

The Sea
Harbinger of eternity,
Time's time-keeper,
She is, in all her vast diversity,
The reflection of man's soul.
(ANON)

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Marine month

www.sanparks.org



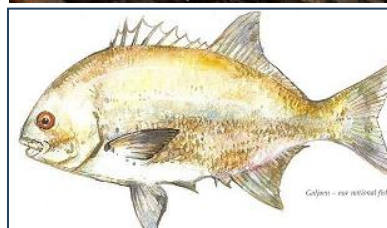
South African
NATIONAL PARKS

National Marine week 2014

The theme for National Marine Week is #OCEANS 70/20 : *Decoding Mysteries, Optimising Opportunities*. The # (hash tag) is used before a keyword or phrase in social media platforms to categorize or classify. This allows for searching or identifying other messages in the same category. The word *Oceans* represents the entire marine environment, from the coast to far offshore, including and beyond our ocean borders or EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone). However, in this context, the word *Oceans* is derived from the first letters of the phrase:

Opportunities for Community and Economy: Advantages from Natural Services.

The two numbers 70/20 have been combined together as a "curiosity factor", to create questions and dialogue, relevant to the marine environment and South Africa. More than 70% of earth's surface is covered by ocean. South Africa is currently celebrating 20 years of freedom as a democratic country. It marks what government has achieved in the last 20 years, but also what is planned over the next 20. *Decoding Mysteries* - The oceans are a mysterious place, unexplored and full of wonder. There are many discoveries waiting to be made – benefits and influences, scientific discoveries and innovations. These mysteries need to be deciphered and uncovered, in order to show ordinary citizens how oceans play a role in their daily lives. *Optimising Opportunities* - The oceans have the potential of being a major driver towards the betterment of South Africans. It is a vast natural resource and as a developing country we need to utilise these resources sustainably to ensure it builds a better South Africa, therefore the word *optimising* instead of *maximising*. It also points to the fact that optimising the use of the oceans for economic development happens in a balanced and environmentally sustainable way. (Supplied by Dr Gavin Maneveldt, UWC)



Monique Rothenberg

Celebrate Our Seas Festival

The annual SOS (Save our Seabirds) Festival has changed format this year and BirdLife South Africa has entered into partnerships with a broad range of marine conservation organisations. To reflect the broader focus of the Festival, we have renamed it the Celebrate Our Seas Festival. The Festival is still part of National Marine Week, this year taking place from 6 to 12 October. There are a lot of exciting events taking place during the week, organised by various partner organisations. Visit www.celebrateourseas.co.za for more information. Bookings have opened for three of the events that BirdLife South Africa is holding as part of the Festival: Monday 6 October: **Opening of the Oceans of Life** Photographic exhibition; Thursday 9 October: **Birds of the South-western Cape and Karoo** talk by Keith Valentine and Friday 10 October: **Changing fortunes: preventing extinctions of iconic seabirds** talk by Ross Wanless. Book at <http://www.quicket.co.za/organisers/427-celebrate-our-seas-festival>.

African Penguin Awareness Day 11 October

African Penguin *Spheniscus demersus*

The African Penguin is the only penguin species to breed in Africa. It is largely confined to the cold waters of the extreme southwest, breeding on scattered islands along the South African and southern Namibian coasts from Bird Island in Algoa Bay westwards. Its distribution coincides roughly with the Benguela Current, a cool, northern flowing, nutrient-rich body of water. The distribution of the birds is further determined by the availability of offshore islands as breeding sites. From roughly four million African Penguins in existence at the beginning of the twentieth century, the population fell to 200,000 in 2000. In September 2010 with only approximately 55,000 left, they were listed in the Red Data Book as endangered. If the decline is not halted the African Penguin is expected to be extinct within 15 years. The main threats to the penguin are man-made: historically by hunting, guano scraping, egg collecting and currently by over-fishing and oil pollution. Many organizations including SANCCOB, Dyer Island Conservation Trust, and the government are working tirelessly to halt the decline of the African Penguin by various measures such as monitoring population trends, hand-rearing and releasing abandoned chicks, setting up artificial nests and proclaiming marine reserves where fishing is prohibited.



