



AgulhasNPark eBulletin

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Conservation Management in the Eastern Section – Nickel Fortuin, Section Ranger

Agulhas East is managed by Nickel Fortuin (Section Ranger) and Field Rangers Vincent Newman, Theseville Matheunis, Pam Matshayana and Anele Wambi and are supported by 12 Environmental Monitors. We are stationed in L'Agulhas and our area stretches from L'Agulhas to the Hangnes section in the west. It includes the Cape Agulhas Lighthouse precinct, the Southernmost point, Agulhas Restcamp, Sandberg, Rhenosterkop, the Saltpans, Bosheuwel Precinct, Bergplaas and half of Soetanys Mountain. This section consists mainly of Overberg Sandstone Fynbos, Agulhas Limestone Fynbos, Overberg Dune Strandveld, Elim Ferricrete Fynbos and Cape Inland Salt Pans which includes the important historical Springfield Saltpans.

Urban landscape

The eastern section borders the urban landscape of L'Agulhas, Suiderstrand and Struisbaai which, being an open access park, lends itself to daily patrols to ensure that no illegal activities are happening. As was described by my colleague, Masindi Raselabe, with regards to patrolling, we aim with these patrols to make the public aware of our presence to minimize the impact of illegal activities and by joint patrols with the local authorities. The urban edge also enforces the maintenance of the fire-breaks in this section.



Hiking trails and board walks

Two hiking trails, the Rasperpunt and the Two Oceans, are situated in the eastern section which are maintained on a regular basis by the field rangers and environmental monitors. Two boardwalks, the Southern Tip and Rasperpunt, were built recently and are part of the eastern section's maintenance and patrol programme.

Cultural sites

The eastern section has six very important cultural heritage sites: the Cape Agulhas Lighthouse, the Southernmost Tip, the Rasperpunt fish traps, Lagoon House, Rhenosterkop and the Springfield Saltpans. The Lighthouse and Rhenosterkop are provincial heritage sites; previously known national monuments. Lagoon House and Rhenosterkop were restored to serve as tourist accommodation.



N. Fortuin



V. Newman



T. Matheunis



P. Matshayana



A. Wambi



Environmental monitors



A tribute to Strandveld women: from the past and the present

9th of August is National Women's Day in South Africa. We pay tribute to women who lost their lives in shipwrecks along the Cape Agulhas coast, Katoeka, a legend in her own time, and some women of today.

A piece of black cloth

The Dutch barque, *Juno*, a wooden vessel of 630 tonnes bound from Batavia to Dordrecht (Holland) sank directly under Cape Agulhas Lighthouse on Wednesday afternoon March 3, 1852 in foggy weather. Two women and two children drowned whilst lowering the boats. They were M.S.C. Hageman and her three daughters and A.C.C. Schwaner, born Hancke. The entire vessel broke up within two days. One of the survivors by the name of Lambinon tried to save one of these women by holding onto her dress. Sadly, when he reached land he only had a piece of black material in his hand. This piece of material is safely kept at the Bredasdorp Shipwreck Museum. (From Bredasdorp Shipwreck Museum files)

The Brandfontein "uitgespoelde"

In 1880 Field cornet Hendrik Van As was patrolling the Brandfontein beach on horseback when he saw something floating on the sea towards the coast. As it got nearer he saw that it was a person on a raft. It took some time to get the raft safely on the beach. The person was a wet, cold and injured woman tied onto the raft made of wooden vats. She was taken home where she was revived and cared for for three months. She never spoke a word. She was taken to the Cape and the family never heard anything of her again. Did the ship she was on caught fire and her husband tried to save her by putting her on the raft hoping that she will survive and be found by somebody? This, however, did happen at the same time the ship, the *Bates Family*, wrecked between Cape Agulhas and Quoin Point in September 1880. Wreckage washed ashore a week after she was found.

