



AgulhasNPark eBulletin



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Happy Festive Season at the Southernmost Tip !!

www.sanparks.org



Agulhas National Park sweeps SANParks Cape Region Awards

On October 27 2016 at the SANParks Cape Region Awards held at West Coast National Park, Agulhas National Park brought home eight awards in the following categories: Best Park of the Year, Best Performing Reception of the Year, Best Performing Camp of the Year and five individual Best Performances in the Work place. The function was also attended by CE Mr. Fundisile Mketeni and Exco members



Esterien Wessels receiving the Best Customer Services of the Year Award at Groenkloof on November 18 2016.

Agulhas Rest camp – your ultimate seaside destination at the Southernmost Tip of Africa



Lagoon House from Rasperpunt, Soetanytsberg in the background



Lagoon House from Soetanytsberg



Enjoy safe swimming, rock pooling, explore the pebble beach, the middens and coastal fynbos, angling, walking, hiking the 2Oceans Hiking trail, coastal birding. Also ask about the shipwrecks and history of the Rest camp area.



Connecting to Society

Holidaying at the Lagoon in days gone by – Pieter Albertyn

The annual holiday at the Lagoon was always an adventure. It began with a seven hour mule wagon trip from Zeekoevlei over the dunes. With no refrigeration, the load included a live sheep, a coup of chickens and even a sucking pig for the Christmas table. The pig travelled to the lagoon in a cage on the mule wagon. Next to him were the chicken coop, and the sheep. What a feast for the Christmas table!!!! By the second day little Oink, as he became known, was enjoying the holiday at the sea as much as everyone else. The early morning bath in the lagoon was his favourite. Two days before Christmas, it was decided to go for a good long walk along the coast – an ideal opportunity to do the necessary slaughtering ... Guess what! – Oink led the hike, much to the amusement of one and all. The Christmas meal of mutton and chicken was delicious all the same with the cats, dogs and of course Oink relishing the scraps. Two weeks later Oink, by now everyone's favourite went home with a first class ticket. No cage this time, but lying on a feather mattress, enjoying a regular tickle behind the ear and a good old back scratch!!! Fish and shellfish were always very plentiful. Many a galjoen was caught directly in front of the cottage, while casting from a wagon parked there. Perlemoen and allikruk were collected at random without getting feet wet. Sadly with the advent of 4x4's and coastal roads it all soon became a memory. However, the Lagoon will always remain a paradise, and my wish is that it will be cherished by many people for many years to come.



See we've come too far, we ain't going nowhere! - Rebecca Jempi, Regional Manager Human Resources

Creation backdates from the beginning of time, sustenance of that is our mandate - SANParks

At our little corners, we hustle, pushing the grind, siyafukuza (we're hustling).....a choice we made

All in a day's work, that of a Ranger Corp; patrolling, controlling; caring and sharing;

You see it in their selfless endeavours, zest and zeal drive them – passion for mission.

Whatever the case, whether the oceans meet in Agulhas or Cape point;

Like a flower crack open the tar, as fate decided on its existence;

We have a right to be here; Pink Flamingos here in West Coast dominate their territory;

Why can't I?

Like seasons change when expected to, it's in their nature;

Like fynbos blooming interchanging colours and species, conserving it it's in our nature.

While doing so, we might as well

Be unique, and "hot" find like "Die Tankwa Karoo" van die "Wes" Kaap

Scenic and Sauv  like the Exclusive and Flamboyantly Fabulous Agulhas

Accessible and Graced with the Queen Protea like the White Nosed Bontebok

Be immovable and Dominant, have staying Power and Prominence like the 7th Wonder

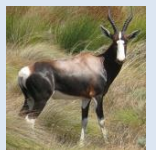
Well, you can Walk it, Jog it, Climb it, take Pic's of it.....oh even Burn it if you must, Table Mountain remain standing.

Remember the "Table Cloth"? If it continuously survives that, what makes you think your arsonistic tendencies will hold?

Years buddy, years came and went and it remains standing flaunting

Fynbos and the works.

(Written in celebration of the Cape Cluster Parks for the 2016 Regional Awards)



Agulhas Kids in Parks (KiP) programme 2016 ending successfully

The Agulhas KiP programme ended very successfully on November 16 with Ouplaas Primary the last school to visit the park this year. For November the following schools took part: Protem (rural school), Okkie Smuts (Stanford), De Heide (Bredasdorp, two groups) and Ouplaas, a rural school to the east of Bredasdorp. In total 11 schools and 503 learners took part. Ms Maria Moate, Manager SANP EE, Groenkloof, visited Agulhas during this last programme. She handed out certificates to the Environmental Monitors for their dedicated work and in facilitating arrangements.



