

Bries • Breeze



Rooikat Edition 2014

News from the Rooi Els Conservancy, Rooi Els Ratepayers' Association and Rooi Els Boat Club

Nuus van die Rooi Els Bewarea, die Rooi Els Belastingbetalersvereniging en die Rooi Els Bootklub

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Useful phone numbers

| | | |
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| Emergencies | ASK | 072 605 9512 |
| Ambulance | Provincial | 10177 |
| | Ambumed | 076 512 3459 |
| Area Manager | (Municipality) | |
| | Cecile Jonkheid | 028 271 8100 |
| Councillor | Lisel Krige | 028 272 9533 |
| Municipality | Betty's Bay | 028 272 9263 |
| | Kleinmond | 028 271 8400 |
| Police | Kleinmond | 028 271 8200 |
| Law Enforcement (24 hr) | 028 313 8111 | |
| Sewerage | office hours | 021 859 5305 |
| | after hours | 028 3138111 |
| Traffic Department | (Kleinmond) | 028 271 8152 |
| Fire | Emergency | |
| | Carl Muller | 082 774 4581 |
| | | 028 313 8111 |
| | | 028 313 8000 |
| | Clayton Francis (Pringle) | 082 416 6685 |
| | Kobus Stemmet (Kleinmond) | 082 824 1434 |
| | Riaan Jacobs (Fire Chief) | 082 373 8270 |
| Emergency | 24 hr Hermanus | 028 313 8000 |
| ESKOM | office hours | 021 859 5305 |
| | after hours | 086 003 7566 |
| National Sea Rescue Insitiute | | 021 449 3500 |
| Seawatch (anti-poaching) | | 082 994 9300 |
| Medi-Clinic | Somerset West | 021 850 9000 |
| | Hermanus | 028 313 0168 |
| | | 082 412 4840 |
| <hr/> | | |
| Baboon advice | Jenny Stark | 028 271 5004 |
| Snake catching | Geoff Harris | 028 273 8164 |
| | Gert Coetzee | 083 658 2504 |
| | Ernst Thompson | 082 333 1543 |
| OM Environmental Officer | Neville Green | 028 271 8420 |
| Hack info | Evette Weyers | 028 273 8483 |
| RE Boat Club | Piet Uys | 083 7994088 |
| RE Conservancy | Anuta Scholtz | 028 273 8539 |
| RE Fire chief | Pierre Kruger | 071 3999112 |
| RE Village Shop | | 073 363 2944 |
| RERA | Izak Smit | 082 577 7037 |
| <hr/> | | |
| Dentist(s) | Dr JP Duvenage | 028 271 3467 |
| | Dr Engelbrecht | 028 271 3662 |
| Doctor(s) | Dr van Niekerk | 028 271 4227 |
| | Dr du Plessis a/h | 082 653 6355 |
| Optician | Dr PL Obermeyer | 028 271 3119 |
| Pharmacy | Albertyn | 028 271 4666 |
| Vet | Kleinmond | 028 271 4183 |
| | Harold Porter Botanical Gardens | 028 272 9311 |
| | KAWS (Kleinmond Animal Welfare) | 028 271 5004 |
| | Drummond Arms | 028 273 8458 |
| | Something Els | 083 370 1960 |

Correspondence

Izak Smit, chairman of RERA, put together this year's RERA correspondence. These letters are welcomed, as they cast light on issues, through expressing different opinions and new perspectives. In this way we can keep one another informed. So please keep on writing.

OUR SHORELINE

So, we have survived Mandela Day, International Beach Clean-up Day and we have still got more rubbish on our beaches than is possible to collect unless with an army of people. We are still getting the recycled rubbish from beaches at Macassar, Monwabisi and Strandfontein!
Sniffer

ON ROADS

I am sending this email to inquire why Pringle Bay is having a traffic circle and associated brickwork divisions at the main business area?

Obviously the circle is a "good idea" to remove the 5 way stop street. However as a resident of Rooiels, I have to protest that the state of some roads here is truly appalling and the cost of construction for this "improvement" could have been better employed elsewhere.

Currently the north end of Rocklands Road needs serious attention where a boat or 4 x 4 might be useful for access to these houses. In other areas after the previous re-grading (?) of the roads several speed humps and berms were "removed" and not properly/or not at all, reconstructed. This is especially true of the berms, as following heavy rain, like last week, the "roads" became rivers with little or no diversion of the water into the veld.

One appreciates that the tarred main road of Pringle Bay is easier to maintain, but the dirt roads in Rooiels are truly shocking.

Concerned Roady

GARBAGE NOT REMOVED

I own a property at Rooiels. A while back I purchased a baboon proof bin to leave my refuse and recycling in as I am not a permanent resident. We dutifully put our recyclable material in a clear bag and leave our other refuse in a black bag in the bin. My problem and complaint is that it does not get collected. Just two weeks ago we arrived there to find that stuff we had put in the bin three weeks previously was still there! I then had to remove it and place it in the trailer at the Rooiels entrance.

There are no permanent residents in our section of Priestleya Road and no one else has a baboon proof bin in which to leave refuse. My view is that the refuse collectors know that there are no permanent residents and so just do not bother to check to see if there is any refuse to collect in our bin. Why am I paying R140 per month for a service I am not receiving? Am I entitled to a refund?

Weekender

LIDMAATSKAP DEUR GEMAGTIGDE VERTEENWOORDIGERS

Dit het onder my aandag gekom dat u tot lid van die Belastingbetalersvereniging individue as 'n gemagtigde verteenwoordiger van 'n belastingbetaler sal toelaat in terme van paragraaf 3.1(a), in die geval waar die belastingbetaler 'n normale individu is.

Vraer

Red - nee poste is slegs vir abnormale individue.

DANKIE BRIEFIE

Dankie vir die heerlike Bries wat so lekker vol nuus is. Verlang sommer na wanneer ek ook daar kan wees.

Jaloerser

Editorial/Redakioneel

Living in Rooi Els opens one to nature, to the rhythms and cycles of life.

We live close to miracles; it is in the everyday's personal encounters with our wild neighbours, in the flowering of a new protea, or the survival of just one little bird, the god of small things. This breeze is a celebration of that.

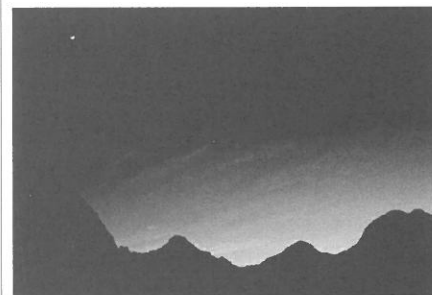
Jenny Stark writes about community science, where we, the locals, can assist scientific research by keeping our eyes open. Rooielsers have a proud history of conserving nature, and this can be seen in our bird drive, our leopard and tortoise projects and our attempts to be baboon-friendly and to plant and maintain eco-friendly gardens.

We welcome a host of new residents and also the holidaymakers.

Thanks to all the regular and new contributors for interesting and inspiring stories. Make sure that you have your Holiday Programme, and if not, please enquire at the village shop.

A Peaceful Christmas Season and a Happy New Year from the RE Ratepayers Association, the RE Conservancy and the RE Boatclub.

Griet Odendaal
Editor/Redakteur
grietjie@mweb.co.za
082 366 8032

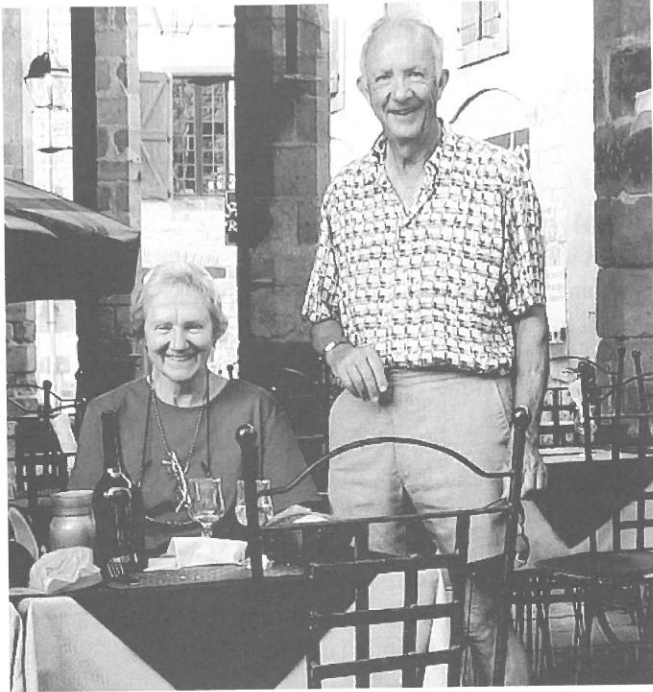


Important Notice – Sewage Pumping

Please ensure that you request your pumping at least two days in advance.

Weekdays: 028 271 8435 (Kleinmond office) Weekends: 028 313 8111 (Emergency number)

Our Migratory Neighbours



Richard and Delene Truran on a visit to France in 2006

Our neighbours to the north are Richard and Delene Truran, who both hail from Africa. Richard was born and grew up in Kenya and Delene was born in Bultfontein. After their marriage they returned to Kenya where Richard worked as a civil engineer and plotted, designed and built many roads over a period of twenty years.

As a long-time engineer in the bush, Richard evolved a wonderfully creative way of resolving problems of any nature, mechanical or otherwise. He has worked in all the countries up the East side of Africa: from South Africa to Somalia plus North Yemen and Oman.

Delene has an affinity for the fynbos and her love for plants is striking. Her spirit is welcoming, inviting many endemic species to migrate into her garden (by themselves) and flourish under her care. In Kenya she could not work after Independence, but The Horticultural Society invited her to be their secretary, a post that she filled for many years. She learnt so much about plants that she became a horticultural judge. When Richard was sent to Zimbabwe, Delene found a work where she helped others with their gardens. A few local women saw her lovely garden and invited her to design theirs. Eventually she was involved in the creation of 87 gardens.

They have wonderful Kenya stories about innovative ways of making their own clothes and producing birthday and Christmas presents out of odds and ends. Their family speciality is Mah Jong, a Chinese board game. The whole family used to play, with children learning from an early age. This enthusiasm soon spread to the other engineers and families that lived in close proximity.

Richard and Delene now live in rural Britain, as do their children. They built their house in Rooi Els in 1991. They visit Africa each year after Christmas, and were here in September to enjoy a trip up the West Coast, to see the flowers. It is always a pleasure to have them here and Richard has been a welcome addition to the Rooi Els hack group for several years.

Evette Weyers

Longing for the sounds of silence

I sat down on this bright Spring morning to enjoy a cup of coffee in the sunshine and peace which makes Rooi Els so attractive to all who are privileged to live in this beautiful village. Soon however, the peace was disturbed by the strident call of burglar alarms heralding the arrival, in town, of the baboon troop. In frustration I write this appeal.

This is a call to all the folk who have fitted movement sensors connected to their security systems outside of their homes. I have no doubt that our friendly security response officers pay no attention to these alarm calls as they continue to cry out until the baboons eventually leave town.

My appeal is to those non-permanent residents with these systems. In consideration for all the permanent residents who have to endure this disturbance, please consider de-activation of your outside movement sensors until you arrive to spend time in your home.

During the weeks and months that you are not in residence, the baboons present little threat to your home because all is secured and food is not visible to cause them to attempt a break-in.

While I am no expert, it does appear that it is only while the baboons are able to see food behind your closed windows, that they are prompted to "hit" your home. This happens only when you are actually living in your home. It is only then that the noise of your alarm may be useful to deter some of the more timid of our furry friends.

Please do your bit to keep our village the quiet and peaceful place which made it so attractive to lure you to this little piece of heaven we call Rooi Els.

Keith Moir



Welcome

Welcome to almost ten new households in Rooi Els. May you all thrive and feel blessed by your decision to move to paradise.

Mike, Christine and Sarah-Jane Hunter recently bought La Cotte in Priestleya Rd. They came from Tulbagh where Mike still practises as a Financial Consultant, so he commutes to Rooi Els once or twice a month. Christine is a retired music teacher, reflexologist and therapeutic masseuse.

Jo Rogge is an artist and has had a long career as a print design specialist. She has recently moved to Rooi Els after 30 years in Namibia to concentrate on her creative work. Jo's first exhibition in South Africa was recently held in Kalk Bay. A keen cyclist who loves the outdoors, she is inspired by the beauty of the Overberg. She and Lavinia Lindsay jointly run their studio gallery, Sweet and Wild, in Pringle Bay.

