

Bries Breeze

June 2001

Rooi Els Ratepayers Association

PO Box 89 Betty's Bay 7141

Redaksioneel Editorial

*... and the mouths of the rivers
sing into the sea
and the sea remembers
and sings back
from the depths
where nothing is forgotten...*

Almal van ons wat Rooi Els toe kom geniet die berge en die fynbos, maar die oorwegende rede waarom ons hier kom woon is sekerlik die see. Die oseaan met haar wisselende buie het die mens al eeue lank betower en digters geïnspireer. Ons bekyk die see van nader in dié Bries.

Early one morning while jogging in Oudshoorn (during the arts festival there) I noticed how the Karoo landscape and vegetation ends at the perimeter of the town (with its large trees, lawns, etc). I thought how different things are in Rooi Els. Here we live in a biosphere and instead of destroying the indigenous vegetation and altering the landscape, we conserve and celebrate it; we work together to look after the fynbos and the creatures that live in it. Look around you at how many Rooielsers re-establish fynbos on their erven after damage was caused due to building. I feel lucky to live here and proud of our town's sensitivity to the natural beauty of the biosphere.

Hier waar die fisante soggens om ons huise kos soek en die otters snags in die donker see vir mekaar fluit, is ons ver weg van die misdaad en probleme van die stad. In vergelyking met stads-voorsorgmaatreëls teen inbraak, is die ongerief van "oë oop hou vir die bobbejane" 'n soms lastige maar kleiner probleem - Bobbejane vat net kos en gebruik nooit gewere nie. Op die dae wat hulle in die dorp is, is dit hoogstens een of twee ure wat hulle in 'n spesifieke area eet. Daarna kan mens weer deure oop maak.

In our territorial tussles with the baboons they often outwit us. Creative solutions in keeping the baboons at bay abound, though. Paddy Main keeps her back door ajar for her dog and hangs a string of fluttering plastic bags in the door's opening. Her dog knows he can go in and out but baboons seem to see it as solid and don't enter.

Stel mens jou sintuie fyn in op wat in jou omgewing aangaan, sien jy nie net die arende wat verby sweef, 'n walvis in die baai of 'n skugter bokkie in jou tuin nie, maar jy hoor ook dikwels, aan die honde se geblaf, as die bobbejane kom kos soek.

**Our Vision.....
An ecologically
well balanced area
Where man and
nature
thrive in harmony**

From the Chair

From the chair is being written this time at 35 thousand feet *en route* to Cape Town after a few days in the city of gold, saying good bye to a family member, who, (after having her house emptied for the third time and car stolen), has decided to seek a safer place to raise her young family. After seeing all the high walls, spiked fences, electric fences, razor wire, hearing sirens screaming, and 24 hour security guards in all buildings etc - it all makes one really appreciate our little bit of heaven at the sea. Please let us keep Rooi Els as it is, and was intended to be.

The Rooi Els Vision evolved from the hearts and desires of the vast majority of property owners. This little spot in the Biosphere, has only been lent to us Let us use our vision to preserve Rooi Els for the generations to follow.

Now that the dust is settling after the elections, and with our incorporation into the Overstrand, RERA has had two working suppers with our new councillor for Ward 8, Marilyn van Rensberg. Your EXCO is very impressed with her quick perception of our ideas and problems, and her cheerful nature and straight talking. Well done Marilyn, we are very pleased to have you as our councillor.

Basil Moss
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ROOI ELS SPEED LIMIT

- 20km an hour for cars
- 10km " for pedestrians
- 12km " for baboons
- 5km " for tortoises
- 75km " for the South Easter (Rory Price has yet to ticket the 80+ km an hour South Easter.)

PORTFOLIO REPORTS

Hacks

We have had regular monthly hacks since February and they have been well attended, even on rainy days. We have been clearing the areas close to the nature reserve to prevent any further infestation in the reserve itself. We will be moving from the less infected areas to the more infected areas (as suggested by Craig Spencer.) The southern part of Rooi Els has been largely cleared of invasive aliens. Although the public open space in "Klein" Rooi Els, is really the municipality's responsibility, we might have to tackle this problem-area ourselves soon.

Natuurbewaring

Die Rooi Els Natuureservaat is weer skoongemaak van indringerplante. Die mense wat om die reservaat woon word gevra om te help om die indringerplante hok te slaan. Ons wil die fynbos by die seetoegang voor erf 214 rehabiliteer en het reeds met aanvoerwerk begin. Verskeie Rooielsers soos die Du Toits en Raymonds doen uitstekende werk om versteurde

areas te rehabiliteer en die fynbos te herwin. So word sowel stof as erosie bekamp. Aangesien sommige Rooielsers, as nuwe intrekkers, verkeerde inligting kry oor tuinmaak op Rooi Els, word 'n brief aan nuwe eienaars gerig om hulle raad te gee oor wat goed hier groei en ook omgewingsvriendelik is. Dit is aan al die eiendoms agente gegee ter insae vir nuwe grondeienaars.

Roads

Upon receipt of complaints Basil Moss liases with the municipality's Mike Bartman, who then fills the potholes. Innovative ways to remedy the sharp stone surface of sections of Ocean View and Porter Drive are being investigated. Basil has asked the municipality to investigate the chemical compound used on farm roads in the Grabouw district, to set the sand coverings (that normally blow off in Rooi Els). It will be tested to see how environmentally friendly it is.

Basil has given the scruffy looking trailer (at the entrance) a facelift with a neutral green paint.

Paint that prevents graffiti from sticking to it is being investigated by us, for possible use on the retaining wall on Clarence Drive. The provincial authorities are most interested as graffiti cleanups are very expensive.

REDUCE
RE-USE
RECYCLE



Die Rooi Els Breeze

This is the second issue of the Rooi Breeze this year. Our objectives with the Breeze is to inform you about what is happening in the Biosphere and Rooi Els in particular. We also want to raise awareness around environmental issues, (often with some levity.) Lastly, we want to share the pleasure of living and visiting here, "in this bit of heaven", as our chairman puts it.

