

AgulhasNPark eBulletin

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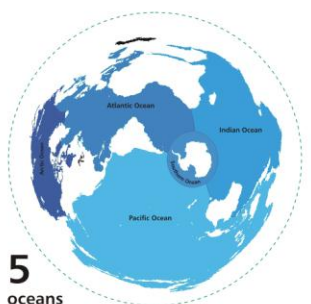
World Environment Day 2014

The UN General Assembly declared 2014 as the International Year of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). World Environment Day (WED) 2014 will be celebrated under the theme of SIDS, with the goal of raising awareness of their unique development challenges and successes regarding a range of environmental problems, including climate change, waste management, unsustainable consumption, degradation of natural resources, and extreme natural disasters. UNEP is also soliciting votes for the 2014 WED slogan through 5 March 2014. The winning slogan will be used to call on the global WED community to take action for islands. The winning slogan is: **"Raise your voice, not the sea level"**. Read more: <http://climate-l.iisd.org/events/world-environment-day-2014/>



World Oceans Day, 8 June

World Oceans Day has been unofficially celebrated every 8 June since its original proposal in 1992 by Canada at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It was officially recognized by the United Nations in 2008. Since then it has been coordinated internationally by The Ocean Project and the World Ocean Network with greater success and global participation each year. World Oceans Day is an annual observation to honour the world's oceans, celebrate the products the ocean provides such as seafood as well as marine life itself for aquariums, pets, and also a time to appreciate its own intrinsic value. The ocean also provides sea-lanes for international trade. Global pollution and over-consumption of fish have resulted in drastically dwindling population of the majority of species. The Ocean Project, working in partnership with the World Ocean Network, has been promoting WOD since 2003 with its network of over 1,600 ocean conservation organizations and others throughout the world. Events performed for WOD and awareness includes beach clean-ups, educational programs, art contests, film festivals and sustainable seafood events. The five major oceans that make up this planet, including the newest 'Southern Ocean', are the Atlantic, the Indian, the Pacific and the Arctic Ocean. (Wikipedia)



The world's oceans

Earth is the only planet that is known to have an ocean (or any large amounts of open liquid water). Saline water covers approximately 72% of the planet's surface ($\sim 3.6 \times 10^8$ km²) and is customarily divided into several principal oceans and smaller seas, with the ocean covering approximately 71% of the Earth's surface. The ocean contains 97% of the Earth's water, and oceanographers have stated that only 5% of the World Ocean has been explored. The total volume is approximately 1.3 billion cubic kilometres (310 million cu mi) with an average depth of 3,682 meters (12,080 ft.). The ocean principally comprises Earth's hydrosphere and therefore is integral to all known life, forms part of the carbon cycle, and influences climate and weather patterns. It is the habitat of

230,000 known species, although much of the oceans depths remain unexplored, and over two million marine species are estimated to exist. The origin of Earth's oceans remains unknown; oceans are believed to have formed in the Hadean period and may have been the impetus for the emergence of life. (Wikipedia)



Aloe season

Now is the time to go aloe watching in the Southern Cape. It is flowering all over on exposed ridges, along main roads, at gates and on farm yards. The Aloe played a huge role in the daily lives of all people living in Southern Africa. The San used the Quiver tree *Aloe dichotoma* to make quivers for their arrows. The Kransaalwyn, *Aloe arborescens* was and still is planted by the Zulu people as a “live” fence for their animals; the remains of these kraals can still be seen today. The Xhosa people use decoctions of *Aloe arborescens* for stomach aches and add it to chicken and cattle drinking water to prevent them from getting sick. When the Europeans came to settle in the 17th century they learn all these different uses of the Aloe from the people living here. Locally people used aloe juice as a pour-on repellent for ticks, flies and other insects. It was also painted on wooden beams and ceilings as a repellent for wood borers. The cultivation of the Bitteraalwyn, *Aloe ferox* started in the 1940s in the Riversdale district. *Aalwyn tap*, an age-old method of tapping the leaf juice, is part of that district’s cultural heritage. Here in the Strandveld the *Kransaalwyn* is seen on most farms where it was planted as hedges for various purposes and is called *Kraal aalwyn*. The gel from split or crushed aloe leaves was used to treat burns and wounds and today it is accepted knowledge that the plant has healing, anti-inflammatory, anti-ulcer, anti-bacterial, anti-cancer and anti-diabetic effects. Aloes are widely planted at entrance gates and in gardens and is truly part of a typical South African landscape and cultural heritage. (SOURCE: *Country Life*, June 2014, p.64-68; SCHWEGLER, M. 2003. *Medicinal and other uses of Southern Overberg fynbos plants*. Gansbaai: M. Schwegler.)