Duncan and Linda Hiles built their Lovers Walk home in Rooi Els in 1989, the same year they moved to Durban, and have holidayed here regularly since then. Duncan is an electrical engineer and Linda is a psychologist. Both enjoy the outdoor life and have recently moved here on a permanent basis.

Hannes and Almarie du Plessis have been living here permanently for about a year. They have had their place in Ocean View Drive for about 20 years.

Hannes does property maintenance and Almarie is his assistant, when she is not working as a radiographer.

Magdaleen and Wessie van der Westhuizen have moved in permanently in July this year. They come from Benoni, where Magdaleen was a medical doctor and Wessie worked as engineer in telecommunications. They are retired, but plan to continue working from here. They bought their plot at the top of Ocean View Drive in 1994.

Tom and Allison Vienings have permanently moved from Johannesburg to their place near Keith Moir in November last year. Allison works from home in the self-medication manufacturers industry and Tom does consulting for companies building renewable energy sources. He was involved in the construction of 7 Eskom power stations. Between them they have 7 children. They have had their stand for 28 years.

Peter and Margie Ellis have recently bought the Faure's place and are busy renovating. Margie shares a bit about their life: "We were both born and brought up in Zimbabwe (and Peter in Zambia also), and after marrying moved, in 1977 to the United States where Peter pursued his studies. We remained in America for 30 years and raised our three daughters there. When the youngest completed university we were anxious to finally return "home" to Africa, so we both joined the Clinton Foundation and moved to Malawi for 4 years.

There we worked in HIV Aids, Malaria and Tuberculosis. I worked in very rural areas on the prevention of transmission of HIV from infected pregnant women to their babies.

Peter has been a regional director of all Clinton Foundation programmes in 13 countries in Southern and East Africa. In 2011 we moved to Franschhoek, from where I commuted to the Pretoria office, until retiring last year.

"Rooi Els attracted us in many ways, not the least of which is its stunning beauty. We felt impressed by the commitment those in Rooi Els have to protecting their particularly special environment, and the interest and love they have for all aspects of fauna and flora, which we share. We felt Rooi Els to be a unique village and have so enjoyed meeting those who have lived in it and loved it for many years already.

"We are very much looking forward to spending as much time as we can feel the wind (or gales), the sand between our toes, listening to the waves crashing on the rocks, and smelling the ocean and its offerings."

Maurice Boshoff and Manie Botes and Jo-Jo have recently moved into their very elegant home in Harveya Rd. They have come from Sea Point and bring many artistic and creative talents with them.

Rooi Els Web site:
rooi-els.co.za

For fresh news about Rooi Els, wherever you are in the world, please visit our Web site, for information about social and newsworthy events, bird or animal sightings, local weather reports, crime updates, opinions and previous editions.

To the homeowners and residents of Rooi Els

We are the owners of 285 Porter Drive, Rooi Els. Currently we live in Switzerland, and visit Rooi Els twice a year. As some of you know we started a project nearly 2 years ago to ease access to our house, by constructing a garage at the foot of our driveway, to be followed by re-routing the driveway along a less steep line, all with new paving.

We really tried to execute this project without taking any short-cuts. We have paid very good money for professional supervision by an architect, a civil engineer and even a geological technician to certify the stability of the earth bank below the house before the excavation was made. All plans were duly approved by Overstrand Municipality, following correct procedure.

However several unforeseen issues arose – firstly the earth and rock under the fynbos bank proved unstable, necessitating the large reinforced concrete retaining wall behind the garage. Some of you saw the steel poles which were required for over a year to “prop up” the front of the house as a safeguard against subsidence. Also side-walls, roof slab and floor are all constructed with reinforced concrete.

Then at the engineer’s recommendation, we had a 3 course brick retaining wall constructed to bolster the car parking area in front of the house. All this took more time and far more cost than was originally anticipated. To be fair to the building contractor, he has made every effort to be thorough; however we did not

expect the degree of environmental damage that has resulted on the bank below our property.

This brings us to the task of restoring nature. It may seem unlikely to some at this point, but both of us are ardent nature lovers, and one of our main motivations to buy in Rooi Els was the splendid natural surroundings. We are fully committed to the restoration of the roadside nature in Porter Drive to its original state as soon as we are able. We trust that you will understand that this cannot commence until the building work is completed, however once complete there will be no expense spared to replant fynbos and repair the mess that our project has caused, and we will seek professional advice and assistance as required.

The biggest learning from this exercise is that we will never again contemplate any construction on our property unless we are resident and supervising it personally. Managing from a distance of 8,000 km is impossible; however our future plans include staying in Rooi Els on a more permanent basis. Please accept both our apologies for the inconvenience caused, and our promise to make good as explained above.

We will be in Rooi Els for year-end holidays, and look forward to meeting some of you, and of course to answer any questions or concerns that any of you may have. Our e-mail contacts are: malcolm.hunter@nestle.com and diana.hunter@bluewin.ch.

Malcolm and Diana Hunter

Healing for all

With the tragedy in Nigeria still fresh in everybody’s memory, the world’s cry for healing remains. We are reminded that we are not going live forever as we, family, or friends and neighbours need to seek healing from various dreaded afflictions.

This article has as its goal, to tell you about a Christian family here in Rooi Els. This family takes the form of an inter-denominational fellowship (cell) group which has met weekly in the various homes of member pilgrims for many years now.

While I cannot attest to physical healing that has resulted from the activities of our small group, I am convinced that each member of the group has experienced healing of some kind as they attempt to live the life of love and compassion which Jesus taught.

The doors of our group are open to all, whether you be a fellow traveller, or just a seeker. All are welcome to join in the great fellowship shared by this group of like-minded friends. Contact detail can be found below.

Keith Moir 028273 8109

Don’t fence me in

According to ‘Living the Vision’, should you require a fence, we are advised to avoid restricting the free movement of our wild animals – of which an increasing variety and number seem to travel through the fynbos and which include rabbits, small buck, tortoises, porcupines, even leopards and caracal – by placing the fence well within the perimeter of the property and avoiding solid walls.

Fun in the sun

Don’t miss this year’s holiday programme activities – there is something for young and old. Some of the new activities include a treasure hunt as well as a viewing of the local

seal community. Read more about the fun in the Rooi Els Holiday Programme. If you have lost yours, enquire at the Village Shop. See you there.

Community Science in Rooi Els

“What’s been happening in RE?” visiting friends asked and I knew they weren’t probing for gossip. They wanted to know about the sightings and happenings that spice up our nature-based lives; the stories that are sure to raise attention and a giggle, and trigger a little lifestyle-envy when retold at swish dinner parties.

I could tell them that, when Danny’s yapping became too much to endure, a grumpy male baboon had slapped our little Jack Russell into a triple-flip summersault. Danny emerged humiliated, wiser and without physical damage. Then, there was the Cape clawless otter, recently seen scurrying across Perspicua Road; and more news on the sad saga of our Black eagles. Fascinating stuff – but only what we knew about.

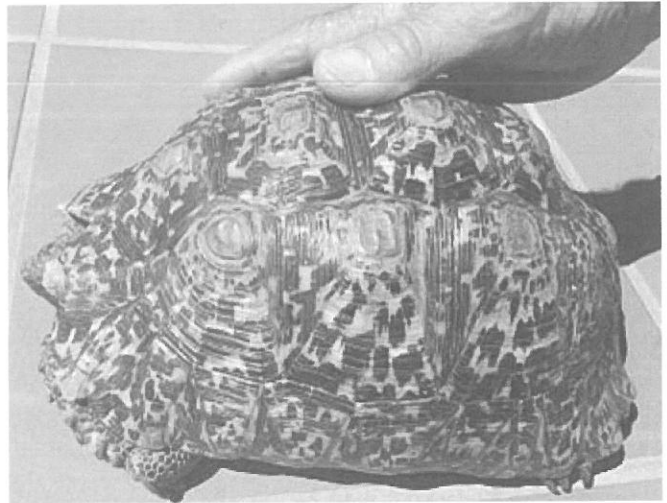
What about the villagers with wide-angle views of nature, or those who can glance throughout the day at ‘in-your-face’ fynbos? All of us have windows that allow us voyeuristic peeks into the private lives of our beautiful fauna and most of us spend some time each week going walk-about. We can share what we see! There are the juicy bits, of course, that make a good story. But there is also Community Science.

Community Science is a partnership between the eyes of the community and scientists who can use the data we collect. The idea is that academics can put our sightings together into meaningful information that contributes to wider scientific knowledge. It is easy to become a part of this. All that is required is, when you see some interesting or unusual animal/behaviour, to go online and answer a few questions about your sighting. Here’s how:

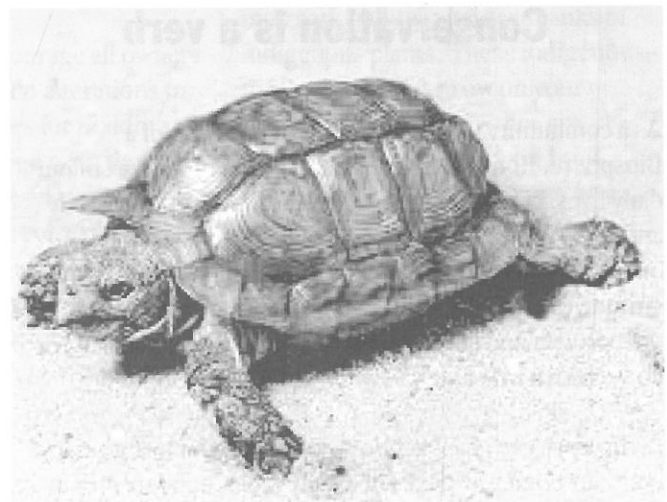
Go to the RE website at www.rooi-els.co.za. Click on ‘Fauna and Flora’, then ‘Report a Sighting’ then ‘Submission Form’.

You will be asked the date and time of the sighting, location, what you saw and what the animal was doing. There is place for comments. When the form is complete press “Submit” and your observation will be logged. You can also take a look at what has been reported since the beginning of 2014. ‘Rooiels Sightings’ provides interesting reading!

Tortoises: These reptiles have earned a place of importance in Rooi Els, because Prof. Retha Hofmeyr (Univ Western Cape) has a particular interest in species distribution here. The textbooks claim that the parrot-beaked tortoise or ‘gewone padloper’ (*Homopus areolatus*) occurs naturally in RE, but the Prof has her doubts.



The Leopard tortoise that marched up to our front door



Padloper

A special submission form has been placed on the RE website for tortoise sightings (click the Fauna and Flora tab on the Home Page and then Tortoises). We are asking you all to document the tortoises you see, even if it is repetitive reporting. There is a very good guide with clear photographs on the site, showing how to identify the species and determine the sex of a tortoise. And if you don’t know what you are looking at, photograph it and send the photo to Jenny Stark (jenny@wonderlingsbandb.com). I have the names of a few experts who will help. This is how we identified the Leopard tortoise (*Stigmochelys pardalis*) that came marching up to our front door a few months ago and also a spotted house snake that we mistook for a common egg-eater.

In our garden, we have begun to notice angulate tortoises, or ‘rooipensskilpad’ (*Chersina angulate*). Invisible all winter, they are once again moving about. Males are usually seen between 11h00 and 13h00 whilst females get going a bit later in the day. Interesting observations indeed, but in the case of tortoises, the data we collect will perhaps show that what we don’t see in RE is more important than what we do.

Jenny Stark



Strange baboon behaviour

Over the past few months there have been many sightings in Rooiels of a big male baboon carrying an infant. Apart from it being an intriguing sight, it has also been amazing to see how the particular infant is taking advantage of his/her special status – as a real tantrum-thrower! Different infants must have been receiving this special attention from the male as the size of the infant appears to be consistent despite the time lapse.

We've all been wondering about this behaviour: are these infants orphans? Does the male have a very protective or feminine character? Or maybe the infants are his favourite offspring?

On Valentine's Day, Jenny Stark and Delene Truran followed a male that had an infant on his back. Jenny says he tolerated the infant jumping on him and carried it around; when the male took a rest the infant got off and cowered behind him. But what they saw next is fascinating: when the male moved on the infant jumped up on his back again, only to be slapped off, very hard! It cried out and jumped onto the nearest baboon – which happened to be a juvenile that wasn't big enough to carry a baby for long. The infant then hopped off and joined some other youngsters, crying loudly for quite a few minutes. Jenny says it was heart-rending and the events dispelled any thoughts of a kind, caring, tender-hearted male caring for an orphaned baby.