IN CASE OF FIRE

We last sent out a local map, with the exact markings where the fire hydrants are, in 1998, (with the Breeze). There is now also a map posted on the RERA notice board. Basil Moss inspected the fire hoses and equipment last time. In case of fire the equipment would be used by the municipal team, led by Carl Muller, who lives in Betty's Bay.

We are organising a fire drill in August/September in order to familiarise everyone with what should be done in case of fire.



Living in a Biosphere

Transition zone of the Biosphere

Rooi Els is in the transition zone of the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve, along with the other coastal towns of Hangklip-Kleinmond. The transition zones have a high conservation value, especially since several species, habitats, etc. are only found within these areas, such as the dune systems, estuaries, wetlands, vleis, rare plants and coastal birds. Aside from the ecological significance of the buffer zones, several important archaeological treasures are found within the residential areas and must be conserved.

It is furthermore vitally important to the functioning of the Biosphere Reserve that the inhabitants are actively involved in the day-to-day management of the biosphere. Involvement in management includes:

- ❖ limiting water wastage; removing aggressive alien plants from your gardens,
- ❖ preventing wild animals from raiding your refuse, etc.,
- ❖ doing as little damage as possible to the environment and landscape,
- ❖ and just accepting responsibility for the environment.

Through this involvement, a sense of ownership and pride for your local environment develops.
Craig Spencer

DIE MELKHOUTBOOM

Die Melkhoutboom is feitlik 'n ekosisteem op sy eie en bied skuing en kos vir 'n verskeidenheid van diere. Die blomme het 'n kenmerkende geur wat insekte lok. Die ryp pers swart eetbare vrugte is 'n gesogte kossoort vir voëls en bobbejane. Die naam is afkomstig van die melkagte sap in die bas en vrugte. In tradisionele volksmedisyne word 'n aftreksel van die bas as teenmiddel vir nagmerries gebruik. Melkhout-bome word deur wetgewing beskerm en mag nie sonder 'n permit beskuldig of versteur word nie.

Bron: Kaap Natuurbewaring

Finding indigenous plants suitable for planting in the buffer zone of the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve

As most of us know, Rooi Els is situated in the buffer zone of the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. This is the heart of the Cape Floral Kingdom and a botanical treasure-house of extraordinary beauty and biodiversity. Should those of us with fynbos growing around and between our houses manage it in such a way that we play a part in the preservation of this treasure?

Tony Hall in the March 2001 issue of the Breeze wrote of the need to find a way of renewing the fynbos without benefit of the burn so badly needed in our Rooi Els

gardens. Few of us have as yet used the smoke-solution techniques of germinating seeds, currently being developed at Kirstenbosch, but it is very good news indeed that it is possible to spray the soil with a magical solution of smokey water with the purpose of facilitating the germination of seeds.

However, many of us visit nurseries to buy plants to fill in spaces degraded by building operations, left bare after the removal of alien vegetation, or to create hedge or shade, or to bring colour into our gardens. Do you, like me, stand in front of an array of indigenous plants wondering what and how to chose?

One way of getting both information and inspiration is to find out what beautiful plants are growing elsewhere in Rooi Els, and particularly on the erven close to you. Rooi Els itself has a wealth of beautiful fynbos plants, many of which can be found in a fynbos nursery.

In addition, there is a wealth of fascinating information available to those who want to enrich their fynbos gardens: Ernst van Jaarsveld's **Waterwise Gardening** and the Wildlife and Environment Society of Southern Africa's **Bring Nature Back Into Your Garden**, by Charles and Julia Botha, were published recently. The Botanical Society's **Wild Flower Guide No. 5** (From Hottentots Holand to Hermanus) is invaluable, and the National Botanical Gardens have recently begun to bring out small handbooks on all

aspects of growing particular kinds of plants, such as restios, agapanthus, and bulbs. Membership of the Botanical Society of South Africa brings with other benefits a quarterly magazine which is both informative and beautifully produced. The Wildlife and Ecological Society of Southern Africa also brings out a quarterly magazine of superb quality. The botanists working at the nurseries of Kirstenbosch and Harold Porter Botanical Gardens are unfailingly helpful.



Karin Behr, who works at Harold Porter Botanical Garden, and with whom I discussed the choice of plants for the gardens in our area, stressed the need to avoid exotic plants. If these become established they may well, through lack of natural predators, spread. **Plants that are indigenous to another part of South Africa may themselves become invasive in the fynbos area.** She hopes that increasingly people will concentrate on growing plants from the Reserve. This of course should be no hardship, as their beauty and variety is breathtaking.

Jean Cowen

●
LEGISLATION COMPELLING
AN OWNER TO CLEAR
CERTAIN INVASIVE ALIENS
ON HIS PROPERTY HAS
NOW COME INTO FORCE.
● ● ●

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF A DIFFERENT KIND

Dalene Trurin's thirteen year old nephew, Frikkie, was walking to the beach carrying a plastic bag filled with coloured balls and bats. He stopped to watch three young baboons play near the slipway. One young baboon became interested in the plastic bag and came over to Frikkie. The baboon gently scratched the bag with his finger. Frikkie, remaining calm, opened the bag to show the baboon what was inside. The baboon took out each ball, looked at it and sniffed at it. When he found out there was no food in the bag the young baboon turned around and walked away. Meanwhile Frikkie had just stood calmly and quietly enjoying the situation.

Richard Trurin

WATER! WATER! EVERYWHERE....

Driving to Betty's Bay one notices that most of the lakes have dried up. Oom Visser (who farms) recently told me that soon they won't be able to get any water for irrigation from the Buffels River dam due to the water shortage. All the dams are very low in these areas. The Western Cape and Overstrand are experiencing water shortages. Rooi-elsers have at times experienced and reported water shortages in their homes.

It seems to be a long-term problem as recent predictions are that our rainfall will

decrease with up to 60% if the "El Nino" or "El Nina" weather systems continue. In their last newsletter the Overstrand municipality wrote about dire water shortage in our area. The water shortage underscores the importance of removing Rooikrans, Eucalyptus, Myrtle and other invasive aliens as these trees guzzle water (in addition to being a fire hazard). These plants use 30 to 60% more water than indigenous trees and shrubs. Despite having good rain recently the problem still exists. Please help curb water loss.