Spotted in the Park



Bosbok, Bushbuck *Tragelaphus scriptus*

Recently a rare sighting of a Bushbuck was picked up by a camera trap in the Ratelrivier section of Agulhas National Park. Its habitat is riverine bush, bush near water from coastal to mountain forest and from sea level to a height of 1800m in South Africa. (SOURCE: STUART, C & T. 2008. *Field guide to mammals of Southern Africa*. Struik Nature.)

Spotted in the Nuwejaars SMA

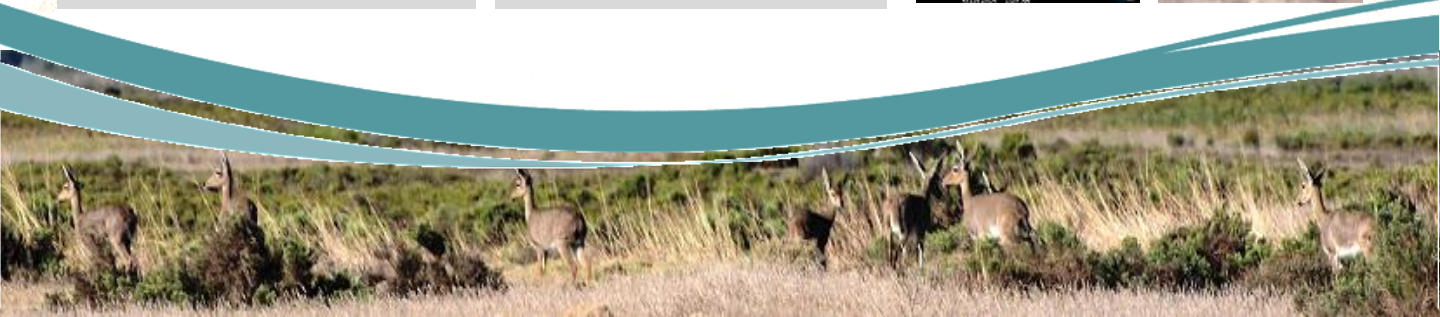


Bosvark, Bush pig *Potamochoerus larvatus*

Neighbouring SMA is also very excited about their rare sighting of a Bush pig with her piglet. Its habitat is forests, dense bush and riverine vegetation and long grass where water is present. (SOURCE: STUART, C & T. 2008. *Field guide to mammals of Southern Africa*. Struik Nature.)

Camera traps

Camera traps are set up to see what animals are moving around during the night in specific areas. It is set in position and takes photos when triggered by movement. The movement sensor is infra red as is the flash and is set to take a burst of three photos and then wait for 30 seconds before it could be triggered again. It is not supposed to disturb the animal. The camera traps in Agulhas also sighted Honey Badgers, Porcupines and Caracals. (Information supplied)



Keeping our Environment clean



BSP Environmental Monitors were appointed at Bosheuwel as from 07 April 2014. Fltr: F. Davids, D. Kortje, K. Ndengane, N. Maart, J. Thompson and C. Moses.



Team C. Josephs busy hand pulling and lopping Australian Myrtle along the road close to Ratelrivier. This alien specie is emerging as a major problem in the Ratelrivier section.

Ratelrivier clearing

Port Jackson Willow, Spider Gum, Long leaved wattle, Rooikrans and Australian Myrtle cleared by Team C. Josephs who received a green card for a job well done.