Curt Busse and William J Hamilton studied chacmas in Botswana's Moremi Wildlife Reserve, back in the 80s. Their three year study (published in the journal *Science*, vol. 212) found male chacma carry their offspring during confrontations with higher-ranking immigrant males who pose a threat to the infants' lives. Busse and Hamilton observed that the infants sometimes initiated the confrontations by approaching and provoking immigrant males when protective males were close by. They also observed that mothers rarely interfered with such interactions.

Rooielsers have witnessed several fierce confrontations between the males in the troop over recent months. Perhaps this explains the infant-carrying in line with Busse and Hamilton's finding about the threat of immigrant males.

Eneth Kruger

Conservation is a verb

As a community privileged to live on the edge of a Biosphere, Rooielsers witness nature events as part of our daily lives: animal behaviour that inspires scientific study and intrigue scientists! Maybe it is time to take stock of our own role in nature, here in Rooiels, and reassess our attitude towards the fauna and flora that surround us. Do we only protect and cherish what we like and what suits us, or do we take a wider view?

Perhaps we can give back some of the habitat lost when we built our homes by planting locally indigenous species that provide food for birds, tortoises, mice, baboons ... Maybe it's not such a sacrifice to turn off unnecessary lights at night so consider nocturnal animals. What about slowing down to let a mongoose, or the francolins, or even a snake cross the road safely? We can also outwit our primate visitors (after all we do claim to be the clever ones) instead of complaining about their intelligence.

Anthropologist Russel Mittermeier says 'Primates are among the most endangered of all vertebrate groups'. Of late, many a Rooiels conversation about baboons feature the statement that the baboons should be shot or 'gotten rid of'. 'I'm a prisoner in my own house' is the lament. Perhaps we are prisoners of our own minds. Is there really such a big difference between securing your home from thieves and preventing a baboon raid?

We humans top the food chain. We are the ones who pollute. We destroy habitat. We are the intolerant ones when nature tries to adapt and survive the impact of *Homo sapiens*...

If we Rooielsers really want to be worthy of our status as a conservancy, we need to act conservation.

Eneth Kruger

Snake catching

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Geoff Harris | 028 273 8164 |
| Gert Coetzee | 083 658 2504 |
| Ernst Thompson | 082 333 1543 |

Boupersele op Rooiels

Daar is nog nooit soveel huise tegelykertyd op Rooiels in aanbou gewees nie. Voeg daarby nog 'n paar aanbouings en jy kom by 'n klomp boupersele uit.

Ons merk 'n groot verbetering in die verantwoordelike sin van bouspanne. In die verlede moes die permanente inwoners bontstaan om vullis op te ruim wat ontstaan by boupersele, maar tans gebeur dit nie!

Ons merk ook dat die huidige boupersele van nuwe huise die beskadiging van die plantegroei veel meer beperk as in die verlede. Ons onthou nog die dae dat die hele erf gestroop is van plante voordat bouwerk begin het. Deesdae sien die erwe baie anders daar uit.

Ons bring lof aan beide eienaars en bouaannemers en hul spanne vir

hierdie sensitiewer benadering. Julle is sommer ekstra welkom hier!

Useful tips on how to deal and conserve ecologically sensitive Rooiels areas can be found on the Rooi Els website. Very useful for new owners, no point in reinventing the wheel! We cannot avoid changing the landscape when we build on a plot, but we can do it with less negative impact.

What happens after building

We would really encourage all owners planning to build or do alterations to consult the Guidelines for building in sensitive areas which is on the Rooiels website: rooi-els.co.za. These guidelines cannot be enforced and are there to sensitize owners and builders to the special needs of ecologically sensitive areas like Rooiels. We cannot avoid changing the landscape

when we build on a plot, but we can do it with less negative impact.

It is essential to rehabilitate erven and road reserves sensitively. This is a natural area, let's keep our erven natural, too.

Try to replace with plants that were present on your property before building operations started. This is especially important for the road reserves which have been recognised internationally as vital seedbanks of indigenous plants. These indigenous-to-Rooiels plants grow on your property for a reason – they are specially adapted to the conditions there. The conditions on your plot differ from five plots down the road – keep to what is naturally present and you will enjoy success.

Anuta Scholtz

Orgidee

Rooieler Dine van Zyl het die orgidee gevind en Werner Mödinger van Bonnie Banks, het dit gaan navors: Dit is *Satyrium odorum*.

In die boek van Stewart, Linder, Schelpe en Hall (ons Prof Hall), *Wild Orchids of Southern Africa*, staan daaroor: "dispersed but locally frequent on sandy soils in the shelter of rocks and bushes, mostly at low altitude in the SW and S. Cape. Endemic. Flowers from August to November." Soos die naam sê, het hy 'n lekker reuk, en dus die volksnaam "reuktrewwa".



What do I do?

...if there is a beached whale on our coast?
...if I see a badly injured baboon?
...if no snake catcher is available?
...if I need an emergency sewerage pumping?
...I need an ambulance?

You call the all-hours emergency number in Hermanus. They will direct your request to the responsible person.

Skakel hierdie nommer vir enige noodgeval. Moenie nog rondval tussen ander nommers nie – hierdie sentrale nooddiens personeel sal sorg dat die regte persoon uitgestuur word.

028 313 8111

Crayfish Competition

Be sure to enter this year's Crayfish Competition to be held on 27th December (weather permitting). Registration is between 7.30 and cut off time 9 am at Piet Uys' carport (Ixia Road 73). Make sure to get hold of the rules for the day, e.g. that an undersized and female crayfish could lead to disqualification.

Extracts from the Fire Hazards Management Policy

Obligation of land owners – Land owners are obligated to comply with the provisions of Sec. 34 of the Overstrand Municipality's Community Fire Safety By-law, P.N 6454/2006. Failure to comply will result in legal action in terms of Sec. 55 of the said By-law. Fines and imprisonment may be imposed by a court of law."

Methods to be used on private village erven (less than 1ha)

4.1 *Manual*

4.1.1 *Manual non-mechanical clearing is done through the use of hand tools such as loppers, slashers, bow-saws, pruning scissors.*

4.1.2 *Manual mechanical clearing is done through the use of brush cutters and handheld chainsaws.*

Guidelines for minimum standards for clearing vegetation

1 *Grass may not be longer than 30 cm. (we don't see this as applying to Rooiels as we only have indigenous restios and no grasses)*

2 *Invasive alien vegetation must be eradicated and treated with herbicide, as applicable, to prevent re-growth.*

3 *Indigenous vegetation shall be reduced as per Section J of the policy. (see below)*

4 *All garden refuse and excess combustible material shall be removed from the property and disposed of at the relevant municipal transfer stations.*

5 *It is suggested that private landowners make use of the registered contractors available on the Municipal database as they are trained and skilled in the clearing of invasive alien plants and property clearing activities.*

Comment from Conservancy: our past experience indicates a lack of training for these "registered contractors" who tend to reduce a targeted area to desert-like conditions. We recommend either personal oversight while the work is being conducted or using a reliable team who have proven themselves able to work sensibly and sensitively. (We can refer you to owners who have engaged Ali Gama and his team with very positive results.)

About Milkwood Trees and other Protected/Endangered Plant Species:

Sideroxylon inerme (White Milkwood) are protected trees and may only be removed, cut or controlled in accordance to the determination of the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. In urban areas Milkwoods may be trimmed by a maximum of 25% without obtaining a permit. Topping of tree crowns and of trees growing in a natural forest ecosystem is excluded from this exemption. Destruction of protected trees or natural forest or any other protected/endangered plant species without a permit obtained from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and/or Cape Nature, is a criminal offence.

Extract from Section J, the requirements for private erven less than 1ha:

"Eradication and removal of all invasive alien vegetation. All combustible deadwoods, refuse, litter and other verified fire hazards shall be removed.

Grasses shall not exceed a height of 30 cm

Trees and shrubs to be trimmed from ground up by one third of height.

Reduce fynbos fire loading by a minimum of 50%". (This would include old, woody shrubs – mostly they will resprout and rejuvenate).

Churches in the area

NG Kerk

9 vm elke Sondag.

NG Kerk Gemeente-sentrum,

Disaweg, Bettysbaai

Roman Catholic Church

5.30 pm mass every Saturday

Twist Street, Betty's Bay

Anglican Chapelry of St Francis of Assisi

(shared with the Catholic Church)

9 am Sunday Holy Eucharist

Twist Street, Betty's Bay

Lakeside Chapel

9 am every Sunday.

Lakeside Drive/Wheeler Rd.

Betty's Bay

United Church

9 am every Sunday

Circle Road, Pringle Bay

Plot clearing instructions from the Municipality

The Municipality has been issuing property owners with instructions to clear their plots in line with the Fire Hazards Management Policy of September 2013. This is not a new approach, but it seems that there is a fresh drive to implement the policy.

We support efforts to reduce the fire hazards in built-up areas. The loss of two homes in Betty's Bay a couple of months ago, as well as four homes lost a few years ago, bears witness to the fact that there is a serious threat to homes in the case of fire. We have extracted those parts of the Policy that apply to Rooiels in an attempt to help owners understand what is expected of them. (See elsewhere in this edition.)

What is clear is that every plot is different and the indigenous flora on each needs an individual response. I quote from a letter from Ernst Thompson, our resident horticulturist and fynbos specialist:

Individual situations must be looked at. Firstly, we have three basic types of fynbos eg. Mountain fynbos (proteaceae, Ericaceae, etc. dominant), Vleiland fynbos (restios sages, and certain proteaceae) and lastly the Coastal Belt fynbos (gwarrie, taaibos, colpoon etc.) It must be kept in mind that the last type is of a more succulent nature and thus fire proof to a great extent.

“Due to our strong winds, it is practically impossible for anyone to grow a specimen tree. The only real way to counter this is by doing mass planting, so that the trees support each other. To open up these trees at the bottom is to guarantee their loss against the wind.

“We have a specific ecology at the foot of the mountain with specific flora and fauna. It will have a detrimental effect if the lower vegetation is cut to 500mm. This is not at all natural for this type of vegetation.

“One must remember that residents bought here as this appealed to them.

“One plant, excluding invaders that must be removed, that one can consider reducing the numbers of is *Metalasia muricata* (blombos). Although this is a pioneer plant and essential on disturbed ground for stabilization, it tends to create a fire hazard when older.

Suggestions from the Rooiels Conservancy:

- Request advice from one of the following conservancy members before starting: Janette Yeats, Ernst Thompson. They could then meet with the contracted team and guide/advise them.
- Use a reliable, properly trained team for clearing.
- Don't use herbicide except for invasive alien species which tend to resprout.
- When reducing the fynbos fire load, concentrate on old woody plants and prune them to about 30 cm which will enable them to resprout easily. Pay special attention to *Metalasia muricata* (blombos).
- Avoid leaving large areas stripped of all plant material.

Anuta Scholtz

If we could strip away the ideologies that separate us, stop the greedy destruction, and meet by the riverside, we would discover that we are all children of the same earth and that our lives are patterned by the ceremonial flow of the sun, moon, seasons and tides. We are all one in the spirit and in the body.

Sedonia Cahill and Joshua Halpern

Rooi Els security body soon to be a reality

The Rooi Els Security Association (RESA) was formed with the sole objective of becoming the entity through which security services are managed on behalf of all home owners. This means a single security service provider contracted to all the homes through RESA, which means one voice for all regarding security matters.

Why was RESA started and how will it work? Rooi Els, with about 240 homes, is not an attractive business proposition for a security provider, unless all home owners unite and use their collective buying power to contract one provider. There have been up to three security companies operating in Rooi Els at times and this has diluted the services that any one company could provide and security services have fallen short of what would be regarded as ideal.

In addition the collective voice of home owners is diluted by the fact that there are 240 odd individual clients of the service providers as opposed to one. One major client gets a lot more attention than 240 smaller ones. RESA is a registered not for profit company. It will manage the contract between the chosen security provider and home owners.

RESA will provide the premises for the security base in Rooi Els, which the chosen security provider will man on a 24 hour, 7 days a week basis. Yes, there will be costs for this, but all indications are that it will not increase the current security costs by any significant amount.