Katoeka, not only a fictional character in a story

Katoeka (Katriena) Williams is a very prominent character in Dalene Matthee's book *Driftwood (Uitgespoeldes)*. She is, however, not fictional, but was in her lifetime a very visible figure in the Strandveld landscape. She and her husband, Hans, lived to the south of Waskraalvlei. She also lived at one stage in the worker's house at Hangnes. The children from the neighbouring farms arrived at her house regularly for thick slices of home-made bread spread with fat and sugar, *vettambrood* in Afrikaans. Katoeka had the ability to know when she was needed to help to prepare food for a funeral or look after a sick person. She always sang when working and the beautiful song she sang at the grave of her day-old baby is still remembered. Hans played guitar and violin, a good combination, the two of them, but Hans's songs were not always meant for children's ears. Katoeka died on 28 January 1977 at a very old age.

Source: Piet Van As, Springfield;
also read *Golgotha van die Oseane* by Jeannette Grobbelaar.

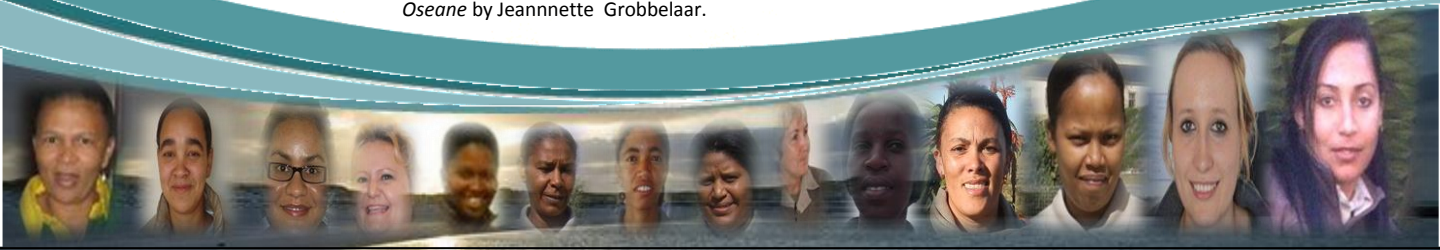
Tannie Raai August, a well-known face at the Bredasdorp Shipwreck Museum

Tannie Raai August is a well-known face to all at the Shipwreck Museum. She is a retired teacher, a member of the Museum's week-end team, member of the Board of Trustees, secretary of the Friends of the Shipwreck Museum and still takes learners on guided tours through the museum. The Shipwreck Museum is housed in the old Independent Church building, founded in the late 1860s, and the rectory next door. The Independent Church closed its doors in the 1870's and the Anglican Church moved in. Tannie Raai completed her St 8 in the 1930s in the Independent Church which was turned into a school by the Anglican Church, before leaving for a College of Education to become a teacher herself. Apart from that, she got married in the Rectory in the 1940s. Tannie Raai is most probably the only person in South Africa who can continue making memories in the same buildings she started off life as a child.



Letitia Stanley: Contractor for Agulhas Working for Water – Patricia Olckers, Bosheuvel Training officer

Letitia started her career as a contractor at Agulhas National Park – Working for Water Project in September 2010 and is pursuing this career for three years now. Letitia is married to Sidney Stanley with three children. In her spare time she does décor for birthday parties and weddings. Letitia loves the outdoors and cannot see herself behind a desk. Her team consists of 12 people from the Struisbaai North area, all with relevant trainings that will equip and empower them to further their own careers. She loves her team and appreciates their willingness and determination. She started with a Ford Courier Vehicle and while working in this project she upgraded to an Isuzu Double cab. She has provided for life insurance and saving accounts for her beneficiaries, as well as for herself. Letitia encourages all to be positive when carving out their own careers. There are difficult times and nice times, but, trust in the Lord and push forward. She thanked management for all the trainings and encouragement. Her last words was: "just stay positive".