Pre-clearing



Post-clearing

Australiese mirteboom, Australian myrtle, *Leptospermum laevigatum*

The Australian myrtle was imported for hedges and as wind breaks. The first documented observation was in 1850 in the Witsand plantation near Cape Town. It spread rapidly and can form dense stands after a fire. Today it is a major threat to indigenous fauna and flora as no other plant can grow underneath it and no birds can nest in it. (SOURCE: BROMILOW, C. 2010. *Problem plants and alien weeds of South Africa*. Briza.)

White Koningsprotea, King protea, *Protea cynaroides*



Ratelrivier section, survived the and spotted after the 2009 fire



Rietfontein section



Soetanytsberg

Koningsprotea, King protea, *Protea cynaroides*

This white form of the King protea was spotted mainly on rocky outcrops within Agulhas NP. The flowers are normally pale to deep pink and it grows on moist sandstone slopes of the southern Cape.



Spotted in the Park



Rots agama
Southern Rock Agama
Agama atra



Liewenheersbesie
Lunate Ladybird
Cheilomenes lunata



Bergadder
Berg Adder
Bitis atropos



Algae a possible solution to a worldwide coal dust pollution problem

It seems that science can happen by accident or per chance. At the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth scientists were busy with experiments with algae when algae juice fell on the floor where it soon hardened into a plastic-like substance. The scientists came up with the idea to mix it with coal dust to see what will happen. They found that when the algae are mixed with low-grade coal dust it turns into a high-grade crude oil! This is new technology with huge possibilities and impact: it can help with the huge coal dust pollution problem at coal mines worldwide, reduce South Africa's carbon footprint, water recycling during the coal mining process, restoring degraded mine land through the algae biomass which is seen as the best soil conditioners for future agricultural use and of course, bio-fuel. Read more in the *Landbouweekblad* of 23 May 2014 or contact InnoVenton at InnoVenton@nmmu.ac.za.

Social Science Research Project

A survey is currently being done by Snr People & Conservation Officer Alliston Appel by interviewing BSP beneficiaries to ascertain the social and economic impact of Biodiversity Social Projects (EPWP) on the lives of the community beneficiaries living around Agulhas National Park.



Cycling from the almost most northern point to the southernmost point in Africa

Dion Striekland from the Netherlands cycled from the Komombo temple in Egypt to the Southernmost Tip of Africa in about 5 months. He visited the Cape Agulhas Lighthouse on 15 May 2014.

"We turn space into place through personal experience... Place is imbued with meaning by virtue of experiences we have had there ..." (Yi-Fu Tuan, Geographer)



Welcome to Norman Johnson

We welcome the new Regional General Manager Norman Johnson to the Cape Region. Norman was previously the Park Manager of Addo Elephant National Park.



Farewell to Gary De Kock

We bid farewell to Gary De Kock who took up the position of General Manager, Business Development, Parks Division. We wish him all the best.



Lighthouse Precinct Development

The Lighthouse Precinct Development will soon begin with the removal of the Manitothas *Myoporum tenuifolium* subs *monatum*. This Australian alien has been planted throughout the Cape provinces as a shade tree, a windbreak and an ornamental. CARA (Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act 43 of 1983) grades Manitothas as a category three alien which means mostly ornamental plants. Unwanted plants should be cut down and removed. (SOURCE: BROMILOW, C. 2010. *Problem plants and alien weeds of South Africa*. Briza) The development footprint necessitates the removal of the trees to establish how big the actual area is. It will also be very interesting to see what will emerge since this area was the site where the light keepers kept animals.



Lighthouse grounds pre-1950s



Cape Agulhas Lighthouse snippet

The first optical apparatus was manufactured by *Le Paute* in France. It had no turning movement and consisted of an intricate arrangement of a lens, reflectors and refractors that concentrated the 4 500 candlepower light from a four-wick *Argand* burner, each 100mm in diameter. Initially fat from the tails of the local fat-tailed sheep was rendered in the two fireplaces in the living quarters in the building to supply fuel for the lamp.