Monique Ruthenberg

Boulders penguins

A new sanctuary for the African

Penguin and other seabirds is planned at Gansbaai under the auspices of the Dyer Island Conservation Trust (DICT), Volkswagen SA, Wildlands, Grindrod Bank and the Blue Fund. For more information contact DICT at office@dict.org.za.

(SOURCE: Suidernuus, 19/09/2014)

Bird of the Year 2014 : Tristangrootalbatros, Tristan Albatross, *Diomedea dabbenena*



The Bird of the Year for 2014 is the Tristan Albatross (*Diomedea dabbenena*). The 2013 IUCN Red List reveals that the Tristan Albatross is one of only two global Critically Endangered species that occur in South Africa (including its territorial waters). The Red Listing is a result of the bird's extremely small breeding range (it is essentially a single-island endemic) and an exceptionally rapid projected population decline over three generations (70 years). The Albatross Task Force is one of BirdLife South Africa's flagship projects and the team has done exceptional work, recognised globally, to reduce albatross deaths. Seabirds, particularly albatrosses, are becoming increasingly threatened and at a faster rate globally than any other group of birds; they face a wide variety of threats. Many declines are closely linked to the expansion of commercial long line fisheries in seabird foraging areas and the incredible damage that predatory, introduced mice are doing at Gough Island, which lay waste to around half the chicks produced every season. BirdLife South Africa is collaborating with the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology in tracking juvenile birds. One of them entered South African waters, near Cape Town, and perhaps lucky birders on a pelagic trip could even see this individual in future! The Tristan Albatross will be an ambassador for all albatrosses and other seabirds! (Read more at www.birdlife.org.za.)



Pictures by Sharon Brink, Wim De Klerk and supplied



The mysterious case of one Petrus Gerhardus Lourens *c1779 – Johan Lourens

Genealogy (family research) is like putting a puzzle together without a picture on the box and knowing that not all the pieces are there. Slowly a picture will emerge the more you scratch. However, you will never find all the pieces and every now and again you will come across an ancestor that defies all logic. One such early Strandveld ancestor is Petrus Gerhardus Lourens, son of the *veldkornet* Matthys Johannes *1753 and grandson of Matthys Lourens (aka Rostock) *1708. According to the “father” of genealogy in South Africa, Christoffel de Villiers, Petrus Gerhardus was born in 1779 and married Margaretha Johanna BLOM in Swellendam on 6 April 1800. They had 12 children between 1800 and 1825. He remarried Maria Magdalena TALJAARD on 31 December 1820... or did he? With TALJAARD he had 10 children between 1822 and 1846. After all the well preserved records of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) were perused by several researchers it would appear that Petrus is a bigamist. His last two children from the first marriage overlap with the first two children of the second marriage. Social convention and the church would not allow this. Logic then tells us there is a second Petrus Gerhardus. If so, where does he fit in? Was there another Petrus Gerhardus born around this time? Matthys Rostock had 54 children and grandchildren born in the Strandveld. As the colony was slowly expanding only Cape Town (known then as Tafel Vallei), Stellenbosch, Drakenstein and Swellendam DRC registers had to be scrutinized which was done methodically. No other Petrus Gerhardus was found born or baptized during the time period in question. Two Death Notices, one submitted in the Cape Province, the other in the Orange Free State, were found for a Petrus Gerhardus. Both apparently refer to the same Petrus Gerhardus as names of parents are the same: Matthys Johannes Lourens *1753 and Catharina Johanna SWART. (To be continued)