Agulhas Working for Water (WfW) Health and Safety Awareness Day – Stanley Engel, Assitant Project Manager

Agulhas Working for Water (WfW) annually organizes a Health and Safety Awareness Day at the Bosheuwel Precinct. On this day all aspects concerning the Health and Safety of the project are evaluated and inspected. All 23 contracting teams consisting of 287 beneficiaries gather with their vehicles and trailers loaded with all their “weapons and protective gear” looking like a small army ready to fight the alien invasion. They are the teams fighting the invasion of alien plants that threaten the biodiversity in the Agulhas National Park. The day is known as *kampie dag* to the workers. The 287 beneficiaries form the heart of the project and their safety in the field or on the road is of the highest priority. This day also forms part of the mentoring and training of the new contracting teams. Each team erects their camp with herbicide and tools to represent the situation in the field. The day’s proceedings are first explained in detail. Personnel from the management team then inspect and evaluate each camp, vehicle, driver, as well as the first aiders and their first aid bags. The spirit of the day is reflected in the competitive nature of the teams when their camps are visited by the officials and the large following of workers. The critique, suggestions and comments going around also helps the interaction of teams and contribute to standards being maintained in the field.

Voëlvlei estuary and Nuwejaars River birding – Dr Wim De Klerk

The Voëlvlei estuary and Nuwejaars River forms part of the SABAP 3435_1950 pentad. Recently seven hours were altogether spent on the Agulhas Plains (Agulhas NP and the Nuwejaars SMA) in perfect weather and 65 species were recorded. Observations included: Southern Pochard, Bruineend, *Netta erythrophthalma*, (initially thinking it was a Macao until the pictures were studied) seen in the area for the first time. Hottentot Teal, Gevlekte Eend, *Anas hottentota*, previously only seen on Soetendalsvlei, now on Voëlvlei as well. Cape Teal, Teeleend, *Anas capensis*; Red-billed Teal, Rooibekeend, *Anas erythrorhyncha*; Cape Shoveler, Kaapse Slopeend, *Anas smithi* and Yellowbilled Duck, Geelbekeend, *Anas undulata*. About 25+ African Swamphen, Grootkoningriethaan, *Porphyrio porphyrio* feeding in the open almost like the Hadedra. There must be hundreds on this vlei. Six Grey Heron, Blouerieer, *Ardea cinerea* feeding in a grain field, catching mice! Far from any water. They have a mice plague in the area. Black Crake, Swartriethaan, *Amaurornis flavirostris*. Red-capped Lark, Rooikoplewerik, *Calandrella cinerea* feeding like Red Bishop, Rooivink, *Euplectes orix* in large numbers, +20 in very small area.



Hendrik Frans team - winner



Ronel Davids team - second

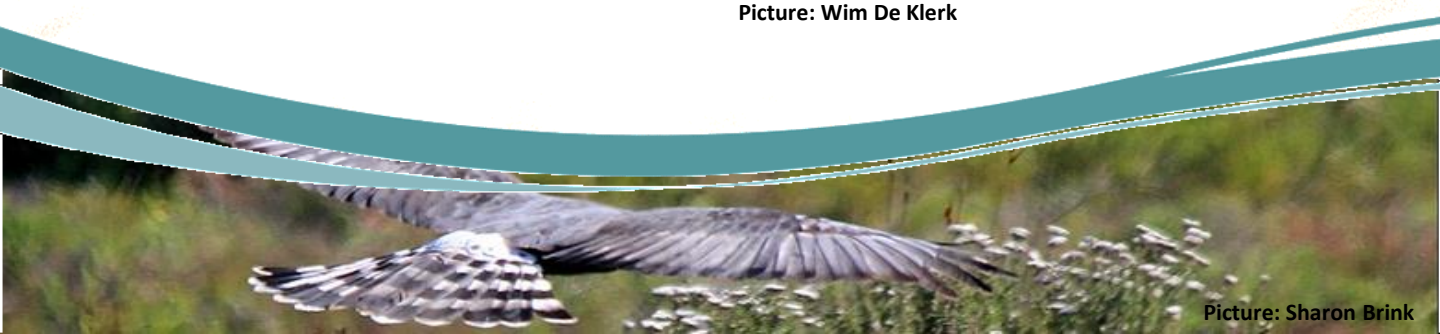


Letitia Stanley team - third

Also Thickbilled Lark, Dikbeklewerik, *Galerida magirostris* and Agulhas Long-billed Lark, Langbeklewerik, *Certhilauda curvirostris*. And then all the normal: African Marsh Harrier, Afrikaanse Paddavereer, *Circus ranivorus*; African Fish Eagle, Visarend, *Haliaeetus vocifer*, etc. seen regularly. Driving back at the end of a wonderful day and, in the Agulhas National Park on the vlei near Soutbosch, something different was noticed. The Greater Flamingo, Grootflamink, *Phoenicopterus ruber* were there in numbers as usual but among them, about 10-15 Lesser Flamingo, Kleinflamink, *Phoenicopterus minor*! Impossible to count accurately because their heads are all submerged! This is the most Lesser Flamingo ever seen in three years of recording the area.