Be Baboon-wise:
share your space, not your
food

Bobbejane: Feite en verdigsele

Bobbejane is 'n bekende gesig in die Hangklip-Kleinmond area en dra by tot die karakter van die groter gebied. Hier is vier bobbejaantroppe. Die kusvlakte is 'n belangrike voedselbron vir hulle en word veral belangrik as die toestande in die berge ondraaglik raak na veldbrande en in die winter. Die mens het hom op die kusvlakte kom tuismaak en dit lei soms tot konflik met wilde diere, veral die bobbejane.

FEITE

- ❖ Bobbejane sal altyd die kusvlakte (en dus dorpe) besoek in hulle soeke na voedsel.
- ❖ Die aantal bobbejane in hierdie area vermeerder nie.
- ❖ Bobbejane is wilde diere en is gevolglik onvoorspel-

baar en moet met versigtigheid hanteer word.

- ❖ Die bobbejane in hierdie gebied het geleer dat kos by huise gevind kan word.
- ❖ Dit is onwettig om 'n vuurwapen in 'n munisipale gebied af te vuur.

VERDIGSELS WEERLÊ:

- ❖ Daar is nie 'n "bevolkingsontploffing" onder die bobbejane as gevolg van die verdwyning van luiperds in die omgewing nie. Slegs 1 % van luiperds se dieet bestaan uit bobbejane.
- ❖ As die dominante mannetjie, of leier van die trop, doodgeskiet word ontstaan erger probleme. Bobbejane het 'n streng sosiale orde en die tropleier oefen streng orde en gesag oor die trop uit.

Craig Spencer



Baboon Education and Awareness Programme (BEAP)

"People are the problem, not the baboons....."

"I'm not prepared to live behind bars....."

"The baboons were here first....."

"It's only a matter of time before a child is hurt or killed....."

"If people don't like the baboons, let them live somewhere else....."

These are only some of the comments which spice up social gatherings in Rooiels. Amusing at first, I felt compelled to take things more

seriously after rumours of baboons shot on 3 different occasions in the Rooiels area during 2000. Since there seemed to be numerous legends but few facts, I decided that the place to start would be to scientifically document facts relating to the 'Rooiels Baboons' and their interactions with humans in our community.

The object of the study is to collect and document as much information as possible with a view to launching an education and awareness programme to teach residents, visitors (and perhaps baboons!) how all citizens of the Kogelberg Biosphere may live in harmony.

In December 2000 Koos Smit, Evette Weyers and Drika Wilkens helped me hand out questionnaires to all occupied houses in the village. Margaret Hensen kept copies available in The Village Shop, for anyone we missed and also for visitors.

To date we have received 113 completed questionnaires, 90 from property owners and 23 from visitors. Thank you to all of you who took the time to fill in the questionnaires. Analysis of the data so far received from **property owners** has revealed some interesting facts.

- ❖ We seem to be fairly **evenly divided on whether the baboons are a problem** (Yes=47%: No=52%).
- ❖ Most of us **(63%) think the baboons are an**

asset. 28% don't agree, and the remainder don't know.

- ❖ Most of us (61%) **LIKE the baboons**, 20% are neutral and 20% **DON'T LIKE** them at all.
- ❖ Despite liking them, most of us (61%) **think they are a nuisance**, though 36% of respondents **DO NOT**.
- ❖ The overwhelming majority (73%) **do NOT consider them to be dangerous at the moment**, but opinion is neatly divided on whether they will become a problem in the future: **YES** (33%), **NO** (30%) and **DON'T KNOW** (37%).
- ❖ **We are NOT afraid of them (76%) and most of us do NOT want them removed from Rooiels (70%).**
- ❖ 80% of respondents would prefer it if we could find ways to live in harmony with the baboons and there is clear support (84%) for an education and awareness programme.
- ❖ Of more than 230 'hits' between July-December 2000, only 14 respondents reported damage to property. In some cases this was extensive (R1,000-R4,000). One has to ask why baboons cause serious damage to property in a small number of cases (6%), and this has led us to implement the second part of the study.

Eugene Marais found in studying baboons that they are very gentle with children and small animals .

We are asking everyone in Rooiels to accurately document 'hits' when these occur and report these to Koos, Jenny or Darelle Snyman who will then do an on-site visit. 'Hit' questionnaires are available at The Village Shop and contain our contact numbers.

- ❖ Baboons enter our homes for fruit (56% of hits), with bread running second (38%) in the favourite human-food stakes.
- ❖ No one admitted to deliberately feeding the baboons, and some commented on how important it is to stop visitors feeding them. It's important for all of us to realize that baboons can't tell the difference between deliberate and accidental feeding. If they get food inside our homes, or food we set out for the birds, **WE ARE FEEDING THEM!**

We are making every effort to increase our response rate in order to maximize the scientific validity of the study. Hopefully you will shortly receive a questionnaire with your municipal account. Please take a few minutes to fill it in (if you have not already done so) and return it to me. Return details are clearly printed on the questionnaire. Thanks to all of you who have, and will, take time to respond.

Jenny Stark



Floral Art in the Biosphere.

Twenty years ago or so I joined a Flower club. It turned out to be one of the best things I have ever done. It allowed me to carry on with art, albeit in a different format to that which I had studied at college. I have spent hours of hard work and fun with people from all walks of life. I have learnt about the different styles and seen how people's personalities are reflected in the works they create.

As Roland and I are in the process of leaving the city and moving to Rooi Els permanently, I face a new challenge. Leaving behind the garden I have cultivated over a 20 years, which has provided me with foliage and certain flowers, and facing adapting my art to the sparser and different vegetation at Rooi Els. I have always enjoyed using indigenous material and regularly use indigenous and exotic plant material together – mixing textures eg roses and cynaroides and erica, or dramatic colour contrasts like statice and lilies.

I will have to discard the masses of flowers and fall back on the more avant garde designs that are influenced by minimalistic Japanese floral art. Here the adage "Less is More" will be put into action; adjusting to using less material and the more rugged forms that some of our fynbos and proteacea provide. I will be forced to revise to create impact in clean, simple lines.

