



AgulhasNPark eBulletin

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Heritage & Tourism Month

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South African
NATIONAL PARKS

Heritage Month 2019

September marks the annual Heritage and Tourism Month in South Africa. Different aspects of South African culture, tangible and intangible, are recognised through creative expression such as music and performances, our historical inheritance, language, the food we eat as well as the popular memory. The Agulhas National Park is celebrating its and your heritage at the Southernmost Tip of Africa with a month-long programme of activities. The Park was officially proclaimed on September 23, 1999 and will celebrate its 20 years of conservation at the Southernmost Tip of Africa during September.

20 Years Birthday Bash: Agulhas Birding day, 7 September 2019

Agulhas National Park at the southernmost tip of the African continent is truly a nature-lover's and birder's paradise with 270 bird species recorded in the area. The Park includes a large variety of habitats; from critically endangered Central Rûens Shale Renosterveld to Cape Inland Salt Pans, Indian and Atlantic Ocean Coastal shores, Wetlands and restored agricultural fields covering almost 22,000 hectares – each bringing its own unique bird species, including many endemics such as the rare Hottentot Buttonquail. A day of birding is planned for September 7. The meeting place is at Southbosch. Please contact Klaas and Linda Steyn at agulhashrbirding@gmail.com or 082-320-1198 for more information.



Greater Flamingos at the Saltpans (S. Brink)



M. Hope



20 Years Birthday Bash: Coastal Clean-up, 14 September 2019

Plastic trash is a serious problem for our oceans and especially all the animals that call it home. Join Agulhas National Park and Plastics SA in a clean-up of the Spookdraai to Rasperpunt coast (8,5km) from 09:00; you decide which part you want to do some coastal-cleaning. Gather at the Southernmost Tip at 12:00 with your bags for a group photo. Collect the bags at the Park office on September 13.

20 Years Birthday Bash: Relay Race, 21 September 2019

On September 14, 1998 SANParks purchased 4ha of land at the Southernmost Tip of the African Continent to establish a national park. The park was officially declared on **September 23, 1999** in the Government Gazette as GN 1135. Today the park stretches over 21 971.0161 ha of land. A Relay Race, cycling and running, has been organised; the cycling event is over 40km and the running over 14km. Registration is at 6:00 and the starting time is 8:00 at the Bosheuvel Precinct on the Elim road. Please register before September 9. Other activities are stalls, birding, walking, eating, canoeing, horse cart riding and a shorter route for cycling. **Please enquire about the stalls.** Braai spots are also available, but bring own wood, grid and meat. The activities start at 9:00 until 17:00. For more information please contact Emmerentia De Kock and Alliston Appel at 028-4356078 during office hours.



Twenty years on: how the Agulhas National Park has developed

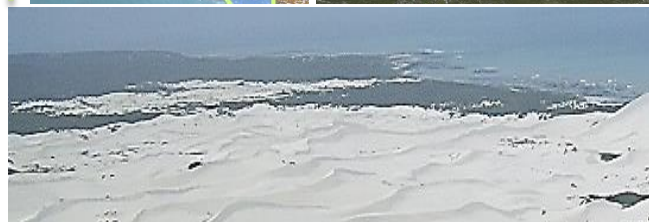
2013

Rest camp Gate guards were appointed in February and the Reception was upgraded. The Lighthouse and Rasperpunt boardwalks were launched in August. The Agulhas Rest camp won the 2013 Best performing camp in the SANParks Cape Cluster. The Junior Ranger programme commenced with 18 learners. After 15 months of extensive restoration work, the Lighthouse building opened on December 10, 2013. The upgrading and renovations of the Bosheuvel office complex started in November. The Agulhas Working for Wetlands took the first place for the Best Project Award for year 2012/13. A Technical manager was appointed in December.