Bird of the Month: African Goshawk, Afrikaanse sperwer, *Accipiter tachiro* – Wim De Klerk

The African Goshawk is a raptor seldom seen in the Agulhas Plain, but probably is more common than anticipated. It is extremely shy and hides away in tall forests below the Soetmuisberg. How do you find this raptor? For six years I have been searching without success until I remembered advice from a fellow birder: wait for a misty morning in a forested area and you will hear it call in the sky. So I studied the call on my Roberts App and waited. Then one day I heard this familiar *krit-krit-krit* call, not immediately placing it with the African Goshawk. The call came from somewhere in the bushes next to me, not from the sky, sounding almost like the Common Quail, but is not. I looked all over seeing nothing. It seemed that the bird was moving in a southern direction. Then it dawned on me and I looked towards the sky! There it was flying high in the sky, projecting its call to the ground and somehow made it sound as if it is on the ground among the nearby bushes! It's pray looks down below while the bird attacks from above! So next time you hear a call similar to the *krit-it-it* of the Common Quail, but it is a slower *krit-krit-krit*, look up, often above the forest canopy, but often very high, you will see African Goshawk!



Spotted on the Agulhas Plain Black Cuckooshrike (female), Swartkatakoeroe, *Campephaga flava*

Spotted by Des Hall on De Mond farms; the first record of this species in the Agulhas Plain, but has been recorded at De Hoop and further north. Also three records to the west of the plain. The Agulhas Plain Birding Project has just reached its 250 species milestone!



Flamingos and Terns at the Saltpans



Caspian Terns are back, spotted by Wim De Klerk

The weekend of November 12 and 13 delivered another feel-good story for the Agulhas Plain. At Springfield Saltpan **43 Caspian Terns** were spotted, some on nests. The Caspian Tern (Reusesterretjie, *Sterna caspia*) has always been around and breeding on the Saltpans, but disappeared after the alien vegetation was removed, leaving them exposed to the dirt road. Last year they started to come back as the natural vegetation recovered and about eight at the most were seen. In February 2016 20 were seen, some breeding. To now see 43 is simply great and hopefully this bodes well for them for the future!

Check out the new Overstrand Bird finder web page at <http://www.westerncapebirding.co.za/overberg/routes.php>.

Birding highlights of one weekend on the Agulhas Plain, November 12 to 13

Voëlvlei: first record of White-faced Duck and Lanner Falcon for SABAP in this pentad. De Mond Waders and Terns: Damara, Little, Sandwich, Caspian Tern, Bar-tailed Godwit, Red Knot, Whimbrel, Ruff, Curlew, Little Stint, Common Ringed Plover, Greenshank. The Spotted Eagle-Owl at the De Mond gate has produced two chicks, despite being attacked by a puff adder! Soetendalsvlei: Hottentot Teal, African Snipe. Altogether 107 species for the weekend. (W. De Klerk)

Monitoring the burnt veld in Waterford



Pictures by Lindsay Lewis, Section Ranger West

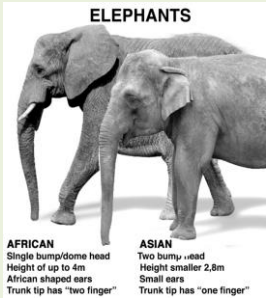


Shipwreck survivors’ encounter with the Overberg elephant 1673-1817 – Jimmy Herbert

This historical record brings to the fore that elephants not only existed in the *Overberg*, but that they were initially here in large numbers. However, after Europeans moved into this part of the Western Cape, their numbers were soon to drop. The *Zoetendaal*, a 448-ton Dutch flute, the first ship recorded to have been lost on Africa's most southern coastline, wrecked in the early hours of September 14 **1673**. The skipper and 40 odd men who survived set off to the Cape and after having walked for only five hours, they came upon a large fresh-water lake. It was in this vicinity that one sailor was trampled to death by an elephant. Not only were they the first recorded shipwreck on our coast, they also discovered Africa’s most southern freshwater lake and were the first to make acquaintance with the Overberg elephant.

In **1682** on June 8, the 550-tonne English East Indiaman *Joanna* foundered on a reef 24km west of *Agulhas*. June 9, the 106 survivors set out on a northwest by north (NWbN) course to the Cape. Not long into their journey, nearing a large swamp, they saw some elephants. At this water source, they saw to the north-west (NW) against a hill three more elephants feeding and to the north (N) three more doing the same. Thus, in 1682 the *Joanna* survivors were the first to come face to face with the Overberg elephant in the *Quoin Point* and *Buffeljagts* area.