Picture: Wim De Klerk



Picture: Sharon Brink

Cape Floral Kingdom Expo in Bredasdorp – Jan Greyling, AgriPromo

If a kingdom is home to royalty the 6 000² exhibition facility at the Mega Park, Bredasdorp, will soon be transformed into a palace to almost 9 000 species of flora naturally found within the internationally renowned Cape Floral Kingdom biome. To *Revive our Floral Heritage* and to celebrate the arrival of Spring annually in sunny South Africa, the all new Cape Floral Kingdom Expo from Thursday, 29 August to Sunday, 1 September 2013, promise to be an extraordinary explosion of colour and fragrance. The expo will be an ideal meeting venue for stakeholders, role players, participants and passionate nature lovers, who wish to salute the royal floral family within the Cape Floral Kingdom. Cape Floral Kingdom Expo 2013 will make a contribution towards sustainability of the Cape floral heritage. The exhibition will be a platform for networking, exhibitions and interactive activities to enhance co-operation and added value in the floral industry. The kingdom boasts five types of unique vegetation: Fynbos, Renosterveld, the Succulent Karoo, Cape Thicket and Afromontane Forest. Are you a flower enthusiast with wild flowers, birding, landscaping, gardening, protection, cultivation, decoration or just have keen weekend gardening in your veins? Then join a unique Cape Floral Kingdom Expo tour for individuals, couples, stakeholders or families to the expo. E-mail to shandre@agripromo.co.za or call 028 424 1716 right now. Tickets available at Computicket, or at the gates. Visit www.capefloralkingdom.co.za today.



Bloubok *Hippotragus leucophaeus*, the first African mammal to become extinct

The Bloubok, *Hippotragus leucophaeus* or Blue antelope, was never plentiful. It was confined to a restricted area comprising Swellendam, Bredasdorp and Caledon districts. It sadly became extinct in 1799 or 1800 and was the first African mammal known to become extinct. It is today known from mounted specimens in museums in a few European cities and maybe in the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, if it was identified correctly. Francois Le Vaillant travelled for the first time through southern Africa in 1781 to 1783. Even in those days the *Blou bokkie* was not that common. He was therefore very happy when one of his Khoi hunters brought him a specimen of which he made the attached illustration. It was in the area of Soetemelkvallei (Soete-Melk Valley) near Swellendam. He rewarded the hunter: "I began by giving him a large provision of tobacco; and to this present I added some tinder, a tinder-box, and one of my best knives: he immediately made use of the latter, and began to flay the animal with the same dexterity as he had fired." (SOURCE: FRANCOIS LE VAILLANT: Travels into the interior of Africa via the Cape of Good Hope vol 1, translated and edited by Ian Glenn with the assistance of Catherine Lauga Du Plessis and Ian Farlam. 2007. Van Riebeeck Society).



(Painting: Francois Le Vaillant, 1780s)

When birding you can experience some other exciting sightings, even for a birder

A Cape Clawless Otter, Groototter, *Aonyx capensis* crosses the vlei and runs straight at you!



And then, an African Wild Cat, Vaalboskat, *Felis silvestris lybica* crosses the road in front of you and stops to pose for a picture!



Upcoming events

SANParks week-Agulhas: 9-13 September 2013
Black Oystercatcher 1km Braai: 24 September 2013
Elim Wine & Food Celebration: 28 September 2013

SANParks Cape Cluster Agulhas regional award winners for 2013



Best Leadership
Bulelwa Msengi (ANP Park Manager)



Best Customer Service
Elizabeth Graaff (ANP Receptionist)



Best performing business unit: Agulhas BSP



Best performing camp: Agulhas Rest camp