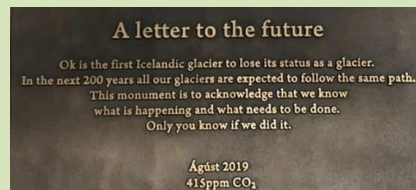
2014

Jeffrey land portions to the west of the Agulhas Rest camp were bought and donated in 2014. Park land was consolidated and linked with Rhenosterkop area and included a portion of the Agulhas dune fields with very important archaeological sites.



Climate depression: when you see the earth dying around you

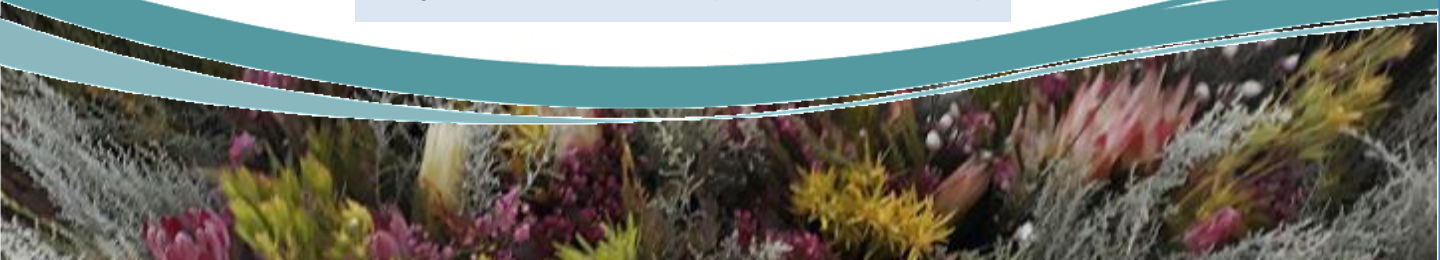
The climate crises or *omgewingsangs* is being described by some people as a vague unease about the changes in nature that they become aware of. Other people talk about a deep sadness, anxiety and anger, feelings of hopelessness and powerlessness. When the rain stays away, when it is so hot on the coast where you live, when the whales and the sharks stay away, when there is all of a sudden a bird in your garden you have never seen before, when the tides are exceptionally high and eat away at the beach ... Ever thought of the individuals that are researching this subject and who come face to face on a daily basis with the reality of it? Prof Wendy Foden was recently appointed as the manager of SANParks Cape Research Centre. In the early 2000s, Wendy's survey of 6000 quiver trees across a range of 2000km, drew the world's attention as one of the first concrete examples of climate change impacts on the world. More than a decade later the quiver trees' slow progression from the hot northern region of Southern Africa to the slightly cooler south is still being followed. Climate change always seemed to be something that was going to happen far into the future. But in 2016, the Bramble Cay melomys became the first mammal extinction directly due to human-induced climate change. This small rodent, endemic to a small coral island located at the northern tip of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, disappeared after 2009 following a rise in the sea level and increasingly severe storms that sent waves right over the island. Twenty years ago everybody was talking about it when individual examples of climate change impacts were found. Today, however, there are so many examples that it is often not reported on unless something spectacular happens, such as 23 000 fruit bats literally falling dead out of the sky after an intense heat wave, again in Australia. (To be continued) (SOURCE: *Climate grief: when hope (doesn't) spring eternal* by Wiida Fourie; the article first appeared on the South African science news website, Scibraai, and was made possible with funding from the Royal Society of South Africa.)



Agulhas Park Management Plan under review

At present Park Management and Researchers are busy reviewing Agulhas NP's management plan for the next 10 years. A Climate Change Programme became an unavoidable addition to the plan. The purpose of the programme is to recognize and understand climate change impacts in the park and their cascading consequences on biodiversity and park operations. Climate change impacts are not only realised through changes in long-term averages, but also through an increase in extreme events such as storm surges, wildfires, droughts and floods. Park management options under predicted climate change scenarios need to be assessed to ensure effective adaptation and mitigation strategies are developed and implemented. Key to the success of this programme will be the development and implementation of SANParks' Climate Change Preparedness Strategy which is aligned to international and national initiatives. (SANParks Cape Science Research Centre)