By having a lot more members than in the past, the security provider will be able to reduce their overhead charge per house, thereby allowing RESA to add the cost of renting Jo Hensen's old office, and other lesser overheads. If RESA controls the premises, any possible future change in Security Company could be done with minimal disruption.

RESA will not be responsible for security provision, but for managing the performance of the chosen security provider. All home owners or representative home owners will be eligible to become members of RESA. The members will determine the composition of the board of RESA and will make the decisions that are critical to the provision of security services in Rooi Els at the general meetings of RESA.

This is an initiative aimed at improving the provision of security services for

all of Rooi Els. A general meeting of RESA will be held on Tuesday 16th December at 11 am at Erf 102, Gazania Road. At this meeting there will be a vote on the proposal that RESA co-ordinate the security services of Rooi Els with a service provider. The choice will fall on ASK as the biggest current provider, and so will cause the least disruption to a most owners. Amongst other matters, a new monthly subscription will be proposed to be paid into the Nedbank account of RESA (who will pay ASK a lump sum monthly) and a board of directors elected. The starting date for the project is January 2015.

We will be communicating with owners by email and request that every homeowner sends an email to RESA@gmail.com with their erf number(s), surname, the first name they liked to be called by and the email address and telephone number for our communications. Copies of our notices, letters and other communications will be available in the RESA office. We encourage all to visit the office and meet the guards, so that we can build a closeness of community in fighting crime in Rooi Els. We need to look after each other.

Mark Butler

RESA – a background

Just as the leopard, the baboons and the caracal are part of the Rooi Els fabric, so is crime. By now, most Rooielsers have experienced this first hand.

In 2011 the Rooi Els Ratepayers Association Security decided that the increase in crime required an on hand security service. This proposal was outvoted at a Feb 2012 referendum, but the problem with security has been ongoing and increasing every year.

A first brave attempt from the community came in 2011 when a community patrol was organised with about 20 locals and a few people from adjacent towns. This was not sustainable, because of numbers. Then last year came Groenland, a further attempt from the community to find a security solution. A flash in the pan, said the sceptics, but the experience raised important issues:

- Residents have had enough. Rooielsers are fiercely independent, many come here to escape the rest of the world, but with the current crime rate, the intrusion from the world is enormous. The only way to put an end to this is to get crime under control.
- Residents had their first taste of a security company on site, and many will testify to the benefits, from response times of between 2 and 10 minutes, to helping with sick people and rescuing visitors from invading baboons. A close collaboration also developed between residents and the resident security provider. Walkers phoned in alarms and in this way problems with faulty signals were discovered and fixed.

Griet Odedaal

Special Law Enforcement Arrangements

Police presence over Christmas. This is promised in the special law enforcement arrangements for the December holiday period between 1 Dec to 25 January.

Rooielsers will have one daily patrol officer on the beach over the above period; a second patroller to control other areas (rocks around the village). This will double up between 16 – 25 Dec.

On top of this, Law Enforcement and security services will do regular mobile patrols throughout the village. Zero tolerance is promised for drunkenness/alcohol on the beach/loitering/noise nuisance/fireworks, while laws are to be strictly enforced about no dogs on beaches, illegal trailers/speeding/quad motor bikes and light pollution.

Special traffic arrangements to close some roads are in place for the period 16 to 25 December and 1 & 2 January, due to the congestion of vehicles near beach entrances. This is to allow roads to remain open for emergency vehicles. Road to be closed: from Drummond Arms around Bathers Road, down into Hotel Crescent, together with Gazania and Ixia on Anemone Street side. These roads will only be closed only when parking areas get congested, as per patrol officer's instructions.

Die brandseisoen is op ons.

Rooiels is currently in the high risk period of the fire season.

Please reduce the fire load on your property by clearing dead plant material and disposing of it at the appropriate municipal dump site. *In die proses, verwyder ook asseblief alle indringerplante op jou erf.*

Please do not leave dead plant material on your property or on the road verge as it constitutes a major fire risk. *En moenie jou tuinvullis brand nie. Dis onwettig, tensy jy spesifiek daarvoor 'n permit het.*

Never leave a braai fire unattended! Blus die vuur behoorlik nadat jy buite gebraai het. And a friendly reminder that NO FIREWORKS may be discharged. This is in line with Overstrand's Fire Ordinance. *Geskrewe toestemming vir vuurwerke kan slegs gegee word deur die Hoof van Brand en Nooddienste: Lester Smith.*

Rooiels Firewise Coordinator – Pierre Kruger – 071 399 9112

House sales looking up

Despite today's evolving technology and the huge role played by the internet, a signboard outside a property is still an excellent way to attract buyers. Sellers should not wait until the summer months arrive before putting their properties on the market; it is surprising how many buyers shop around in the winter months, looking for that summer holiday home to use.

The Rooi Els market is very active; I have sold 6 properties in Rooi Els during the past year. Prices have ranged from R650 000 for a vacant plot in the village to R3 300 000 for a seafront plot. Please do not hesitate to contact me for a free valuation.

Just for interest I have also sold 10 properties in Pringle Bay this year.

Wendy Cilliers from Pam Golding Properties

Arctic Terns

Terns, restless as the sparkling autumn sea
caren, with flashes of white,
along hidden planes
and angles of the wind,
their urgent shrieks
more sound and energy than seeming destination.

Will anyone know them on the day of their departure?
Perhaps tomorrow
they will leave in quiet order
for the northern summer
to recover and breed,
sadly, emptying
for another season
the noisy geometry of our sky.

Bruce Relly

Introducing new people to the old hack group

Imagine this: driving through an avenue of Australian myrtles lining Ocean View Drive, admiring the forest of large rooikrans trees in the nature reserve, watching baboons climbing in the huge rooikrans trees opposite the CBD, many roads forming little tunnels through tall aliens. This was Rooiels as we came to know it almost 40 years ago.

In die voortyd – so 40 jaar gelede het huiseienaars besef hulle sal self iets aan die indringers moet doen. Daar was min permanente inwoners, so meestal naweek- en vakansieganger het besluit om een keer per jaar bymekaar te kom om die rooikrans uit te roei. Soos wat daar meer mense gekom het, het die kapdae vermeerder tot kwartaalliks. Ons moes ons eie bakkies gebruik om die takke weg te ry, ons was almal nog jonk, ons kon vir 'n volle oggend werk sonder om te moeg te raak. En daar was nie toebroodjies en bier agterna nie, ons moes ons eie toerusting gebruik...

And then, one day, Jean Cowen (the original hacker) came up with a plan to hack once a month. Oh, no, I thought, this will never work. Well, our numbers grew to in the 20s on a hack day. Looking back, if it wasn't for this effort, this village would still be choking in a forest of invasive alien plants.

So, what has changed? The young hackers are all a lot older (two hackers are in their eighties), we can only work for two hours before exhaustion sets in, we are treated to sandwiches and beer afterwards, the municipality picks up the cuttings, equipment has been purchased, and our numbers have shrunk to around 12 ...

Surely the job should be finished by now? Unfortunately rooikrans seeds remain viable for 40 years or more. That means that we are still removing rooikrans trees which can trace their ancestry to those first big trees we cut down. On top of that we still have some property owners who believe that their rooikrans isn't doing any damage! And we need more bodies working.

Here's something you should know: Everybody will be received with the warmest of welcomes if you pitch up on just one hack. Those two hours of your life will be the most rewarding!

Where to report for this gratifying experience: Every first Saturday of the month either 08h00 or 08h30 (depending on season). We meet in front of Mark Butler's house, erf 124 Priestleya Rd and notification by email.

Anuta Scholtz

The Sins (Botanical) Of The Fathers

According to researchers alien plants first came to South Africa about a millennium ago. The first damage, in the form of invasive alien plants, was done by the early botanists for whom it was high fashion to have large collections of alien plants, and also to make gifts of them to their acquaintances. Later these invasive aliens were imported, mainly from Australia, to stabilize the dunes of the Cape Flats. Colonists also wanted the Cape to look like Europe, hence the oaks and pines.

The botanical fraternity is equally guilty. About 40 odd years ago, Botsoc recommended the New-Zeeland Christmas Trees (*Metrosideros excels*) as a good tree to plant along the coast. Today, in our area, it is one of the worst invasive aliens. At the time, the Mountain Club encouraged their members to go into the mountains with a pocket full of *Hakea* seeds to propagate them.

Later came the plants for commercial gain: black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*) for its tannic acid, the various pines and blue-gums for timber, or prickly pears for cattle food and human consumption. These are now some of our worst invasives.

"The famous Cape Floral Kingdom is seriously threatened by Australian hakeas, wattles and myrtles, and northern-hemisphere pines. These displace the native species; reduce water yields and increase fire intensities and erosion." – Dr. Brian van Wilgen, CSIR, Stellenbosch

A large part of the damage was done in the name of botany. We, the voluntary "botanists" of today, must bear equal guilt and responsibility to help nature by eradicating the invasives. That is, if we want to have a Fynbos Floral Kingdom in the future, there is only about 40 percent left.

Jan Joubert

Rock Time

For a lifetime, the sea bursts fierce
upon the unchanged rock
and seems to say
here, time goes hand in hand
with the scale of the stars
whilst, in the rough rhythm
of the waves,
there is more of poetry than power.

Bruce Relly

Building character and saving fynbos



Jill and Dick Lockley's garden in all its splendour

Gardening in Rooi Els is a character building exercise! The wind blows, there is too much rain, too little rain, baboons that pull out plants to inspect the roots and simply then discard them or sit on prize plants and squash them and even tortoises that munch every succulent they find. The victories are sometimes small, but rewarding, and certainly feed our souls.

We live in the heart of the fynbos kingdom and it is important that we retain as much of it as we can on our erven. Coastal fynbos species are at risk due to the rich coastal plains being ideal for human settlement.

Once indigenous gardens are established they are water wise and the enjoyment gained from watching the birds and butterflies attracted by the plants is endless. I find so many of my plants seed themselves and I am forever finding little treasures – even the proteas. With our hot dry and windy summers there is a need to compost the soil and mulch around the plants to prevent the soil drying out.

Although we are a small village conditions for gardening vary considerably from garden to garden. Close to the sea, with few exceptions, proteas do not thrive as they do farther away, sheltered from the salt air. It is always a good idea to wander around your area to see what is flourishing either in the bush or in gardens.

There are many hardy plants, suitable for low maintenance gardens such as succulents, aloes, mesemb and even agapanthus. But even these plants need a good start and some care and attention. Shrubs such as Euryops, Polygala and pelargoniums are good standbys for colour and are hardy when established. The buchus such as Coleonemas or the confetti bush are fragrant and easy to grow. Shrubs to attract birds such as the dagga plants like Leonotis leonuris and proteas especially the Leucospernum are rewarding. Crassulas such as Cotyledon orbiculata are life savers for the sun birds as they flower when food is scarce.

Bedding plants such as Felicia and Cinneraria are very colourful but need watering in summer. The old Osteospermum is colourful and hardy and gives good ground cover unlike the new hybrids which need more cossetting. Arctotis is another good ground cover – waterwise and colourful. Gazanias are lovely but are baboon fodder and best left out.

I have hardly scratched the surface of gardening here, and there are many more plants worth growing. After the good winter rains gardens in our village are looking very colourful, but the flower display along the road to Gordon's Bay has been stunning with the Felicias and Muraltias in shades of mauve and purple and finishing off with the Pelargonium cucullatus.

Jill Lockley

Are sugarbirds in trouble?

The extracts below are taken from the Newsletter of the Southern Overberg Branch of the Botanical Society of SA:

“Those long-tailed, often noisy, lovers of our proteas, the sugarbirds, could be becoming a threatened species. The only place you encounter them is in mature protea veld where they scavenge among the flower-heads of the large pincushions and proteas for nectar and insects, so acting as a first class pollinator.

“But here is the thing. They are totally reliant on mature protea veld. After a fire they will be totally absent from the area until the protea veld has recovered sufficiently to have protea flowers in bloom. This can take up to 10 years and more. With the huge fires that seem inevitable each summer, they lose their foraging area. Research shows they seldom move far from their home range so when this is destroyed in a fire, the affected birds are in big trouble.”

The Whale Coast Conservation adds the following note in their newsletter: We can all contribute to the protection of our biodiversity and the eco-system services that we derive free from nature.