The inspiration all around me at Rooi Els, from the changing moods of the sea and the mist on the mountains and even the depiction of our windswept landscapes, should keep me happily busy creating. Any aspirant Rooi Els floral artist needs to see the beauty and the possibilities of the use of bleached driftwood, fire blackened branches and the beautiful colours, shapes, textures of our stones, anemones, seaweeds; the multitude of ways fynbos can be used to create cameos of our Rooi Els landscape.

Floral art has transcended its humble origins as part of the local agricultural show or the craft of ladies on the church roster.

Floral art incorporates all the principles of art and design. It is accessible to everyone. Rules help to begin with, BUT rules are a guide and need to be broken! Only through experimentation is one able to come up with original ideas and designs and eventually develop your own style.



For those who love the indigenous vegetation of the biosphere.

- ❖ Pick on your own property. (It is illegal to pick wild flowers in public open spaces.)
- ❖ Know your plants, so that you do not destroy the more rare and delicate plants by over-picking.
- ❖ Know which will last in a vase and how to 'condition' them to last longer. Leave those that do not last in the garden.

- ❖ Never pick from one plant only. There is usually more than one bush with the same foliage or flower on the property.
- ❖ Always pick so that anyone walking after you cannot see where you have picked. In other words, pick conservatively and do not damage or spoil the shape of a shrub.
- ❖ For special occasions or emergencies of the floral kind, know where your nearest reliable supplier of fresh plant material is to be found so that you have an alternative to the selection of material available to you.

Your Motto should be "Have secateur, will arrange"



Living in a biosphere website

We have decided to open an interactive website for Rooi Els. You will be able to see recent pictures of the fauna and flora and other Rooi Els happenings on it. Amongst other things you will be able to read the Breeze on the website. You can post comments on it as well. Visit:

rooiels.org.za or
rooi-els.org.za

WHAT ABOUT BUMPER STICKERS AND T-SHIRTS PROMOTING "LIVING IN THE BIOSPHERE" IN ROOI ELS?

HOOFARTIKELS

OF WHALES AND LITTLE THINGS

Today, 23 April, the first Southern Right Whale casually cruised into Rooiels Bay and proceeded with callisthenics. Tail up, tail down, left flipper up, right flipper up, etc. We were quite astounded, because one normally expects them at the earliest around end July. "Not so," say John and Helen Niemeyer, who are part of the MTN Whale Monitoring Programme. "Many people think that all Southern Rights spend the summer in the Antarctic, but some have been known to stay around the cape coast right through the year," said Helen.



One whale species that frequents False Bay daily is the Bryde's whale. In fact I am prepared to bet even Hansie Cronjé that, visibility permitting, through my powerful binoculars I shall see at least one *every day*, usually around late afternoon, cruising off Rooiels Point. This is a fairly large whale, 13,5 m to 14,5 m with length at birth of 4 m. It has a dorsal fin about a quarter of its length from its tail, therefore one is likely to see the vertical single blow (V-shaped in the Southern Right), as it breaches, followed by a momentary pause, and then the dorsal fin. It is a toothed whale and feeds on pelagic fish such as maasbankers, pilchards and anchovies.

I have heard it called the false killer whale, probably because of its dorsal fin and predatory behaviour. (Chris Gilmour had quite a "skrik" with one of them while fishing from "Fox", his comparatively small boat, as reported in last year's December Breeze.) If you would like to see one, position yourself on the lookout rock on the edge of erf 115, above the midden at Rooiels Point between 1600 and 1900 hours. Concentrate on the area about 200 to 500 meters out due north, and you're bound to see one. Don't confuse its blow with the splash made by hunting gannets. Happy whaling.

André Wagener.

EETBARE SEEWIER EN SEEBAMBOES

As jy uitkyk oor die see om die Kaap sien jy telkens die drywende lower van die Seebamboes of kelp. Hierdie taai bruin plant is die spil waarom die ekologie van ons kuslyn draai. 'n Kelp bedding is van die mees produktiewe ekosisteme in die wêreld. Kelp versag die mag van die brekende golwe en bied skuilplek en kos vir seediere. Seegras en kelp is nie net die kos van perlemoen, alikruk en perdevoetjies (limpets) nie maar ook van baie visse en swart mossels.



Van die 10,000 ton kelp wat jaarliks op ons strande uitspoel word 6,000 ton geoes vir gebruik in die maak van kompos, bier-skuim, ens.,

ens.. Kelp het ook medisinale waarde. Die Khoisan het dit al in toeka se dae in poeier form op wonde gesit om te genees.

Baie min seegras word in S.A. geëet, in teenstelling met Japan en die Ooste. Hier by ons, in die vlakwater op die klippe, groei egter 2 soorte seegras wat baie eetbaar is. Die seegras met groot bruin-groen blare, wat laaggety so op die rotse krakend droog word, is *Porphyra capensis* wat, weens sy hoë protein- en vitamien inhoud, die meeste geëet word in die Ooste. Dit word o.a. om sushi gedraai. Dit is volop hier by ons.

Die ander eetbare seewier of "seeslaai" (*Ulva capensis*) is ook volop by ons en kan op die rotse gevind word. Dis 'n kleiner plant as die *Porphyra* en groener. Party mense braai dit kort in olie en eet dit as 'n kraakvars southappie. Dit kan ook fyn opgekerf, rou met uie en slaai geëet word. Ek breek die blare van albei plante af sodat die wortels agterbly. Ek spoel dit goed af in die see (of in soutwater), laat dit kurkdroog word en bêre dit in 'n lemoensakkie. Dis heerlik fyn gesny oor rysdisse en oor slaai.

Daar is ook die lang pers slierte (*Suhria vittata*) wat op die stamme van seebamboes groei en heerlike jellie maak. Die beste tyd om dit te oes is na 'n storm. Sny dit af van die kelp wat op die strande en rotse uitge-spoel het. Kom smul saam aan die voedingsryke seekos wat pasella is.

Evette Weyers



Viewpoint Release

The water is cold and
deep blue
and it still thinks wet. How
surf
and how tides and how
otters
and sea lions and crows
and kelp-flies
and driftwood-shore
succulent plants
and how these windows
of sunlight open.

And when open, we fall
into stars

like a relief, travelling by
viewpoint release...

