



AgulhasNPark eBulletin

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Women's Month

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Women to the fore

On August 9 1956 about 20 000 women, from all walks of life, participated in a march outside the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against exploitation and discrimination during the apartheid era. Programmes such as Violence against Women and others have been established as a result of this march and the determination of women countrywide. On National Women's Day 2000, the Women's Monument at the Union Buildings was unveiled to recognise women's contribution towards gender equity and human rights for all. In many parts of South Africa, women still bear the brunt of extreme poverty, abuse, exploitation, oppression and great suffering. On National Women's Day all women are affirmed, their courage and sacrifices over the ages acknowledged, and their aspirations and achievements applauded. (SOURCE: *Year of Special days 2015*, Sharenet.)

Healing Memories Workshop

Seven beneficiaries of the Agulhas Working for Water and Working for Ecosystems attended a weekend of healing and transformation between May 22 to 24. The *Institute for Healing of Memories South Africa* was founded in 1988 by Father Micheal Lapsley, who lost both hands and an eye in a letter bomb attack in Zimbabwe in 1990. Accompanied by prayers, love and support from around the world, Fr Lapsley began a journey "from victim survivor to victor". The Institute seeks to help others in their journey towards healing and wholeness through the Healing of Memories workshops. Everyone has a story to tell and every story needs to be heard, acknowledged and respected. Together with people from Bredasdorp, Napier and Struisbaai, this was the first step to personal healing as well as healing of interpersonal relationships. It was a response to the emotional, psychological, and spiritual wounds inflicted by human rights, abuses and other traumatic circumstances and events and provided a safe space where individuals could tell their stories in an atmosphere of confidentiality and respect. The workshop was guided by trained facilitators, where they encouraged all to confront issues on an emotional and spiritual, rather than intellectual, level. "We are all in need of healing, because of what we have done, what has been done to us, and what we have failed to do."



A bouquet for all the women working in SANParks. We salute you!!



Connecting to Society

Integrating fire and alien management in ABI-area

The Agulhas Plain has been selected as a pilot site to study how fire- and invasive alien management activities are being integrated. The study will be driven by the FynbosFireHYPERLINK "<http://fynbosfire.org.za/>" Project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Both fynbos and alien vegetation are driven by fire. And while fire is essential to fynbos, it also effectively spreads alien vegetation. Zane Erasmus, consultant for the GEF FynbosFire Project and driver of the study, says it is key to manage fire at the same time as managing alien vegetation. However, he says, there is a perception that fire and invasive alien management is not well integrated. Organisations and programmes, such as the government-driven Working for Water and Working on Fire programmes, work independently of each other, with different strategies and budgets. The study will now aim to better understand the challenges around invasive alien management on the Agulhas Plain, the level and rate of infestation, and some of the eradication programmes already underway here, including the ABI Alien Clearing Project. The study will be completed by the end of the year, when the GEF FynbosFire Project is concluded. For more information on the study and the project visit <http://fynbosfire.org.za/> or contact Zane Erasmus: zane.erasmus@mweb.co.za (SOURCE: *ABI News from the Overberg*, May 2015)



Fire-fighting training

On July 1 and 2 2015 the Agulhas personnel did fire-fighting training at Bosheuvel organised by the Greater Overberg FPA and funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Two staff members of neighbouring Nuwejaars SMA attended as well.

Research projects in Agulhas National Park

Two research projects on fire and fynbos are currently running in Agulhas NP. They are: *The influence of fire on soil properties and soil erosion in Fynbos* and *The influence of wildfire on soil properties and soil erosion rates in Fynbos Parks*.

Cape Floral World Heritage site extended

The Cape Floral Regions, one of eight United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) World Heritage sites in South Africa, has been extended to over a million hectares. Unesco approved the extension on July 3, during the 39th Session of the Unesco's World Heritage Committee in Bonn, Germany. The Cape Floral Region was first listed on the World Heritage List in 2004. The extension brings the size of the World Heritage Site to 1 094 742 hectares, significantly increasing the size of South Africa's internationally-recognised protected areas. The eight areas of the region are located in the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape provinces and are managed by the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency, Cape Nature and the SANParks. They include Table Mountain National Park, the Agulhas Complex, the Langeberg Complex, Anysberg Nature Reserve, the Swartberg Complex, the Baviaanskloof Complex and the Garden Route Complex. The extension also increases the number of protected area clusters making up the Cape Floral Region from eight to 13. The extended Cape Floral Region is one of the richest areas for plants when compared to any similar sized area in the world. It represents less than 0.5% of the area of Africa but is home to nearly 20% of the continent's flora with some 69% of the 9000 identified plant species being endemic to the area. (SOURCE: *News24 Traveller*, 2015-07-04)



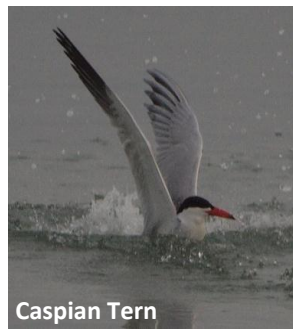
Cape Floral Kingdom Expo, Bredasdorp

World's biggest indoor fynbos expo with the theme *Change Your Point of View*, SA Flower Arrangement Championship and a Peter Chadwick conservation photography exhibition. The Cape Cluster Parks will also be present.