Xoub/gu/khab in Khoe means diarrhea moon (abundance of milk causes diarrhea)



Randall Smith, former Environmental Monitor

Randall Smith was one of the first Environmental Monitors appointees in 2012. He soon excelled and after three years applied for a position as an Environmental Assistant with Denel Overberg Test Range. Randall is a keen runner and takes part in various running events. He decided to plough back his experiences into youth activities and started training a small group of learners from Albert Myburgh High School and De Heide Primary School. They now also take part in various running events, for example the past Zoetendal Trail Run where they made a clean sweep of the first five positions in the 5km run. Randall himself won the 10km trail run. They went to Paarl on August 17 to take part in the Boland championships where two athletes from De Heide won to take part in the Western Cape championships on August 31.



The Migrants are on their way!

It is that time of the year. The migrants are coming. The Agulhas Plain has 37 non-breeding Palearctic migrants visiting from September until March. Many of these species have juveniles that over-winter in the Agulhas Plain, but the mass influx will start within the next few weeks! Here are a few of them.



Bandstertgriet
Limosa lapponica



Steenloper
Arenaria interpres



Bosruiter
Tringa glareola



Kleinstrandloper
Calidris minuta



Europese swael
Hirundo rustica



Blouwangbyvreter
Merops persicus

Bank Cormorant, Bankduiker, *Phalacrocorax neglectus*



W. De Klerk

The Bank Cormorant is endemic to southern Africa and listed as endangered by the IUCN red list of threatened species. Data from the Animal Demography Unit at the University of Cape Town shows that they are breeding from Hollamsbird Island, Namibia to Quoin Rock, South Africa. The non-breeding range extends further north from Hoanib estuary in northern Namibia to Die Walle in the Western Cape. They seldom range further than 10km offshore and their distribution roughly matches that of kelp (*Ecklonia maxima*) beds. The Agulhas NP is important as it is on the border of their breeding distribution range. Sightings and recordings to the east of Quoin Point by Wim de Klerk of the Agulhas Plain Birding project is very exciting and SANParks scientists added Bank Cormorants to the list of species of special concern. The Agulhas Plain Birding Project is very valuable in assisting scientists with up to date recordings and confirmation of bird species in Agulhas NP. (Information provided by Marna Herbst, Regional Ecologist, Cape Research Centre)

Storm Water Drain Net: an ingenious method to collect pollution from storm water drains

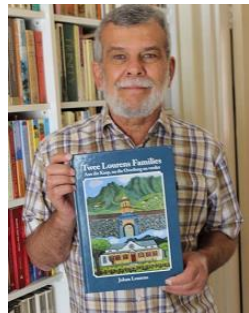
Inspired by a project in Australia, Wilfred Chivell of Marine Dynamics Tours and founder of the Dyer Island Conservation Trust, realised the need for a net system over the storm water drain outlets in Gansbaai. The first identified site was Gansbaai Harbour, an area notorious for plastic pollution and a prime spot to test the efficacy of such a net and attachment design. The nets are designed to prevent pollutants and solid waste, carried by storm water from the local road network, from flowing into the marine environment. The first net design was sponsored by Marine Dynamics, and project leaders Hennie Otto (Marine Dynamics) and Benjamin Kondokter of the Overstrand Municipality placed the net on World Oceans Day June 8. It was tested during a rainstorm but tore due to a design flaw in the oyster net used. Wilfred and Hennie then approached Ian Wessels of Wildegans Fishery who kindly donated the sardine purse seine net and stitching work required and this was placed on Plastic Bag Free Day July 3. It is hoped that through this project the impact on marine life will be minimised by reducing the amount of waste entering the marine system. Unfortunately, most of the waste will probably not be suitable for recycling, but this will be done where possible. Storm water drain pollution is a world-wide problem and the dream is to roll out the project throughout the Overstrand and the rest of South Africa. Read more in the October eBulletin, October being Marine month. (Brenda du Toit, Public Relations, Marine Dynamics)