Russel Salamons

A PASSION FOR DIVING

I was born next to the sea and since I was very small I have had a passion for the sea. Once I discovered diving, where you remain submersed for periods, I was hooked. Irrespective of the weather or even the size of the swells on the sea, come the end of the day, I can't wait to get into the water, dive down below and loose myself in a totally different world with totally different sounds.



Everything changes under
water. Don't be fooled by the

size of that BIG crayfish down there, as everything is a third larger and closer under water! Sound also has a different quality under water. The most common sound is that of a constant clicking chatter that you hear when diving off a reef made by the corral, plants and small creatures who live on the reef. Because sound travels four times faster under water, everything seems much closer.

The biggest and most pleasant change is the freedom of movement one has under the water due to one's buoyancy. One can't "fall" in the sea. Even when the sea is very rough and huge swells hurl you over underwater cliffs; you are padded by water and usually survive. I personally love that feeling of flying when you dive down and twist and turn effortlessly. This must be how an eagle feels as it flies over the mountains and dives down to snatch its prey.



One's relationship with the sea creatures is equally interesting. The wily ones sense when you are merely sightseeing and when you are hunting. When the crayfish season closes the crayfish seem to come out in their droves and you almost have to brush them aside to get to a common alikruk.

Sometimes a cormorant will dive past you as it drops out of the sky. They seem less alarmed by humans under water. One day a seal mother

and her cub swam past me. The mother seemed bored with humans and took no notice. The cub however, was excited and swam around me; wide eyed and with a big smile on his face. I was possibly its first underwater human. I felt such affinity for him.

USE A PATH SAVE A DUNE

One day in a very dirty sea I was deep down and felt an excruciating pain in my left calf of something grabbing it and shaking it. "It must be a seal", I thought but as I turned around I saw a young shark shaking my leg. He let go and swam off when he saw my full size. I followed him for a short distance so as not to lose my nerve. I later found out it was a cow shark and they are scavengers rather than predators. My calf was bruised but not lacerated. There are at least 4 of these large cow sharks patrolling around the Point almost up to the slipway. They are blue-grey in colour. Don't get a fright when you see one, as they don't usually attack humans.

Some times, in the open season, I hunt in the sea and my focus narrows down to what I am searching for. One experiences an ancient excitement and one relies on observations and instinct. Sometimes one can feel that there is a large crayfish under a rock without seeing it from above. On such occasions I feel close to the KhoiSan,

adept hunters, who used to roam this area.

I also find that in eating mussels, kelp, crayfish, alikruk and abalone, harvested from the sea in front of our house, I become part of my surroundings. One's body is then made up of parts of one's present landscape. Physically you indeed become one with your environment.

Of course one also absorbs the health-giving salts and minerals of the seawater while you are submersed in it. A physiotherapist once told me that the feeling of heightened well-being one gets from diving is due to the nerve endings between one's ribs getting a good stretch from all the deep breathing. True as it may be, I can assure you though that no amount of deep breathing on land can give me the exhilarated release I get from diving; that feeling of being truly alive.



If you have never snorkelled, try it one day. Take along a pair of diving goggles when you go swimming and have a look underwater. It's good for your health to submerge yourself in the mineral rich seawater and your lungs get great exercise when you dive down (and don't forget about the nerve ending's stretch!) You will discover an amazing underwater world.

Evette Weyers



ROBBE

Rondom November of Desember spoel daar soms heelwat dooie robwelpies op ons klein strandjie uit. So twee jaar gelede het Dairmuid Baigrie, (wie elke oggend strand skoonmaak as hy hier is), elf rob karkasse begrawe binne een week.

Robwelpies is baie lewendig en kan al goed op land rond-beweeg in die eerste maand van hulle lewens, maar hulle kan nie swem nie. Hulle is geneig om op die rotse te vergader waar hulle ouers in die see ingaan. As 'n sterk somer Suidooster of 'n rowwe see een van die welpies van die rotse afwaai, of afslaan die see in, dryf die welpie hulpeloos op die water rond en verdrink.

Robbe word van hulle ma's gespeen op nege of tien maande oud. Onder die jong robbe is daar party wat nie goed genoeg leer om vir hulle self te sorg nie en hulle word later te maer om in die koue water vis te jag. Hulle kom soek dan warmte op die rotse. Ons sien soms sulke enkelinge hier. So 'n kleintjie word natuurlik niks vetter in die son nie, en sy oorlewing is baie onseker.

Die ligkant van die storie is dat ons 'n oorfloed van robbe het. Hulle natuurlike vyande, die haaie, is drasties deur die mens verminder en nou is die oorfloed van robbe weer, in sommige gevalle, 'n bedreiging vir die pikkewyne wat nie so vinnig kan visvang nie.

(Bron; WWF, Cape Envirolink) Evette Weyers

ROOIELS RIVIERMOND

*and the mouths of the rivers
sing into the sea
and the sea remembers
and sings back...*

Die monding is die plek waar die rivier en die see mekaar ontmoet. Hier vind die vermenging en interaksie tussen twee verskillende water-massas plaas en word in die proses 'n ryk en dinamiese ekosisteem geskep. Die vlak en beskutte toestande is 'n ideale "kleuterskool" en voedings-area vir meer as 'n 100 verskillende spesies vis, garnale en krappe.

'n Mond is 'n plek van onophoudelike verandering en afwisseling tussen die getye, kalm waters en storms, die vlak van die rivier en die soutgehalte daarvan. Dit is ook die plek waar die rivier sy bruidskat van opdrifsels en voedingstowwe skenk aan die die strand en see. Ongelukkig bestaan hierdie "bruidskat" vanweë die agteruitgang van die omgewing, gewoonlik ook uit groot hoeveelhede kosbare bopgrond en besoedeling wat in die see uitgestort word. Die goeie nuus is egter dat ons eie Rooielsrivier een van 'n handjievol riviere in Suid-Afrika is, wat sover nog hierdie lotgeval vryspring.

