noise impacts on the sugarbird's ability to pollinate plants. The Orange-breasted Sunbird *Anthobaphes violacea* and its feeding habits on *Erica* species were studied. The research was done on the road between Pringle Bay and Kleinmond on the Overberg coast. The speeding limit is 100 km per



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hour and the road carries more than 3300 vehicles per day. It was found that the *Erica* specimens that grow along the road were hardly utilized by the sunbirds. The researchers now propose that new roads through conservation areas should be carefully planned. It is especially important within sensitive ecosystems with endemic and threatened plants and where plants and animals are dependent on each other for pollination and food. Read more about this very interesting research at <http://academic.sun.ac.za/botzoo/pauw/index.htm#cv>



Photo: Anton Pauw

(Source: Landbouweekblad, 13/04/2012)

Heritage month Art Exhibition – Agulhas Art Friends

A building can be declared a historic building when it is over sixty years old. If it is worthy of preserving, what about the items which filled the building? We can remember and celebrate them in photographs, art, sculpture, literature, music, constructions, ceramics and fabric work. An art committee, Agulhas Art Friends, is being formed to work with the Agulhas National Park to organize this event. We would like to invite you to take part in an art exhibition in September 2012 in which you can showcase your heritage through a medium of your choice. All are welcome to join in. Watch this space! (Mosie Hope, Artist at Work)



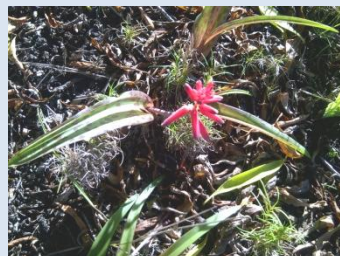
Suurkanol, Suurpypie, *Chasmanthe aethiopica*

The *Suurkanol* is now flowering all over L'Agulhas and Struisbaai. It is a cormous plant with sword-shaped leaves and orange-red flowers. It occurs in dune thicket and elsewhere in damp sheltered places. It shows off beautifully growing through other shrubs and grass.



Rooinaeltjie, *Lachenalia bulbifera*

A bulbous perennial with plain green or blotched lance-shaped leaves, orange to red with darker red or brown markings cylindrical flowers; grow on sandy slopes and flats, mainly along the southwestern Cape coast; flowering now all over L'Agulhas and Struisbaai.



(Source: MUSTART, COWLING, ALBERTYN. 2003. *Southern Overberg SA Wild Flower Guide* 8. Cape Town: Botanical Society.)

The Southernmost Tip secret season

We want to remind the world out there that the Southernmost Tip and its neighbouring surrounds, especially the agricultural landscape of the Rûens and Strandveld, are turning yellow and green, and it has nothing to do with rugby. The winter landscape of the Overberg and the Southernmost Tip with its wonderful warm sunny windless days between the cold fronts makes for exceptional experiences and an ideal time to visit. Visit the website: www.discovercapeagulhas.co.za or the Facebook Page: Discover Cape Agulhas.





Bietou, *Chrysanthemoides monilifera*



Suurlemoen Boegoe, *Agathosma collina*



Slymbos, *Roepera Sp*

Spotted in Agulhas National Park

Western Rockhopper (*Eudyptes chrysocome subsp. chrysocome*) spotted on the 14th January 2012 and recently identified by Sharon Brink. Thanks for informing us of the sighting and providing the photographs.



“Die donkie is ‘n wonderlike ding”

The Afrikaans folk song, directly translated “The donkey is a wonderful thing” is an apt description of the donkey’s true nature.

- The donkey is as much part of the African cultural landscape as man.
- All modern donkeys are descendants of the wild African ass which roamed the desert plains of Ethiopia and Somalia.
- The best known African breeds are Ethiopian, Somali and the familiar grey African donkey.
- There are more than 180 donkey breeds.
- Donkeys are not stubborn, just clever and cannot be forced to do something, you have to negotiate with them.

(To be continued)

(Source: *Landbou Weekblad*, 15 July 2012)



Sunrise over the Strandveld (Photo: Alliston Appel)

Events Calendar

July 2012	
16	Mandela day, Elim
21	“Beesloop” festival, Elim
August 2012	
19	“Kinderfees”, Elim
21	“Kinderfees” picnic, Elim
27	International Tourism day
Mid-August – September: Tourism in my Backyard - Alliston Appel	
September 2012	
HERITAGE MONTH	
12 - 15	Agri Mega, Bredasdorp
17 - 18	“My storie” exhibition, Bosheuwel
22 - 24	Flower Festival, Elim
24	Braai4Heritage, Bosheuwel