© Hennie Otto, Marine Dynamics

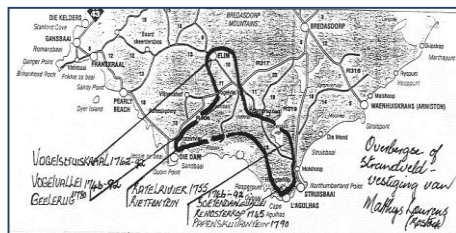


Drietostrandloper, *Calidris alba*



Johan Lourens book launch

On September 28 *Twee Lourens Families: aan die Kaap, na die Overberg en verder* by Johan Lourens will be launched at the *Suiderlig Dienssentrum* in Struisbaai. This formidable work is a welcome addition to the documenting of the Strandveld's cultural history. For more information contact Johan Lourens at joanlourens2309@gmail.com or Emmerentia De Kock at emme.dekock@sanparks.org.



Matthys Rostok Lourens and off-spring grazing land from middle 1740s to the 1790s

Borderer (1868) ship, discovery and two recorded salvages dives – Jimmy Herbert

The *Borderer* (1868), was a British iron ship of 1062 tons, on a return voyage from Penang (Indonesia) to the United Kingdom with a general cargo of rum, tin, rattans, pepper, hides, shells, horns, sugar and more, it struck the outer blinder of Struispunt on October 27, 1868 at around 4pm and sank about 15 to 20 minutes later. In 1984 and 116 years after the sinking of the *Borderer*, she was rediscovered for a second time by a group of eight divers – Aqua Exploration. The vessel was pinpointed close to two kilometres southwest of the outer blinder of Struispunt, upright in 42 metres of water with her keel well settled into the fine sand. After discovery, it took two weeks of diving before the first pair of tin ingots were discovered and brought to the surface. The following is a typical dive as recorded in the *Dive Report Book – 1988*: "... I never saw so much wood on a wreck before. Lots of planks from packing cases, crates, and barrels lying around, mostly still in perfect condition ... Also found were rhino-horn, some unbroken bottles, lots of jumbo shells (part of cargo) and bricks from the galley, some in perfect condition. My first dive in a hot-water suit proved to be an amazing experience ... Our job was to move the already loosened bars to a central position and stack them in rows of six. We stacked 29 ingots ... the other divers had been pumping deep holes all over the place. We did a 45-minute dive in perfect conditions with clean, clear water on the bottom ... Apart from stacking tin, we recovered five large shells (cargo) and a fire-brick from the galley ... As soon as the last two divers were out of the water and in the decompression chamber, we cast off and left for Struisbaai". During the last month of salvage in August 1993, the sand covering the *Borderer* had been pumped out down to hull level – more than four metres down. The project was concluded as a "job well done!"



Heritage & Tourism month important dates

National Arbour Week,	2 – 6 September
SANParks Week,	9 – 13 September
International Literacy Day,	8 September
National Coastal Clean-up Day,	21 September
Recycling Day SA,	18 September
World Rhino Day,	22 September
Agulhas NP birthday,	23 September
Heritage Day,	24 September
Tourism Day,	27 September

Elim Heritage Festival, 27 – 29 September 2019

Floral Exhibition in the Moravian Church; Trips to Geelkop Nature Reserve by horse and cart; Wide selection of stalls; Entertainment for children and adults; Cultural Exhibition in the church and the local *Blommestoor*; Mr & Ms Heritage; Visual Exhibition in the Elim Heritage Museum and more..... Contact Amanda Cloete at 082 678 0450 or Martin Salies at 063 865 6327 for more information



Bontebok National Park Birding Weekend



Date: 18 – 20 October 2019
Time: 17:00 onwards
Venue: Bontebok National Park
Contact: Anton Swanepoel
079 888 7559
bontebokhr@gmail.com

Erica elemensis
Leucadendron elimense sp elimense



1820s



2008