Dit is aldus 'n WNNR verslag, getiteld "Estuaries of the Cape" (Rooiels CSW 10) wat in 1982 gepubliseer is. Dit meld dat die Rooielsrivier 'n klein maar ekologies gesonde ekosisteem is. Volgens

studies in 1958 en 1979 gedoen, was daar selfs na vloedreëns geen tekens van erosie en besoedeling in die rivier bespeur is nie: "The only form of pollution evident at the estuary is litter left by picknickers or that washed up by the tides."

"Reasons for the relatively undisturbed state of the estuary can be attributed to the effective protection of the catchment and floodplain by the Directorate of Forestry and to the conservation orientated approach of the residents of the Rooiels township."



Die verslag waarsku egter dat die area maklik gedegradeer kan word deur oormatige benutting en indien nie behoorlik beskerm nie.

"As is the case with many other South African estuaries, the aesthetic appeal and high recreational potential of the Rooiels estuary has led to the development of a township consisting almost entirely of holiday houses. It is therefore essential that the features which led to this development in the first instance are not destroyed through excessive additional developments, be this in the form of extensions to the township, overloading through additional picknicking facilities or roadworks."

Die Rooielsrivier se opvangsgebied strek oor 'n area van ongeveer 20 vierkante kilometer in die Blousteenberge, waar hy in die hart van die biosfeer ongestoord sy eeue-oue roete loop. Die rivier self is ongeveer 9 kilometer lank. Die rivier het 'n baie styl helling met nou klowe en stroomversnellings en klein watervalle.

Ou fotos van die riviermond in 1934 wys dat die rivier oorspronklik aan die suidekant van die eilandjie in die see geloop het. Met die bou van die brug in die 1950's is die rivierloop verander sodat dit om die noordekant van die eilandjie loop. Die arm wat doodloop aan die suidekant (met die oorblyfsels van die ou houtbrug), dui die roete aan waar die rivier eers geloop het.

Estelle Raymond



HIDDEN TALENTS

CONGRATULATIONS!

In unusual recognition of a husband-and-wife partnership the University of Natal awarded honorary doctorates of literature (D.Litt.) to David and also to Marie Philip for their publishing during apartheid. The doctorates were awarded in April at separate ceremonies in Pietermaritzburg and later in Durban. They have been Rooielsers for 33 years.

Last April Adriaan Donker, received an honorary doctorate of literature from the University of Natal for his publishing and his contribution to the creative arts. He published the works of many prominent black writers in the 70's and 80's e.g. W. Serote, also writers such as Athol Fugard. He was the director of the Centre of Creative Arts at Natal University where "Poetry Africa" started.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Dine van Zyl is as die naaswenner in die Sanlam/Insig/Kwêla romanwedstryd aangewys uit 104 inskrywings. Haar boek, "Slagoffers", handel oor die lyding van vroue in die Angolese oorlog. Dis gebaseer op Dine se ervaring as filmmaker en joernalis in oorloggetysterde Angola en Namibië. Dit is Dine se sesde boek, en tweede roman en dit word in Oktober vrygestel.

Baie geluk, Dine, dit was dus die moeite werd om regdeur die kreef-seisoen te skryf



Jenny Stark heard from some Rooielsers that they would hear wonderful piano music emanate from a certain house in Rooiels around 4 o'clock in the afternoon. They eventually timed their walks to be able to listen to this music every day. It turned out that the person playing was a concert pianist - Margareth Menzel.

Jenny organised a recital for her at Rooi Els (at Pat McLagan's house) earlier this year.

WE HAVE NOT INHERITED THE EARTH, WE HAVE BORROWED IT FROM OUR CHILDREN

MAGIC MOMENTS

Gift from the Sea

Joe Henson and I went crayfishing early one Saturday morning and having caught our bag we were nearing the slipway. Suddenly an otter's grey head popped up in front of us. He then dived and quickly headed for the kelp to the east where he soon appeared again. I disengaged the engine and turned the boat to drift towards the kelp. We were rewarded by seeing the otter come up to look at us several times. Ever so often he would lift his head 30cm or more above the water to get a better look at us. Soon his curiosity got the better of him and he swam towards us coming within 10 meters. Such experiences are of the intimate blessings of Rooi Els

Richard Trurin



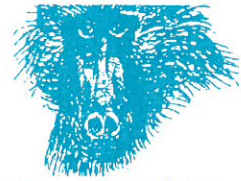
WIE KYK NA WIE?

Rooiels lê stil in die vroeë oggend. Selfs die wind lê nog. Dit is volkome stil terwyl sy in die sand-paadjie afstap na die baai voor Aneen Diedericks se huis. Die see lê glad en grys voor haar.

Sy hoor 'n sug, 'n diep asemteug in die see voor haar. Sy kyk op - reg in 'n reuse oog. 'n Walvis-oog. 'n

Charlie's Corner

I asked Charlie if he would tell us about the time he had André Wagner practically eating out of his (Charlie's) hand but Charlie said he was planning a few related strategies, as that one was so successful, thus he didn't want to let the cat out of the bag (or let the ape out of the



sleeve as they say in Afrikaans.) Thus he asked me to let André tell the story:

Bobbewales

Ek en Dine was destyds vir ons wittebrood op die eiland Capri en een van die aandenkings wat ons terugbring het was 'n porseleinbak in die vorm van 'n eend waarin daar ses kleiner eendbakkies is, wat ons vir sout- en peper- en koljanderhouders gebruik en so aan. So met verloop van tyd het hierdie eendstelletjie vir ons baie spesiaal geword en dit staan veilig op 'n doelgemaakte houtrakke langs ons kombuistonbank, bokant die hout Kavango vrugtebak. Die vrugtebak is altyd vol, dit het iets met my sekuriteitsgevoel te doen. Daarin is piesangs, appels, pere, duiwe, perskes, 'n spanspek en, toe ek onlangs om die hoek stap, ook 'n groot vet, uitgevrete, lummel van 'n bobbejaan met die naam van Charles.

Ou, grys, nuuskierige, sagte oog. Sy voel asof sy droom, verloor haarself in hierdie oog, in die wonder van die oomblik.

"'n Walvis kyk *my* reg in die oë!" dink sy. "Hy hou *my* dop!"

Die Walvis draai stadig om, kyk 'n laaste keer na haar. Dan verdwyn hy in die diepte.