On April 19 **1686**, slightly east of *Agulhas*, the 850-ton Portuguese treasure ship, *Nossa Senhora de los Milagros*, ran ashore. The survivors marched towards the Cape and, also near the coastal region of the *Quoin Point* and *Buffeljagts*, while descending a mountain, they saw over 20 elephants. So, clearly in those days, the area around *Quoin Point* was home to herds of elephants - not only the survivors of the *Joanna* in 1682 saw elephants, but those from the *Nossa Senhora de los Milagros* also reported seeing these monstrosities in this region four years later. The Siamese survivors from the latter wreck, knowledgeable about the Asian elephants, mentioned that these elephants in the Overberg were a lot smaller than theirs. (To be continued)



Reconcile with our slave past

Well-known writer and historian Dr Dan Sleigh is the guest speaker at the *Afrikaanse Taalmuseum en -monument* (ATM) in Paarl’s celebration in commemoration of slave emancipation on Saturday December 3, 2016. The theme of the event is “Reconcile with our slave past”. According to Michael Jonas, Director of the ATM, the aim of the celebration is to commemorate the legacy of the slaves in South African culture and environment. Jonas says slavery is not exclusive to South Africa but a worldwide phenomenon already practised in Biblical times. He points out that slavery has had a profound effect on the economic and cultural development of society and that many of the socio-economic and racial identity issues South Africans struggle with today have their origins in slavery. In December Reconciliation Day is also celebrated. All South Africans are being called upon to reconcile with the country’s history, including the slave heritage. Between 1658 and 1808, 63 000 slaves were imported to the Cape from the East as well as from other parts of Africa. These diverse origins led to the establishment of a unique and diverse slave population and their important contribution to language and cultural development at the Cape. An important present-day concern is that, although slavery is officially illegal in all countries, there are more slaves today than ever before in history. During the four centuries of slavery, about 13 million people were exported from Africa. Today there are an estimated 27 million slaves – people who are forced to work for no pay, who are locked up and are controlled through violence. For more information contact Carlo Joshua at 021 872 3441 or erf.assist@taalmuseum.co.za or Isabeau Botha, 021 863 0543/4809 or bemarking@taalmuseum.co.za. (SOURCE: Die Afrikaanse Taalmuseum en – monument, 11/11/2016).



Elim Slave Monument



**Visit Elim Heritage Centre for more information on
Slave history and heritage.**



Surfing in L’Agulhas

Festivities at the Southernmost Tip

Strandveld Vineyards annual Trail run and Bubbly Breakfast

Join winemaker Conrad Vlok of Strandveld Vineyards for the annual Strandveld Trail run, followed by a *Méthode Cap Classique* breakfast on December 29 at Strandveld Vineyards. Enjoy a scenic 15km trail through vineyards, fynbos and pastures along the jeep track onto Sandberg to enjoy breath-taking views of the Agulhas Basin, with wetlands, wheat fields and the surrounding coastline. The non-competitive eight km vineyard walk is mainly on a jeep track and gravel road taking you around vineyards, through grazing pastures and fynbos, with the highlight being the beautiful view from the water point at the weather station of the Agulhas Plain and surrounds. Otherwise, there is a shortcut on this route and you can just do a gentle 4½km walk. Sunblock and insect repellent are essential to bring along. Prizes will be awarded to the first three male and first three female finishers of the 15km. Registration starts at 06:30 and the run starts at 07:00. Pre-booking your spot for the day is essential as only a limited number of tickets are available. Contact Jackie Rabe at jackie@strandveld.co.za or 028-4821902 during office hours for more information.



Black Oystercatcher Wine Farm, adding new activities to their holiday programme

16 December 2016:

Black Oystercatcher Beer Festival

26 - 28 December 2016:

Tip of Africa SOS Festival (Sauvignon Blanc, Oysters and Stout, at the Black Oystercatcher Wine Farm).

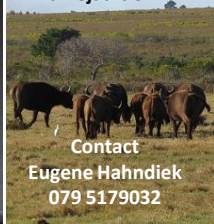
For more info on both festivals, visit: www.blackoystercatcher.co.za or Tel. 028 482 1618.



To explore the Nuwejaars SMA



Caught on camera in the Nuwejaars SMA



Contact
Eugene Hahndiek
079 5179032



Struisbaai Harbour during Super Moon on the evening of November 14; picture by Esna Swart



Cape Agulhas Tourism Activities

Visit www.xplorio.com/regions/cape-agulhas for activities planned for the festive season at the Southernmost Tip!

Upgrade of 1,2km coastal road and construction of the Southern Tip Icon now a reality

The two contractors for the upgrade of 1,2km coastal road from the Lighthouse to the Southern Tip and construction of the Southern Tip Icon have been appointed. The site handover was on November 22 2016 and it is planned to start construction middle January 2017.



**FLIGHT FOR BIRDERS course, Fernkloof Nature Reserve Hall, Hermanus
4 & 5 March 2017, www.westerncapebirding.co.za**