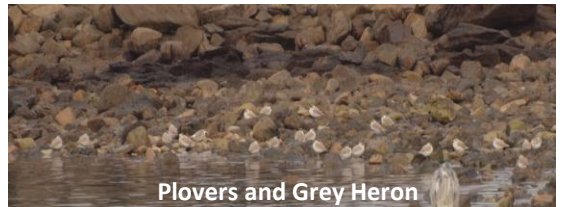


Winter birding in the Agulhas Rest camp - Dr Wim De Klerk

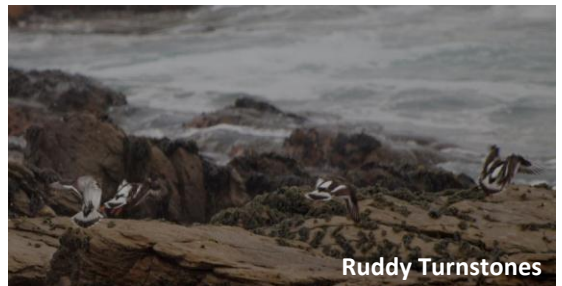
As mentioned in the 2014 Birding report the Agulhas Rest camp was one of the “mybirdpatches” which was not documented yet. The Rest camp falls within the Suiderstrand pentad and on June 27 the Rest camp was visited. Sunbirds were enjoying the little sun there was. A Caspian Tern (Reusesterretjie, *Sterna caspia*) feeding close-up was spectacular and to see the pictures afterwards even more interesting. The speed with which it plunges into the lagoon and then manages to fly out of the water is just special. 32 White-Fronted Plovers (Vaalstrandkiewiet, *Charadrius marginatus*) bundled together behind a Grey Heron (Bloureier, *Ardea cinerea*) were then spotted! This was not seen in the five years of the birding project. You see them two to five perhaps, running on the beach or between rocks but 32 within three square meters? And the Heron? Waiting to feed on them? Then another unanticipated sighting: in the middle of winter – five Ruddy Turnstone (Steenloper, *Arenaria interpres*)!! Proof that some do stay for winter. A Rock Kestrel (Kransvalk, *Falco rupicolus*) was seen real close-up, sitting on a low bush next to the road sun-bathing. 28 species were recorded in about five hours. But what a day, proof of exciting birding opportunities in the Agulhas Rest camp.



Caspian Tern



Plovers and Grey Heron



Ruddy Turnstones

Spotted in the Park and surrounds



Familiar Chat

Gewone Spekvreter
Cercomela familiaris

The first sighting south of the Bredasdorp Mountains!

Martial Eagle

Breëkoparend

Polemaetus bellicosus

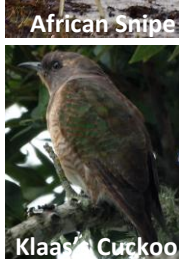
Becoming a common sight in the Agulhas Plains, spotted by Gilbert Reinhardt



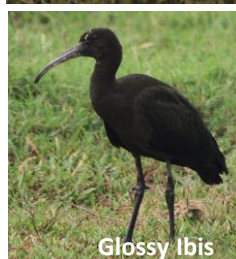
African Snipe



Rock Kestrel



Klaas's Cuckoo



Glossy Ibis



New species for Suiderstrand pentad

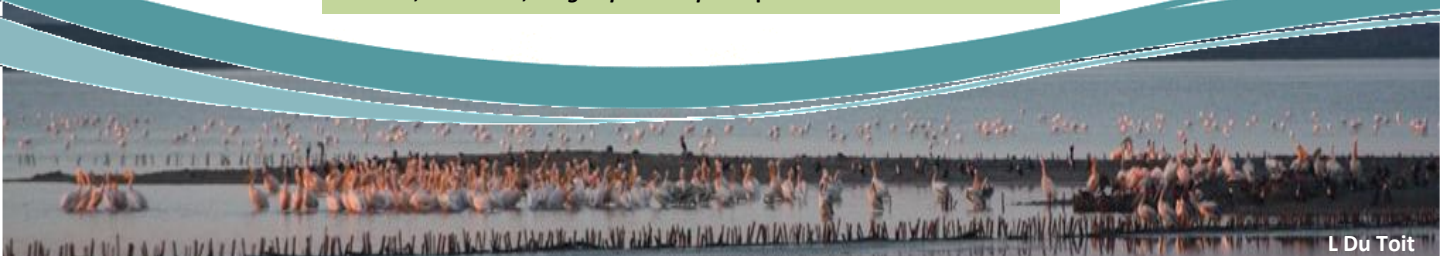
New species added in 2014 includes: Acacia Pied Barbet, Bonthoutkapper, *Tricholaema leucomelas*; African Snipe, Afrikaanse Snip, *Gallinago nigripennis*; Common Tern, Gewone Sterretjie, *Sterna hirundo*; Black-headed Heron, Swartkopreier, *Ardea melanocephala*; Curlew Sandpiper, Krombekstrandloper, *Calidris ferruginea*; Glossy Ibis, Glansibis, *Plegadis falcinellus*; Klaas's Cuckoo, Meitjie, *Chrysococcyx klaas*; Levallant's Cisticola, Vleitinkintkie, *Cisticola tinniens*; Red Knot, Knoet, *Calidris canutus*; Ruff, Kemphaan, *Philomachus pugnax* and Three-banded Plover, Driebandstrandkiewiet, *Charadrius tricollaris* most of which is due to the exceptional water levels of the Rhenosterkop Pan.