Perhaps we can start by planting our gardens with protea species that are native to our area to provide sugarbird ‘restaurants’ in times of need. But before planting please consult a reputable nursery to ensure that you choose species that will not hybridise with local wild species.

The added bonus is that these protea species, once established, require no additional feeding or watering and can be pruned to suit your space.

Sugarbirds ringed

Our sugarbirds are free of scaly leg, a disease that has been plaguing urban sugarbirds. In January this year Dr. Phoebe Barnard and her team from the University of Cape Town, came to catch and ring sugarbirds in Rooi Els gardens to test whether they showed signs of the leg disease.

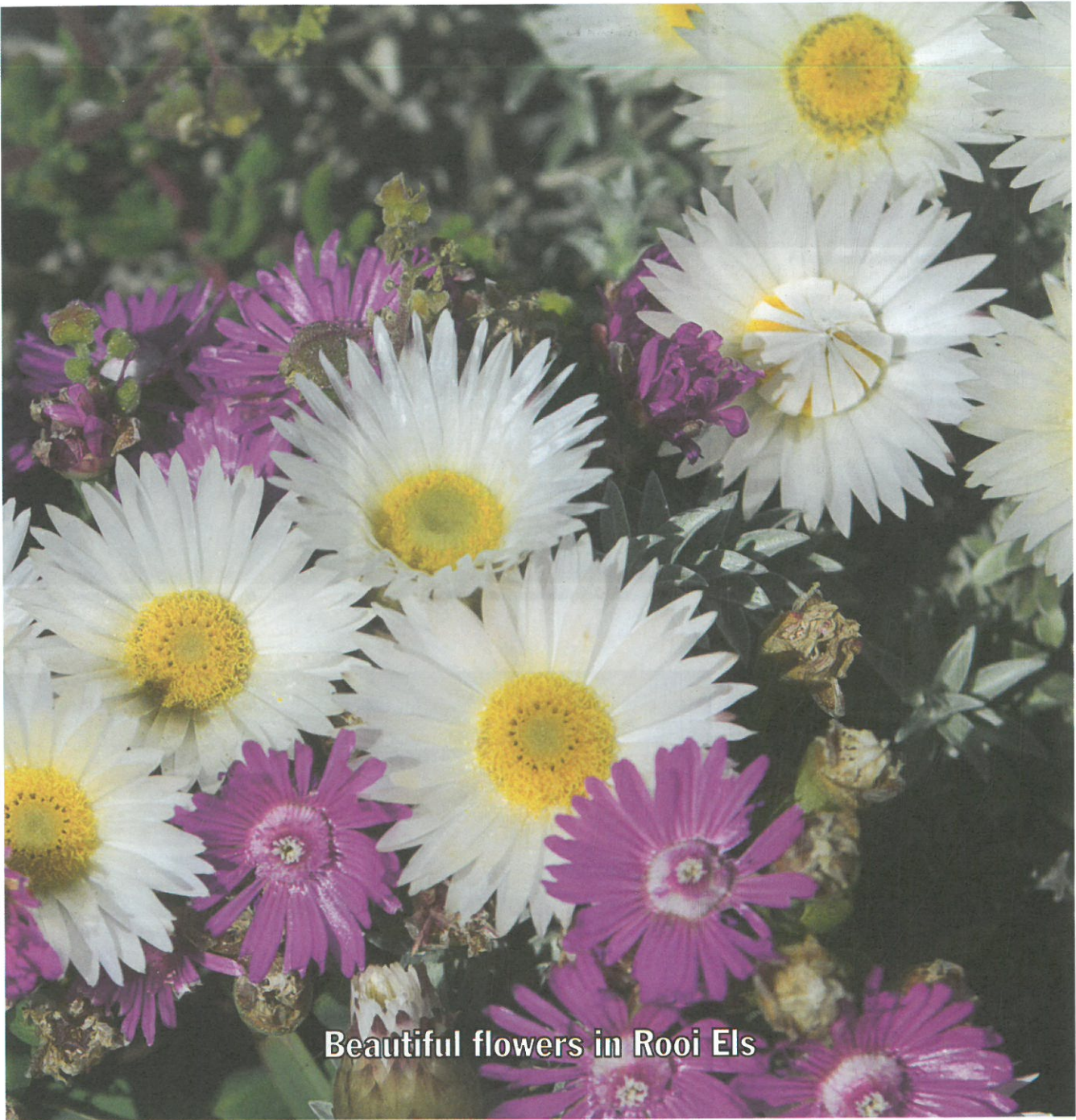
This is also a way to track their movements. So far, our birds are safe, they are not urbanised yet. The sugarbirds were out in full force and twenty were caught in less than an hour.



Die Woord *deur W.E.G. Louw*

Alles wat genoem word, lééf:
arikriekiel, aalwynblom,
jakkals wat in gate woon
en dassies teen die son.

Dáárom lê ek soms nagte wakker
en vrees ek dat die woord nie kom,
ter wille van rooi jakkalse
en dassies teen die son.



Beautiful flowers in Rooi Els

Gardens around the village are in full bloom after two good rain years. We live in the heart of the fynbos kingdom and it is important that we retain as much of it as we can in our gardens. Coastal fynbos species are at risk due to the rich coastal plains being ideal for human settlement.

The early Dutch settlers named the vegetation surrounding us, fynbos – perhaps because of the fine, needle-like leaves that so effectively resist dehydration and ensure survival through dry summers, fierce scorching southeasters and salty north-westerly gales. There are 9 000 species in the Cape Floral Kingdom, 6 200 which occur nowhere else.

We often see plants that we love on our walks, but we never find out what they are called. And knowing your plants is the first step for gardening!

Here is a selection of the most common plants from this area that flower around Christmas time. Some are found on the slopes of Klein Hangklip and along the gravel path to Pringle Bay. The plants are divided into colour of flower to make identification easy. The selection is compiled by Dave de Klerk from his Identification guide for plants growing naturally in and around Rooiels.

We encourage Rooielsers to find the plants in this selection and to take photographs of the plant and the setting. Let us know if you have got them all, and maybe new ones that are not in this selection.

Griet Odendaal



Aspalathus aspalathoides



Aspalathus ciliaris



Athanasia trifurcata (Klaaslouwbos)



Chrysocoma coma-aurea (Beesbos)



Helichrysum dasyanthum



Hymenolepis crithmoides



Leucospermum oleifolium (Overberg Pincushion)



Rafnia capensis



Senecio halimifolius (Tabakbos)



Ursinia paleacea (Geel magriet)



Edmondia sesamoides (Sewejaartjie)



Erica imbricata (Salt and Pepper Heath)



Lanaria lanata (Cape Edelweiss)



Syncarpha vestita (Cape Snow)



Zaluzianskya capensis (Verfblommegjie)



Erica mammosa (Ninepin Heath) (white form)



Helichrysum patulum (Kooigoed)



Felicia aethiopica (Wilde Asterjie)



Otholobium fruticans (Cape Town Pea)



Pseudoselago spuria (Bergaarbossie)



Psoralea pinnata (Fonteinbos)



Erica cristata



Erica fastigiata (Four Sisters Heath)



Erica gysbertii



Erica labialis



Erica mammosa (Ninepin Heath)



Erica placentiflora (Klokkiesheide)



Erica plukenetii (Hangertjie)



Erica pulchella



Pelargonium betulinum (Kanferblaar)



Chironia baccifera (Christmas Berry)



Chironia baccifera (Christmas Berry in flower)



Dilatis pillansii (Rooiwortel)



Erica barbigeroides



Erica bruniades (Kapokkie)



Erica corifolia



Erica perspicua (Prince of Wales Heath)



Pelargonium cucullatum (Wildmalva)



Phaenocoma prolifera (Everlasting)



Salvia africana-lutea (Bruinsalie)



Data on our local otters

Our Cape Clawless otters survive quite well around Rooi Els. Sometimes you can hear them whistling when they come out of the sea. That is how a mother remains in communication with her young ones.

An African Clawless Otter (*Aonyx capensis*) is also called by the name “Groot otter” and has partly webbed and clawless feet (hence its name), and it is in fact the second biggest freshwater kind of otter. The Brazilian, or Giant otter is the largest freshwater otter and the sea otter is the largest otter of all (fresh and salt water). The African Clawless Otter could be found next to bodies of water and in forested areas, even savannahs.

The fur of the African Clawless Otter is smooth and thick. The colour is chestnut and they have white facial spots that go down to the throat and chest. The African Clawless Otter’s paws are partially webbed, with five digits.

In the way of shelter, logs and even foliage would entice

this otter. They are clumsy on the ground and build their burrow near the water, as this would permit them an escape route when in danger.

The new-borns are raised by the female alone, and gestation takes up to 2 months. The weaning occurs from 45 up to 60 days. Full maturity is around one year. The diet consists of fish, frogs and crabs. When they spot a prey, they dive, catch it and then return to ground to eat.

Basically a solitary animal, they live with up to 5 members. Otters don’t have many predators. Their number one enemy is the python. Other predators are fish eagles and crocodiles. When threatened, an otter screams to warn its brethren, or to disorient a threatening predator. In our area, dogs are a problem, because they chase the otters and the young can’t keep up with their parents and get lost.

Evette Weyers

Rooielses Alison Baigrie took these otter shots on Monday, 14th April, at about 4 pm at the Slipway Beach where the old concrete column stood.





Pa voel (afgeneem deur Mike Titley)



Ma voel

Kyk na die voëls van die hemele, hulle hou van Mozart

Twee tenger Oranjebors Suikerbekkies het in een van die lollipop wildevyebome op ons stoep kom nes maak. Die wyfie begin nesbou – van gras, plantvesel, spinnerak en droë blare. En sag uitgevoer met plantdons en vere. Dit neem haar drie besige dae. En toe lê sy twee roomkleurige eietjies met olyf en grys vlekke, vertel Rooielser Gerard Scholtz.

Net 16 dae later is die twee kleintjies gebore. Soos twee haarlose, veerlose rooi–swart rotjies. Pa en ma gaan vreeslik tekere en huppel uitbundig in die lug rond. Ons juig saam en almal kom kyk. Die geluidjies uit die nes is eers net ‘n sagte gemurmer, maar word al hoe skeller soos pa en ma kos aanvlieg. Klein vlinders, vlieë en stukkie uit ‘n protea gepluk met nektar aan. Ons hele lewe begin draai om die babas. Soggens as dit lig word gaan groet ons, praat die hele dag deur met hulle, en saans vou ons hulle toe met ons seënwense.

Dit was op die stormagtige Sondag 16 Februarie, twee weke nadat hulle uitgebroei is, en warmste dag in mense heugenis hier, dat die ma se hele lyfie en vlerke begin fladder, asof daar iets in haar aangeskakel is. Sy fladder heen en weer. Roep, sing, koggel en nooi die kleintjies. Die pa bly op ‘n afstand op ‘n tak wat die wind wild en woes heen en weer swaai en hy sing sonder ophou. En skielik, onverwags, verlaat die twee babas die nes en fladder tot in die naaste tak buite die stoep.

Hulle het vlerke gekry. Hulle vlieg.

Maar dit is waar die moeilikheid begin. Die wind waai verwoed. Skielik bars pandemonium los toe al die voëls van die omtrek beginne raas en waarsku. Asof uit ‘n mitiese toneel verskyn meneer Muishond om die draai. Sluipend en slu. Listig. Met daardie ronde donker ogies en die blink neus. Ek verjaag hom, en soos hy verder op sy gewone roete deur die bostonnells sluip is die kwaai kawalkade voëls agterna. In die harwar en wind raak die een baba weg. Die ma raak histories. Gaan soek in die nes. Agter die meubels op die stoep. Vlieg selfs die huis in en roep. Sy kom vra by ons, kyk in ons oë. Ons treur die hele dag. Dit word die warmste dag. Later die middag 40.7C. Die hitte, die wind, meneer Muishond. Met skemer gaan sê ons met swaar harte nag by die nes. En... daar steek twee klein bekkies uit!

“Kyk na die voëls van die hemele; hulle saai nie en hulle maai nie en hulle bring nie bymekaar in skure nie, en tog voed julle hemelse Vader hulle. Is julle nie baie meer werd as hulle nie?”