'n Deel van haar wil saamgaan. Sy staan op die hoogste rots, strek haar hande uit in 'n groet en roep en roep – totdat dit in die berge weerklink – "Dankie Walvis! Dankie!"

'n Rooieler



Sweet Treasures

The crayfish season is drawing to a close. Perhaps the dolphins know this as well as they regain their territory and play in the shallows of Rooi Els beach.

Out on the reef a variety of boats pull red gold from the sea. We follow the shoal of harders or elf, while waiting for our nets to fill. A tranquil moment, a large seal rests nearby, flipper aloft.

As we lean over to pull our nets up a jet-propelled torpedo darts past in pursuit of the shoal. Narrowly avoiding our alien presence, he catches quicksilver and triumphantly, like Francois, trophy aloft, awaits our applause.

Julia Aalbers



Aangename kennis

Gewoonlik is kontak tussen mense en klipvissies beperk tot kinders wat leer hengel in klein rotspeele en klipvissies vang. Maar soms, as ons werklik aandag gee aan die klein gekleurde vissies, kan 'n heel ander verhouding tot stand kom.

Die Raymonds swem graag in 'n spesifieke poel wat bewoon word deur heelwat klipvisse. Hulle het al dié kleurvolle klipvissies, met hulle individueel beskilderde lywe, leer ken, en omgekeerd. Die klipvissies is baie nuuskierig en ook aangetrokke tot die twee mense in hulle poel. In plaas van wegvlug sal die klipvissies eerder nader kom, veral as die twee stil lê. Soms wikkell 'n klipvissie hom knus in die holte van 'n voet of in die kromming van 'n elmboog - salig tevrede om net velkontak te maak en 'n bietjie warmte te deel. 'n Vlietende wonderlike oomblik van kontak en vertrouwe tussen twee baie verskillende spesies, (mens en vis). Soms maak die klipvisse beurte om te kielie en met hulle klein mondjies te knibbel. Later word die visse somer besittlik ook. As 'n laatkommer klipvis nader kom om te deel in die samesyn dan stamp 'n (eerste) vis hom weg met "Los, dis my mens hierdie!" Daar is een spesifieke vis wat besonder baie van Frank hou en hom orals volg. Vriendskap oor wye grense heen is inderdaad moontlik.

Evette Weyers

Die manne sal nou weet waarvan ek praat: die een primaat duld nie 'n ander op sy werf nie. My eerste reaksie was een van verontwaardiging en toe woede en terwyl ek gryp na my leesboek om die vark sommer daarmee te gooi, lig hy sy linkerhand ewe doodluiters en sit dit so langs die eendjies neer terwyl hy nog 'n piesang in sy kies stop. Ek het versteen. Een sentimeter na links met daai hand en die porseleineende is in hulle maai. Ek dog ek sal so stadig naderstap, dan sal hy die hasepad kies. Maar toe ek roer, lig hy net een vinger van daai linkerhand en daar staan ek van eendjievrees in die vloer vasgespyker. Terwyl hy klaarspeel met die piesangvoorgereg en die eerste appel takel, kyk hy my in die oë. En toe verstaan ek.

Nou vra ek, waar het daai aap die Middeleeuse speletjie van afpersing, gyselaars en lospryse geleer? Hy roer weer daai linkerhandjie terwyl hy die eerste perske hap en my vrees verander in marteling. Wie sê hy gaan nie in elk geval die eendjies afklap voor hy laat spaander nie? Die werklike betekenis van daardie deel van die anatomie wat die Spanjaarde *cojones* noem, vasgeklem in 'n draaibank, dring tot my deur. Ek is magteloos. "O my Heerser, Grote Koning, kry vir jou 'n lekker tros hanepoot vars uit Robertson se wêreld. Kry vir jou 'n spanspek. Hier is ander kos ook. Spaar tog net my eendjies."

Charles het met sy oë die hele tyd op my, die vrugtebak rustig gesit en leegvreet saam

met my senuwees. Toe het hy die spanspek soos 'n rugbybal onder die arm gesit en kersgat by die voordeur uitgestap.

Daar staan ek. En ek weet nou nog nie of ek die insident moet vergeet, of verneder moet voel, of wraakgedagtes moet koester, of maar moet erken dat die bobbejaan 'n aap van my gemaak het nie.

STUMBLING BLOCKS AND STEPPING STONES

Builders on site!

Oh woe is me!
There's been an invasion of my space.
My peace and quiet has been disturbed.
Builders have moved into my street.
Unightly huts and heaps of sand and stone disorder our views.
All is in disarray – will it ever be the same?
How dare they upset my life!
Are they aware of the rules?
Can they keep the noise levels down - please?
Let them dare disturb the fauna
or uproot the flora
and there'll be war!
Plastic and cement bags littered about will be a red flag to a bull!
I've decided to speak sternly to the builder and the owner...

But alas,
They are building for me!

Debby de Vries



Building Woes are not a modern Problem:

July 23

"After being angry a little in the morning, and my house being so much out of order makes me a little pettish, I went to office ...and so to bed - quite out of sorts in my mind, by reason that the weather is so bad and my house is all full of wet and the trouble of going from one house to another..."

September 10

"...To my office, and then at my house amongst my lazy workmen all day..."

October 30

"... and so by coach home again, where to my trouble I find that the painter hath not been here today to do anything - which vexes me mightily."

(Excerpts from the diaries of Samuel Pepys, London. July to November 1662)

GROUNDWATER

Groundwater is water that fills the cracks and pore spaces beneath the surface of the earth. Most groundwater is naturally pure. In many cases, groundwater remains undisturbed for years, even centuries, before it is used. More than 90% of the world's total supply of drink-able water is groundwater. Leaking septic tanks and bad landfills contaminate groundwater.