Camera traps for Agulhas National Park

Three camera traps donated by the West Rand Region of the SANParks Honorary Rangers were recently handed over to Agulhas National Park. In 2014 the Cape Research Centre (CRC) installed a camera trap in the Rietfontein section as a trial run and some interesting sightings were photographed. These camera traps will be installed in the park which will help to monitor species and provide photographic evidence of their presence. The CRC will assist with the project.

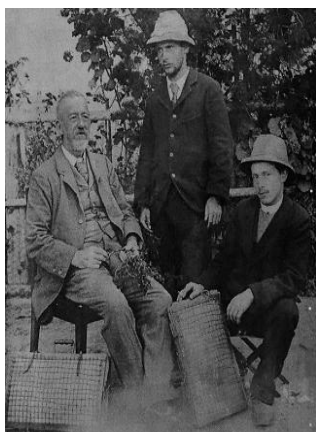


Boshok, Bushbuck, *Tragelaphus scriptus* spotted with trial run in 2014



Intriguing history of Ratelrivier continues

In 1898 William Fletcher bought Ratelrivier from the Van Breda family. The Fletchers were a respected and affluent family and continued their luxurious Cape lifestyle at Ratelrivier. William Fletcher bred race horses and built the impressive stables in 1902. In spite of the wealthy lifestyle the Fletchers were very popular among the locals. There were regular visitors to the farmstead and was a hive of social activities which included hunting parties. The Fletchers had only one son, William Anthony, who died in 1916 during World War 1 in Mesopotamia. Six months later William Fletcher also passed away. Stephen Fry visited Ratelrivier as a child and was much loved by the Fletcher family. Mrs Fletcher asked him to manage the farm after her husband's death. Stephen managed the farm until his death in 1939. Fletcher Fry finally sold Ratelrivier to Clive Corder in 1946. The Corders used Ratelrivier as a holiday farm. (To be continued)



Bolus and Ratelrivier continues

During the 1894 collection trip to Ratelrivier area Harry Bolus collected 14 type-plant specimens in total. His friend, Rudolf Schlechter, collected 18 specimens. Bolus collected mainly in the western part of the Agulhas Plain around Elim and Ratelrivier, while Schlechter ventured further eastwards and collected near the Southern Tip, Rhenosterkop and Brandfontein. In all Bolus collected 40 types and Schlechter 106 on the Agulhas Plain. To date 29 of the 32 species which had been collected inside the boundaries of the Agulhas National Park have again been found. These have Red Data statuses from critically endangered to threatened. At a national and global scale these plants are rare as well as having a **heritage value** within the park. (SOURCE: COWELL, C. 2014. *Critical moments for botany on the Agulhas Plain*. Unpublished).

Mandela Day 2015 a success

Mandela Day came full circle this year when the Agulhas National Park again co-hosted the celebrations of the former President with the Elim community on July 17. When the first Mandela Day was held in 2009 the Agulhas National Park made a presentation at the Elim Heritage Centre and the Elim Home to honour Madiba. After that the Park organised a rotational programme, visiting all the neighbouring communities and spending time and energy to make Mandela Day a success. This year almost all the departments of the ANP, namely Biodeiversity Social Projects, Technical, Conservation and People and Conservation were involved in the programme. The plan was to assist the community in various ways and the BSP participants and contracting teams were divided to focus on certain hotspots and sites. The day started off with a march from the Gansbaai entrance of Elim, down Church Street towards the community hall, followed by a programme of song and dance and an inspirational speech by Thys Ahrends, Assistant BSP Cape Cluster Manager. Different groups conducted alien clearing, general maintenance, working in the flower beds of the town and cleaning up gardens and waterways – and even washing windows at the Elim Home for disabled children and Mispah School for learners with special educational needs.