Naskrif: Die suikervoëls hou van Mozart. Spesifiek sy klavierwerke. Vanoggend luister ek na Mozart Radio hier op die stoep waar ek sit en skryf en skielik word ek bewus van ‘n oorverdoende koor van voëls wat luidkeels sit en saamsing. As dit konsertwerke of sang is, is hulle stil. Maar kom die klavier, val al 9 in die gallery lustig en uitbundig in. Kyk na die voëls...

The duiker no longer crushed by concrete

We all chose to live in Rooiels because we love the untamed, natural atmosphere. We put up with the poor roads and no street lights, so that we can keep it unspoiled. Most of us forego the walls, fences and security lights for protection, not because crime is lower than in the cities, but also deliberately because we want to try and avoid the impact of civilisation on the ambience and spirit of Rooiels.

As our village grows we need to be vigilant to be sure we keep our windswept peninsular a place that encourages nature and reinforces our spirits in its celebration of God's untrammelled creation. The coastal fynbos along our roads does much to enhance the aesthetic value of Rooiels and it is also important to consolidating our status as an integral part of the Kogelberg Biosphere reserve. This is an appeal – please can we be sure to keep the road reserves wild. Can you actively encourage coastal fynbos around the borders of your erf?

We all have different ideas of what our gardens should be and provided the gardens do not include plants that will spread and be invasive, you should live your choice. But the road reserves are the one place where the natural coastal fynbos of the area can be used as habitat for the insects, animals and birds. Furthermore, there are actual bye-laws that require us to leave the road reserves natural – can we all try to ensure that we let those areas go back to fynbos indigenous to Rooiels? Possibly we can even help by replanting species that are being lost and that are important to our insects, birds, reptiles and mammals.

The road verges belong to the Municipality and, apart from driveway access to your home, are supposed to be left undisturbed as our part of living in a Biosphere Reserve. These verges are very important 'fynbos corridors' for both flora and fauna. They encourage gleaming sunbirds, long-tailed sugarbirds, tortoises and pollinating butterflies into the village. It is these verges that help to retain our floral diversity and locally endemic species. If these have been damaged by building or other activities, or if they were covered in lawn or were otherwise damaged in the past, the fynbos will recover on its own if you loosen the soil and keep it relatively free of alien weeds and grasses. You can hasten the process if you plant some locally indigenous plants, but you will be surprised by how quickly nature will repopulate it. It is these wild road reserves that give Rooiels the untamed feeling we all fell in love with. The Rooikat on the cover is just one of the animals that need these wild verges, both to provide food for its prey and as home for its young.

The Sleep of my Lions by Douglas Livingstone, an extract:

Save me from civilization, my pastory from further violation;... to the quagga, the dodo, the sleep of my lions..... Grant me a day of moon-rites and rain-dances; when rhinoceros root in trained hibiscus borders;.... Accord me a time of stick-insect gods, and duiker no longer crushed by concrete

Kay Leresche

The Micro Frog

The Micro Frog (*microbatrachella capensis*) is one of the smallest amphibians in South Africa with an adult length of approximately 15 mm.

It only occurs in certain areas between Betty's Bay and Cape Agulhas and on one site on the Cape Flats, where it survives in acidic blackwater fynbos vleis.

One of these sites is in the middle of the Kenilworth Racecourse in Cape Town. In Betty's Bay a proposed development was stopped to protect these unique frogs.

They could possibly occur at Rooi Els as well, says local expert Ernst



...just as big as your thumbnail

Thompson, we just haven't discovered them yet.

The filling in, drainage or pollution of vleis, and alien vegetation encroachment, are major threats facing this frog species.

The Micro Frog is critically endangered and is one of the most threatened lowland amphibians in South Africa.

Only four sub-populations survive and their distribution is fragmented and restricted and comprises of four sub-populations over a total area of less than 10 square kilometres.

The Rooi Els Leopard Project

The highlight for the Rooi Els Leopard Project was that Wolfgang Steinbach arranged for two more Cuddeback Black Flash cameras to be bought direct from the manufacturers in America at half the price. These cameras are the latest models available and are now installed together with the original two cameras. Rooi Els now have 4 cameras at the cave site.

In this way we hope to cover all approaches to the cave and also get photos of both sides of the animals visiting the cave. For an accurate identification, both sides of the animal should be recorded. Markings are asymmetrical as they differ on the left and right sides. Our new photographs could assist the Boland Cape Leopard girls to identify our mystery leopard once and for all. We have recorded a number of photos of him/her, yet still have not been able to either sex it or confirm whether or not it has been photographed by other cameras.

In May Jill Lockley, Wolfgang and I attended the 10th Anniversary of the founding of the Cape Leopard Trust at a weekend function in the Cederberg. We met the inspiring founder, Dr Quinton Martins, and his associated staff members.

We were very impressed with the organisation of the weekend – attended by over 300 supporters of the Trust. We only had to book our own accommodation. Hikes and lectures were arranged for us. We climbed those beautiful mountains to see the areas in which Quinton Martins had first set his elementary camera traps 10 years ago and then compared those cameras to the sophisticated ones deployed now. The whole experience was highly motivating and we returned to Rooi Els keen to further the work we are doing to assist in recording the movements of leopards in our area.

I am often asked how our submission of the “porcupine kill” photo sequence did in the National Camera Trap photographic competition held earlier this year. Unfortunately we did not win a prize but achieved a “Highly Commended”. Pictures of this killing sequence on page 16 of our last Edition. Because of Jill’s bicycle accident and now our family bereavement the new cameras have not yet been visited and results assessed.

Dick Lockley (Leopard Project Admin Clerk)

Fire spectacle

On 28 February this year Rooielsers had a fire scare, and everyone was impressed with the efficiency with which the fire was dealt with. A helicopter and two spotter planes were involved. It was a reminder of the dangers of fire in our fynbos area.

A small fire started against the mountain to the south of the reservoir and spread quickly. First on the scene was Pierre Kruger, our own fire co-ordinator.

The fire fighting services were on the scene really quickly and so was the fire helicopter. The helicopter pilot was amazingly fast and accurate and dropped the water exactly on the spot every time. Two spotter planes were circling the area continuously. One of them ended the show by dropping a fire retardant in the form of big white flakes/bubbles which descended over a strip of fynbos below the line of water drops.

The heroes, apart from the official fire fighters, were people like Jill Lockley and Wolfgang Steinbach who were on the scene, beating the flames while the fire was still relatively small.

The fire ended close to some of the homes, and it was a reminder of the dangers of fire in our fynbos area.

Light pollution

“His path was marked by the stars of the southern hemisphere and he walked his days under African skies.”

We are reminded by the words of Paul Simon what a joy it is to be able to look up and be able to see the millions of stars in the night sky, to be able to show a child the Southern Cross, to be able to walk at night with a sense of wonder, to watch the moon rise.

It is also in consideration of our numerous nocturnal animals, especially the birds.

For these reason, we have, as a community, decided against street lighting and why we encourage home-owners to limit or avoid the use of outside lights. By-laws require that our lights do not spill beyond our erf boundaries. To truly live the vision, we should use only essential lights and draw curtains at night.

Mary Comrie

Bird Chat

What a busy birding year it's been in Rooi Els! New sightings, the demise of the eagle chick, peregrine and kestrels with chicks, our bird celebrities, the rock jumpers attracting birders from all the globe and nests in strange places.

I've been at a loss compiling this year's bird chat with Franny my co-conspirator in a dire depression over the loss of her early September six chicks. She and the rest of the Cape Spurrow covey are p#*@!* off with the ever decreasing "overgrown" erven, so perfect for nesting sites. "It's not much to ask, a real piece of low fynbos where we can hide and incubate our eggs, is it?" This acid comment is a barbed reference to the Municipality's bizarre plot clearing policy. She has a point. If "suburbia" is allowed to come to the Kogelberg Biosphere's buffer zone these omnipresent feathered Rooielsers could become a thing of the past.

The swifts and swallows returned in early September and after much aerial combat the exclusive avian real estate of 127's stoep was re-occupied by swifts. This pair subsequently spent a great deal of time and energy defending it against fellow swifts.

It never fails to amaze me that these spectacular flyers are fuelled by aerial plankton, gnats and other irritating insects! Humans owe insectivorous birds a huge thank you! White rumped swifts can be the villains usurping swallows nests. If the neck of a swallows nest is "tight", the swifts will line it with feathers to ease their direct flight in. Swifts cannot perch and are only still when inside the nest where they lie down, their feeble legs too weak to support them. They have sharp talon like feet so they can "hang", but it is the open sky where they excel, rapier-winged and aerodynamically designed swifts are imperious avifauna.

"Wolfgang's bench" has incidentally provided a perfect viewing spot for our rich seabird life that congregate on the Point with its ever growing permanent colony of swift terns, assorted cormorants, gulls, oystercatchers and even the odd penguin. Add to this mix the migratory terns, the odd visitors like whimbrel and turnstone and the ever present white fronted sandpipers, a veritable "zoo" of avifauna. Birding in Rooi Els is never dull and never fails to amaze. Happy holiday and birding.

Alison Ayre

A walk in the park?

Sandra Yeo, a Rooi Els swallow, went for a hike at the Robberg Peninsula at Plettenberg Bay in March this year, as it was first on her Bucket List of experiences. "Am I glad I finished that one!"

She tells her story:

Not very high, reasonably level, a whale-like protuberance into the waters of Plettenberg Bay – that's what the Peninsula looks like that from a distance. Must be a doddle... So, with water and hat, I thought I could cope, particularly as I restricted myself to the half walk which is predicated as a two hour trudge. Two hours for barely 5kms? No problem...

I started off down the east side, but turned back as it seemed 'not quite right' and continued on the west side until I reached The Gap. It was then that the first realisation of what I had committed to kicked in: how on earth was I to get down from this plateau? I did not follow the signs.

So, I bummed down and then crossed over to continue to Witsand on the correct route. By now, I was well and truly exhausted and my legs seemed too short, I had to stop every few moments. I stood and gazed down at the seal colony and wished I could be among them.

Having plodded back to The Gap, I realised that I could cross over and continue back, in the wrong direction, to the start, a much shorter route! I returned looking like a Human Christmas Tree with every exposed part of my body glistening and my clothes clingingly sodden. My thighs took three days to stop giving me grief!

Why so cocky? I have climbed in the Lake District and Scotland; walked some of the South West Coast Path and a lot on Exmoor and Dartmoor in the UK; I have staggered a bit around the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve and in the European Alps. I am no stranger to a challenge. However, maybe that was some years ago and although I try to walk five kilometres a day, with some degree of difficulty involved, I cannot, hand on heart, say any of that is really challenging.

On reflection, I started out too late (10.45) and I needed more than 2 hours and a proper backpack. Also, this walk is best done in winter.

The scenery was lovely, and I recommend it to all the younger people. If you walk the whole peninsula there is an overnight hut. It is a magic place where you rely on your own resources.

The genet loves Monteverdi

Sightings as they happen. Rooielsers are informed about wonderful sightings almost as they happen through a local email network Tweet. These reported everyday miracles are inspiring to all, as everyone is reminded to keep their nature eyes vigilant. Rooielsers who wish to receive news and to participate, can do so by contacting birdsarefun.tweet@gmail.com.

Here follows extracts from some of the Tweets received this year:

7 October, Jenny Stark: "I spotted a Namaqua Dove this afternoon at about 5:30, on the verge of scrub adjoining the beach, just where the retaining dune fence is between the slipway and the Kirkinis home. I see from the RE website that this species has been seen in RE before but would just like to know how common they are here?" Tweet : The last time it was sighted was October 2011. It is actually one of my favourite birds with such a glorious call.

12 October, Louise du Toit: "Did you know that genets love Monteverdi? It's a fact. Coming downstairs at 8.45 pm, listening to heavenly music, I caught the beautiful genet tail first jogging past our sliding doors. I see my last entry was 2001 of the (last) dead one on the tarred road. Years ago they were inquisitive visitors at night until the big kill on the coastal road."

Tweet: We have had genet on our side but sporadically. Esme Munnik at Watercolours used to have one there almost every day because she then fed it/them – again going back to early 90's'.

12 October, Louise du Toit: We have the Cape Rock Jumpers many times a day at our water bowl and cheese supply." Tweet: GREAT NEWS, I have yet to see Rock jumpers so far into Rooi Els. I saw one many years ago, behind the Prinses. The cheese is also of great interest because they usually only like this during the breeding season, which must have been very successful as they are moving out of their "comfort zone" of the "road" between the Raymond's and Skerpioenskraal. I have counted seven there this spring season.