The Southern Ocean

The Southern Ocean, designated as such in 2000, is a body of water that lies between 60 degrees south latitude and the Antarctica coastline. It's coordinates nominally are 65 00 S, 0 00 E, but the Southern Ocean has the unique distinction of being a large circumpolar body of water totally encircling the continent of Antarctica. This ring of water lies between 60 degrees south latitude and the coast of Antarctica, and encompasses 360 degrees of longitude. The Southern Ocean is now the fourth largest of the world's five oceans (after the Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, and Indian Ocean, but larger than the Arctic Ocean). Some of the current issues include - impacts of global warming, ocean currents, environment and climate change research, fisheries. (Information supplied)



The SHELL, SEALIFE & ART EXPERIENCE at Seashell House, 8 Golf Street L'Agulhas is becoming the 'shell museum' of the area. Visit and enjoy the display of my own and donated collections as well as the amazing shell wall cladding. Yvonne (Mosie) Hope, 082 296 0144.

Kids in Parks 2014



The Kids in Parks programme for 2014 starts on 15 October until 31 October.



Flight for Birders: a bird identification course for novice and intermediate bird-watchers

A "Flight for Birders" bird identification and conservation course by Anton Odendal will be presented at the Community Hall, Mollergren Park, Hermanus on 31 October and 1 November 2014. This course is being presented to raise funds for conservation projects supported by members of BirdLife Overberg. It includes the **development of an African Penguin and seabird rehabilitation centre** at Kleinbaai and the Fynbos birds' research project. Much stronger emphasis is also being placed on conservation issues, in line with the MOU signed between the Overberg division of CapeNature and BirdLife Overberg. A new addition to the course is a section focusing on the differences between the various families of LBJ's and other confusing species, as well as Birds of Prey, and how this applies to the region where the course is being presented. The cost of R 500.00 per participant includes the course manual, a certificate endorsed by BirdLife South Africa and a year's free membership to BirdLife Overberg. The development of an infrastructure for birding tourists in local areas will be highlighted as well as how ordinary bird-watchers could become involved in the conservation of birds and their habitats. Parts of the proceeds will be donated to the mentioned conservation projects. A review of a previous course can be seen at the following link:

http://www.westerncapebirding.co.za/conservation/458/%93flight_for_birders%22_review



Lana Du Toit



Lana Du Toit



Lana Du Toit



Elim Wine & Food Celebration

On 11th October 2014 the Elim Winegrowers present their third Elim Wine & Food Celebration. Besides the top notch wines from Elim and surrounds, visitors at this year's hosting farm, Black Oystercatcher, member of the Nuwejaars Wetland Special Management Area, can tuck into some of the best country food available and mellow out to the sounds of popular local artist Valiant Swart. Wine lovers will be spoilt to taste the wide range of exciting wines from this relatively young wine growing region, known for producing cool climate wines of great elegance and finesse. The participating wineries, Black Oystercatcher, Dâbar, The Giant Periwinkle, Ghost Corner, Jean Daneel Wines, Lomond, Sijnn, Strandveld Vineyards and The Berrio, represent some of Africa's southernmost wineries. Beer lovers will also have the opportunity to sample artisanal ale from Africa's most southerly brewery, Fraser's Folly. Visitors with a love for adventure can look forward to exclusive trail running and mountain biking (14 and 37km) through nature routes that are otherwise inaccessible to the public. The 37km mountain bike race starts at 08h00 (entrance fee R150 for adults and R75 for under 18's, this includes entrance pass to the festival and a wine glass for adults), 14km mountain bike race and trail run starts at 08h30 (entrance fee R100 for adults and R50 for under 18's, this includes entrance pass to the festival and a wine glass for adults). Registration starts at 07h00 and participants can pre-enter via webtickets.co.za. The entrance fee is R75 per person, including a branded wine glass. Tickets are available at www.webtickets.co.za. Entrance for under 18's is free. For more information, call 028 482 1618 or email info@elimwines.co.za. For more information on the event and accommodation options in the area, visit www.elimwines.co.za. Follow 'Elim WineGrowers' on Facebook and be part of the conversation on Twitter @ElimWines.