Bird Chat



In the last bird chat I wrote on the variations in weather and climatic changes, their effects on our bird population and rare sightings for the area. We're always pleased to receive news from fellow Rooi-elsers of their sightings (preferably not after a very liquid lunch when a serious element of doubt may arise-). I was delighted to hear Ian Ricbter's story of the uncommon half-collared kingfisher (430). This is not on our bird list; i.e. we haven't personally seen it in Rooi Els. The bird had flown into their home, crashed into a window, knocked itself out and fallen into the dog's basket, which was occupied by Dylan at the time. Fortunately he must have been aware of the significance of his unconscious visitor and left it alone. Resident kingfishers are pied (428), giant (429) and the diminutive malachite (431). The river area is excellent habitat for the half-collared and we look forward to personally seeing it. Of further interest is that though these four are fish eaters some South African kingfishers don't eat fish at all. Michael Harrison phoned to tell us there was a secretary bird (118) walking along side the Reserve but despite sprinting to the area the bird had gone. This spectacular and unmistakable bird is a most unusual raptor in that it prefers to walk everywhere. It kills all its prey on the ground which it disturbs while walking - (Robert's quote a pace of 120 paces/minute). It's very name is a puzzler, some believe it's crest resembles the (secretary's) antique quill pens, but it is also thought to be an Anglicised corruption of the

Arabic word saqr-et-tair, meaning hunting bird. As Arab countries are quintessentially linked with the ancient art of falconry, this is an extremely likely explanation.

The later end of February this year was literally blown away by severe south-easters. Late one afternoon I saw a clearly distressed raptor battling with the wind along Rocklands Rd. The bird was different, so out came the binoculars and out of the house I went post-haste. It proved to be an immature gymnogene (169). It was totally exhausted and clung to the window frame of the Pullen's house for at least half an hour providing a lengthy period to observe it. The unusual characteristic of this raptor is that the tarsal joints bend forward, backwards and sideways enabling the bird to extract prey from small crevices with its feet. It also has an abnormally small head for its size.



March brought the garden seed feeder (a rarity), or to be more accurate, eleven of them! Red-billed quelea (821) are pests, avian locusts often in colossal groups numbering thousands, incurring serious crop losses. 'Our' eleven's consumption of seed was reminiscent of a hoover and their aggressive behaviour towards our resident seedeaters was evidence of this; eleven was quite enough. They remained for the whole month, the group consisting of two males and assorted females and juveniles, and photographs were taken. Little explanation can be given. The S.W. Cape Bird Atlas notes that some were recorded

at Zeekoevlei in 1946 probably as a result of a population explosion farther north.

I would like to advise readers that the Robert's numbers are from the 'new' Roberts, i.e. the 6th. Edition. Older editions had fewer entries so numbers may not tally. Don't forget lists are available from the Rooi Els Shop for a small donation to the NSIR. Other sightings have been the welcome return to our garden of the Boubou (736). This handsome bird is a bush shrike, the same family group as the bokmakierie. An unwelcome visitor has been the brilliantly attractive male Klaas cuckoo (385), heralding his presence with his mournful, repetitive call. In Rooi Els these parasitic birds are known to have used lesser double-collared sunbirds (783) and barthroated apalis (645) as brood hosts. In late April the male had still been seen indicating it may be resident; most cuckoos are summer visitors.

I'm delighted to report the reappearance of the black eagle (131). Residents in the south of Rooi Els do see this majestic bird more frequently. The eagle was watched hunting along the mountainside in close proximity of the nest sites. Its position in avian hierarchy makes it a target for mobbing by other birds especially red winged starlings (769), but a pair of kestrels (181) were as unperturbed by it as it was by them.

There are a small number of 'homing' pigeons in Rooi Els. Being in the right place at the right time one Sunday afternoon in early February the population was reduced by one above Geoff Harris's house when a peregrine falcon (171) stooped and killed the bird. We are very fortunate in Rooi Els to also have lanner

falcon (172). Several years ago we watched a clever, or very fortunate, pied kingfisher (428) evade capture near the river bridge.

Rooi Els is profoundly favoured by its diversity of habitat, its birds reflect this fact. Any alteration to that diversity will have a negative, even destructive, effect upon our feathered neighbours. For me personally the bokmakierie is becoming Rooi Els' dodo, gone but never forgotten, a symbol, and a reminder that when some things are 'lost' they cannot be recovered

.Allison Ayre

Het jy geweet?

Hoeveel plantspesies het jy op jou erf? Tel gerus. Hennie Wilkens, bo teen die koppie langs die Rooi Els rivier, het onlangs die plantspesies op sy erf getel en by 180 uitgekrom.

Prof Tony Hall counted 96 plant species in the area just in front of his house.

Nuusflitse

.Darelle Snyman, our municipal nature conservation officer, has started an RDP programme called Coastal Care. A group of 10 woman with black bags come every week to clean the beaches and picnic spots.

SEAWATCH was recently named by WWF as one of the two most important projects that it is funding in the country. The two most endangered species are abalone and the albatross. SEAWATCH helps protect abalone through policing and education.

"There is pressure to develop the smallholdings outside Rooiels and Pringle Bay boundaries... It is important that the nature of the smallholdings be preserved due to the relationship with the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve and the many erven still available for development. The smallholdings form part of the Biosphere buffer zone."

*Environmental Management Plan: Hangklip-Kleinmond
Dr Allan Heydorn, WWF*

DEVELOPMENT AND SUBDIVISION

There are three smallholdings in our area applying for subdivision and development. At Pringle Bay the owner of a smallholding adjoining the town wants to subdivide and sell caravan stands. In Rooi Els the owner of erf 324 is looking at subdivision. From Pringle Cove there is an application to establish an abalone grow-out facility .

Up to now, no attempt at subdivision and expansive development in this area has been successful. If these subdivisions were to succeed it would alter this *status quo* to one in favour of subdivision and development.

There are also 2 owners adjacent to Rooiels awaiting the outcome of these applications before proceeding with their applications: one for subdivision and the other one for establishing an abalone grow-out facility close

to us. We can thus expect major change to our area if these applications succeed, (despite the large public objection and protest.)

Subdivision changes the landscape forever.



Where Many Rivers Meet

All the water below me came from above,

All the clouds living in the mountains gave it to the rivers

who gave it to the sea, which was their dying.

And so I float on cloud become water, central sea surrounded by white mountains,

the water salt, once fresh, cloud fall and stream rush, tree root and tide bank

leading to the rivers mouths

and the mouths of the rivers sing into the sea and the sea remembers and sings back

from the depths where nothing is forgotten.

David Whyte

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