17 April. Hamerkop on main beach. Just seen this morning. Keep a look out for any different birds these hols, please. The Hamerkop was last seen in July 2013.

16 March: A wonderful Cape Eagle-Owl was seen by June van Reenen in her garden 20 minutes ago. She was alerted to it by Cape Bulbuls and she thought that it must be a snake and then she alerted us. It has subsequently moved on to the Podestas. It must have been disturbed because it is nocturnal. It calls just after dark, a deep hoo hoo ho - so perhaps check it out tonight! Look for the large orange eyes and enormous feet. It is probably resident in Rooi Els as "pellets" were recently found at below a flag post on a beach front property. The last sighting was by Dave de Klerk in December 2010.



A wonderful Cape Eagle-Owl captured by June van Reenen in her garden in broad daylight. It must have been disturbed because it is nocturnal. Look at the large orange eyes and enormous feet. The last sighting was by Dave de Klerk in December 2010.

Boules Day

Rooielsers of all ages are invited to the annual Boule championships in December as part of our holiday programme, and possibly another one in January. The last competition was held in April this year at Charlie's place next to the slipway. Seven teams of 2 each participated and the winners were Ernst Thompson and Jill Lockley. "Closest to Jack" went to Rina Thompson. A quarterly event will be announced throughout the year.

The rules are simple and straightforward. They are published below, so that all can feel free to participate in the championships. The rules: Teams consist of one to four players, each player throwing two or three boules (metal balls). The team whose boules land closest to the target wins.

A game begins with a coin toss to determine the starting team. This team chooses the play area, draws the circle to stand in (with both feet) and throws the target cochonnet (Jack) about 10 m from the circle. They then select a player to throw the first boule as close to the Jack as possible.

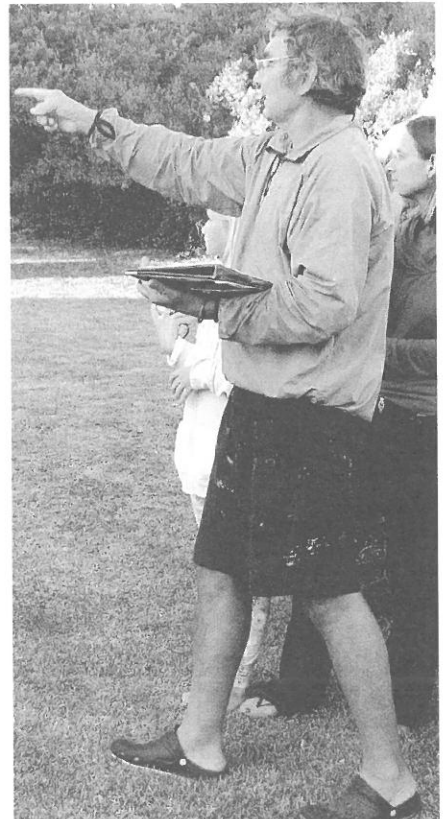
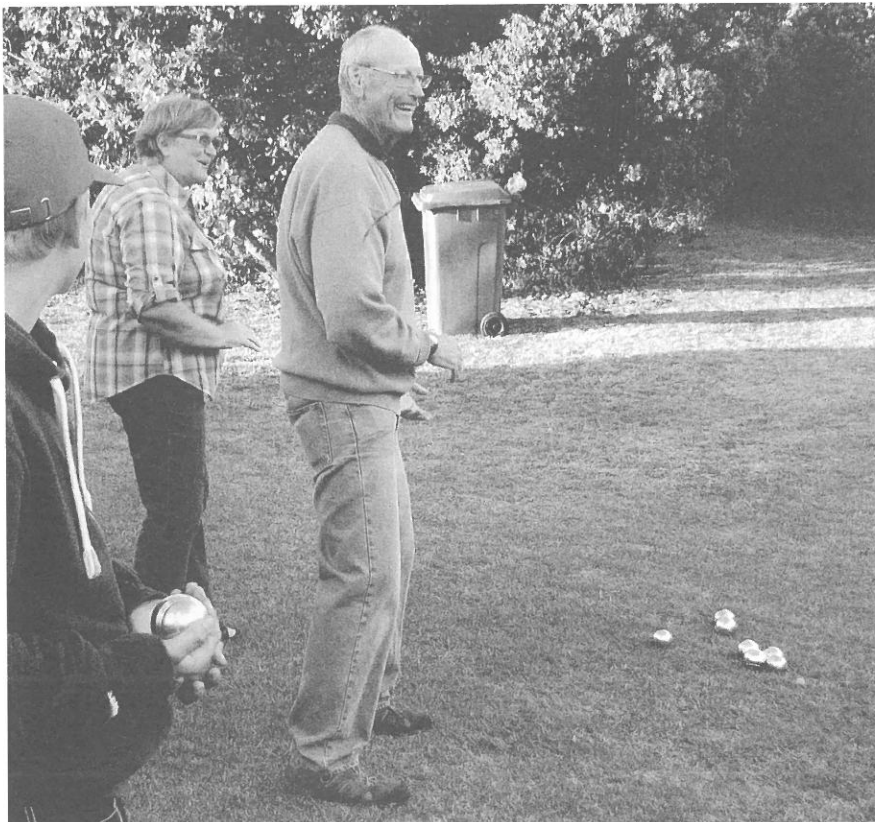
Then it is over to the opposing team who tries to beat the first thrower. They continue throwing until they take the lead (closest to Jack), or run out of boules. Once a new lead is established, the first team steps in to throw their remaining boules, until they re-establish the lead or run out of boules. There is no fixed sequence or fixed turns.

Once all boules are thrown, the score is recorded. The team closest to the Jack gets one point. Extra points are given for any other boules of the winning team closer to the Jack than those of the opposing team.

The winner then draws a circle around the Jack and starts a new "end" or round. The game continues until one side scores 13 points. A match consists of 3 games.

Boules originated in France and one of the old traditions that the Rooielsers will be spared, is that when a player loses 13 to 0, he has to kiss the bottom of a girl named Fanny. Almost everywhere in France you will find a picture, woodcarving, or pottery figure of this bare-bottomed lass. The team "that made fanny" has to buy a round of drinks for the winning team.

Dick Lockley



Rooielsers hard at work at this year's boules. Rina Thompson and Dick Lockley checking the distances, while organiser Wolf Steinbach points out the rules.



Close to home

Today, you can call me inspired; friends in Scotland have just released a collection of photographs (originally as an exhibition, more recently, a beautifully printed book) called “Zero Footprint”. Every image has been taken from the stoep of their lowlands Dalry home, each depicting the light, weather and wildlife seen from that one spot – it’s a very special body of work.

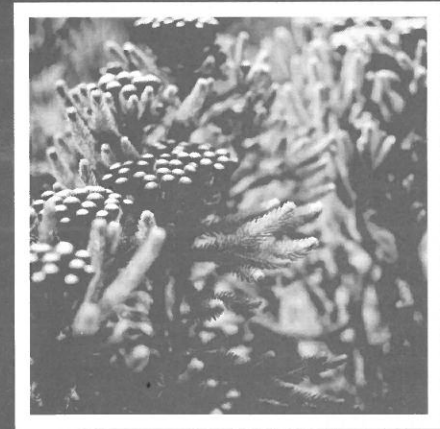
Which really got me thinking of a similar series taken here. No-one can deny the rugged and tough terrain, the fynbos, the ocean and four-seasons-in-one-day weather. Will that translate that into something spectacular too?

I did a bit of digging in my archive, looking for images that might give me a clue as to how do-able this project might be and when complete, give the viewer a true perspective of the extraordinary place in which we live. Within moments of starting my search, it became clear that a hundred or so images taken from a single viewpoint won’t work here – with one view, I’d be leaving out so much of the area’s natural diversity. Clearly, I need to change my brief a bit.

These five photographs are a starting point. If you know the area well, one is immediately recognisable. The rest, just a part of where we live, things we see and experience every day.

Lucky us.

Paul Perton



Our eagle chick killed



Sad news for eagle lovers was that this year's Verreaux chick was "murdered" by a foreign male eagle. However, science was served, as this attack was caught on film, the first time ever, writes Breeze's eagle team:

The Verreaux Eagle season began well, with wonderful courtship displays and stick gathering to "upgrade" their luxurious nest on the face of Klein Hangklip in

mid-May. The eggs were laid around 30/31st May and the first sound of the chick calling, was reported on 18 July. On 15 August, at around 4 weeks old, the chick was photographed by rock climber Mark who placed a camera placed at the nest site. This was the first time that Lucia Rodrigues (an experienced and authoritative, enthusiastic Citizen Scientist) had placed one at a nest with such a young chick, so Rooielsers were indeed most privileged.

Unfortunately on 13 September when we went up Klein Hangklip again to collect the camera footage and to tag the chick, the nest was empty. From about 28 to 30 August we were worried, because we neither heard the chick nor saw the adult Eagles.

What happened? For thirty six hours the chick was left alone (23rd/24th August) with no food or water. Two adults returned, one was not of the

original pair and this adult killed the chick. All of this was recorded on the camera, there is no speculation. The footage is "amazing and gruesome" and is still being studied by a group of ornithological scientists. It is probably the first time that such an attack has ever been caught on camera. The Eagles have not been seen again since 9 September. Hopefully they will return and continue to be a daily sighting in our Rooi Els skies.

If, anyone else would like to be kept up-to-date with Rooi Els bird sightings then, please send your email address to birdsarefun.tweet@gmail.com and also, your contributions will always be welcomed.

See you at the BIRD WALK in our Holiday Programme Calendar.

RERA AGM

All Rooielsers are invited to the Annual General Meeting of the Rooi Els Ratepayers Association to be held at 17:00 on 22 December at the Drummond Arms.

Come meet the other home-owners and make your voice count.
For newcomers, we are sending a membership form with your magazine.

Ons noem hulle op die naam

Ons gee seker almal gereeld name aan die diere wat ons leer ken op Rooi Els, en die plekke wat ons gereeld besoek. Die alfa kees, Charlie, was opgevolg deur Harige Harry.

Marius en ek noem die een jong tiener bobbejaan wat geen trop het nie, 'die weeskind'. Spesifiek oor hy so hartverskeurend roep na 'n bobbejaan trop om hom aan te neem.

Dit klink meer soos 'n mens se weeklaag as 'n bobbejaan sin. Van 'n afstand af roep hy na die trop, maar geen kees sien of hoor hom raak nie.

Wat van die name van ons baai? Ek weet van Bakkiesbaai, Bamboesbaai en Rooi Els baai, is daar dalk ander? Laat ons weet wat is die name vir kесе en die geliefde plekke wat julle gebruik.

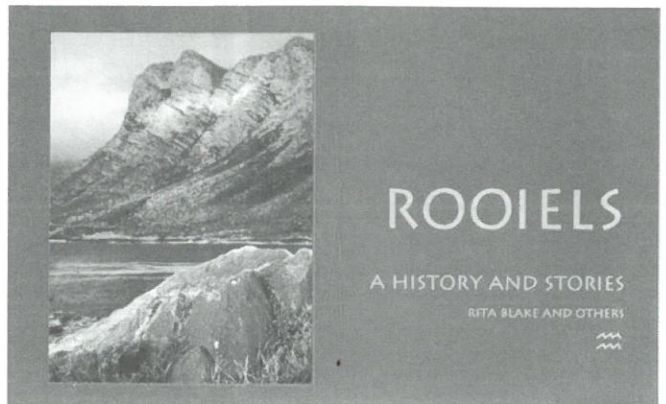
Evette Weyers

Rooi Els has a history

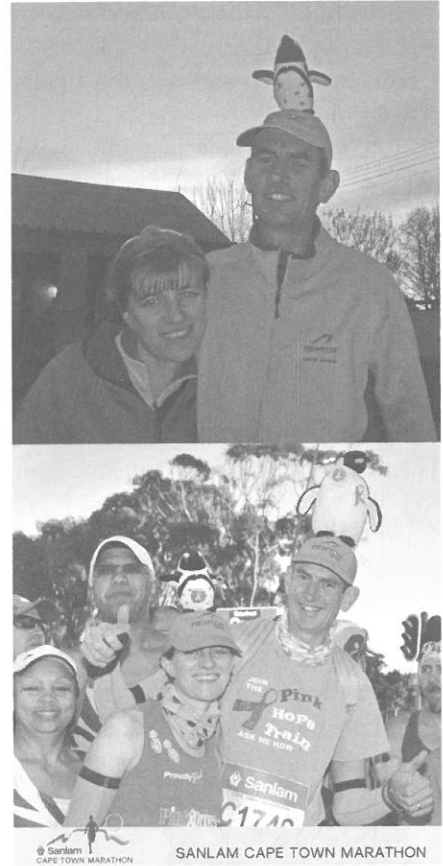
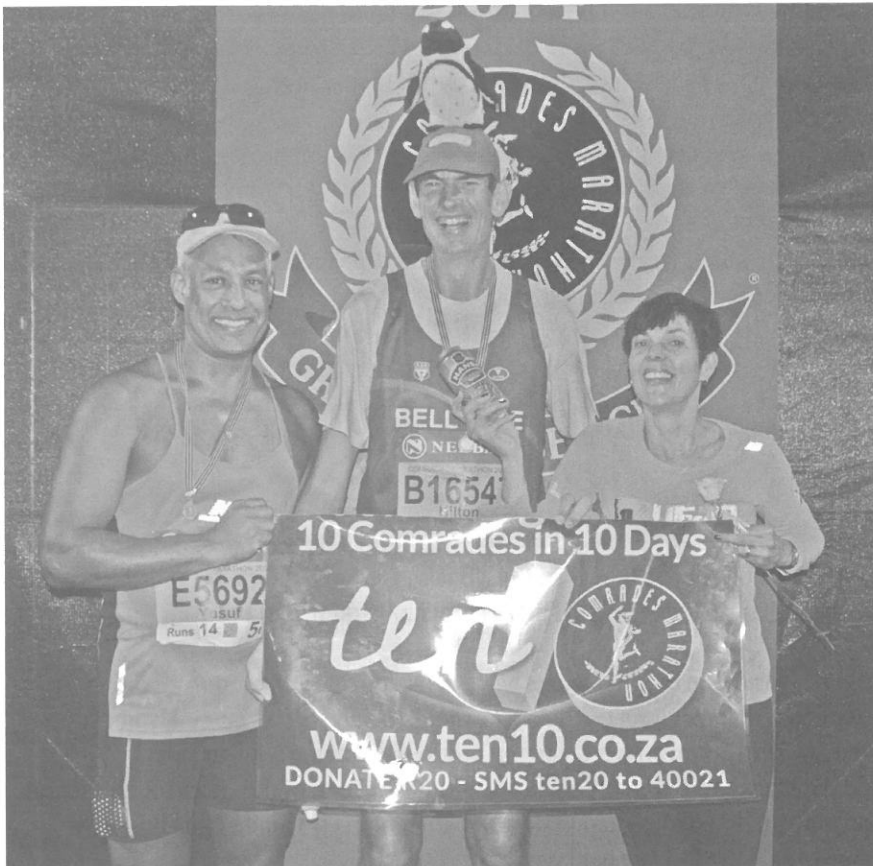
Do you know the history of, or current affairs in Rooiels?

Do you own a copy of History of Rooiels and other stories?

To purchase a copy, contact:
conservancy@rooi-els.co.za



Hilton Murray runs 10 Comrades in 10 days



Hilton Murray and Lizet with the people from his charity, Pink Drive.

"We are participating in next year's 90th Comrades celebration in a Pink Drive running Bus, called the Pink Hope Bus.

I will be the official running conductor!"

Ten Comrades in ten days. This was achieved by Rooielse Hilton Murray (48) in June this year. He completed about 90 km per day in the nine days before the Comrades, as he made his way from Johannesburg to Pietermaritzburg in time for the start of the world's largest ultra-marathon. And then he finished the actual Comrades 15 minutes before cut-off time – a mighty 873 km in 10 days.

This was his eleventh official comrades. Starting in 1989, it took him 25 years to complete the first 10, and then only 10 days to do the equivalent of 10 more.

Hilton, who co-owns a shoe shop in Cape Town with Zola Budd, undertook this huge challenge with two friends, running in support of two charities, Pets Empowerment in Townships and Pink Drive (breast cancer). He was the only one to complete the whole distance.

He started training in home town Harrismith when he was 15, after ending last in his first race. Before that he never competed in any sporting event because of a serious kidney condition since the age of 5. Now there is no stopping him.

When phoned early October, Hilton had already completed three more 80 km runs as well as a 12 hour relay since June. In the 32 years of running he has never been to a physiotherapist and uses no supplements. "I don't even have a regular GP."

Previous records? "I am the only athlete ever to complete 2 Two Oceans and 2 Comrades with a penguin on my head. I love penguins and am a regular visitor to the Boulders and Betties' Bay colonies." This 2 meter running penguin and his wife, Lizet, who has completed 5 Comrades herself, bought their Rooi Els house five years ago.

The secret to his 873 km success? It's all in the head, and the diet; "I've been on Tim Noakes' high fat, low carbs diet for the last year and am living proof that it works. I didn't even suffer a muscle cramp, in spite of doctors and sport nutrition specialists warning that it was not humanly possible and that I would run out of energy. I ate every 10 minutes, carrying with me salamis and cheeses. A lot of the credit goes to Lizet who kept me well stocked and supported me in my few resting hours, and my brother Marius."

What is next for 2015? After my epic run, the goal post of what is humanly possible has moved to around 1300km in total, on a Comrades distance of 87-90 km per day, under 12 hours. As I was told before, after that you cannot eat enough to sustain your energy levels. So I thought, what about doubling up? From Cape Town to Durban, a 1000 miles (1609 km) in 20 days? "You never know."

In Memoriam

We pay tribute to Rooielsers who have passed in the last year. Their contributions will be remembered with gratitude.

Keith Mattison passed away on 17 July of this year. This loyal volunteer for Botsoc and other non-government organisations, for many years, will be missed by all those whose lives he touched.

He will be missed most by Ruth, whom we have come to know as a skilled facilitator and loyal supporter of village conservation actions. Our sincere condolences go to Ruth at this time of loss.

Tony Hall, another great son of Rooiels, passed away in January this year. His great contribution to Rooiels will be remembered, specifically to our knowledge and appreciation of our indigenous flora..

We also say goodbye to **Harriet Wall**, who passed away end last year. Her daughter Bronwyn Coelen wrote a letter to the Breeze: "My Mom had been very weak and ill. Mom had a deep love for Rooi Els and loved living there. I managed to share the beautiful pictures in your South East addition of the Breeze with my Mom on Monday morning and it made her smile. Thank you for bringing Mom joy."

OUPA HANS



Picture: 'n Sportprent van Oom Hans, geteken vir sy tagtigste verjaardag, n geskenk van sy kinders.

Oom Hans Els was 'n geliefde inwoner van Rooiels. Hy is op 25 Junie 2014 na 'n siekbed oorlede. Sy buurman van 33 jaar, Gerard Scholtz, het hierdie brief op die dag van sy afsterwe geskryf uit Auchswitz/Birkenau in Pole.

"Oom Hans het 'n ereplek in ons harte gehad en ons was bevoorreg om 'n afskeidsgesprek met hom te kon hê. Hy het 'n ironiese lewe gelei. Hy het sy foute herken, erken en ten koste van homself dit met groot flair vertel. Wie sal ooit die stories oor sy gebreide baaikostuum vergeet, of die vrag koffiebone wat muf geword het, of die stukkende kombi met hom en Tannie Gina bo-op 'n vragmotor al die pad van baie ver af?

"Vir Oom Hans het sy familie bo alles eerste gekom. Sy liefde vir veral sy kleinkinders het hom teer gemaak. Oom Hans het die lewe liefgehad. Niemand kon so lekker lag soos hy nie. Niemand kon 'n storie vertel soos hy nie. Hy was die gees van enige geselskap.

"Oom Hans se groet die laaste jare was altyd: lief vir julle hoor!

Dit is wat by ons sal bly."

Rooikatte hit the headlines

In May this year a Rooi Els caracal family made headlines when it came to visit a few residents enjoying a quiet afternoon at Hettie Claasen's house.

The visitors were astonished to see a wild caracal standing in the garden, 3m away, staring at them through the sitting room window. The next moment two cubs came out of the shrubs and played around on the lawn!

This all happened at about 5 pm and resident Gerard Scholtz was ready with his camera and was rewarded with the best sighting of the year (see cover).

The cats were there for about 10 minutes before they left.

Shortly after this sighting, a baby caracal was killed near the Rooi Els bridge. Caracal sightings are amazingly common in these parts, often during the day. They are often seen near the dassie rocks in Rocklands avenue.

A leap through history



Linda and Duncan Hiles photographed above Franz Josef Glacier in New Zealand

Retirement is wonderful, enabling us to see the world. We did two very different trips this year, first to Malta and recently to New Zealand. Here are some of the highlights:

Malta is a small island at the foot of Italy, a fascinating and interesting multi-faceted place to visit. Its location as a naval base has given it great strategic importance throughout history, and a succession of powers, including the Phoenicians, Moors, Romans, Normans, Sicilians, Habsburgs, the Spaniards, Knights of St. John, the French and the British have left their influence in the streets and buildings of the towns.

Linda's brother lives there, which meant we had our own personal tour guide for our visit. We saw the Mdina, an old fort with narrow twisty streets so the enemy couldn't shoot arrows for any distance. We then went underground to St Paul's catacombs and heard about the geology of the island and the burial rituals during the Roman Christian times.

Another leap through time took us to Mosta, a church which was hit by a bomb during a service in World War 2. The bomb didn't go off, and has become an attraction in the church, which is incredibly ornate and decorated in the Baroque style.

Another very ornate Baroque church is St John's co-cathedral built between 1573 and 1578 when the knights of Malta competed with each other to decorate chapels with works of art.

A ferry trip took us to Gozo, an island of 67 square kilometres north west of the main island of Malta, considered one of the top diving destinations in the Mediterranean.

Australia was our next destination to visit friends and see the sights. From there, we "hopped across the puddle" to New Zealand where we rented a campervan, a popular means of accommodation and transport in one. Our trip began in Christchurch on the east coast of South Island where we saw some of the damage in the city centre caused by the 2011 earthquake as well as the process of reconstruction. Then it was over the mountains via Arthur's Pass to the west coast to see the glaciers and fjords. On the way we encountered the Keas, large alpine parrots with the same attitude, opportunism and intelligence as the Rooiels baboons. They steal from anything unattended, intimidate the uninitiated and pull at the rubber from around car windscreens.

The towns on South Island have beautiful settings, surrounded by

snow-capped mountains and set next to lakes with crystal clear water. This meant that we had good views of glaciers, alpine lakes, forested mountainsides and valleys of the Southern Alps.

Milford Sound was everything that the guide books said, with deep glacier-carved valleys and fjords, dramatic mountain peaks, luxuriant rainforests and gushing waterfalls.

A different kind of attraction we visited was the glow-worm cave at Te Anau. The glow-worms are the larvae of a species of fungus gnat that spins a curtain of sticky threads, then waits for insects to be attracted to their taillights. At suitable sites in caves they are concentrated in their thousands and make the cave roof look like the sky on a clear night in the Karroo.

On North Island the attractions were the geothermal features. The geysers, bubbling mud cauldrons, springs of boiling water, sculptures of deposited salts were totally new to us.

We were thrilled with how much we were able to see and experience during this short whirlwind visit, but as always there was so much more that we couldn't fit in. Next time!

Linda and Duncan Hiles

In April this year after a storm, the pillar at the Rooi Els slipway collapsed. It was the only remains of a jetty from yesteryear.

The reinforced rods and iron mesh were exposed and posed a danger and was made safe by members of the Rooi Els boat club.

We were left with the suggestion to give it an explanatory plaque to be affixed to it for 'low-tiders' to examine.

We lost a pillar



Photo: Jenny Stark

Snakes galore

Doris Jansen, one of Rooi Els' swallows, took this picture of a puff adder swimming in October last year. She saw the snake after one of the rain storms in a puddle along the smallholdings road. It stopped her in a tracks, and caused a u-turn and subsequent trips by car to have that coffee in Pringle Bay.



A world without wild music

Poets warned us, writing of the 'heartbreaking beauty that will remain when there is no heart to break for it.' But what if it is worse than that?

What if it's the heartbroken children who remain in a world without beauty? How will they find solace in a world without wild music? How will they thrive without green hills edged with oaks? When my granddaughter looks back at me, I will be on my knees, begging her to say I did all I could.

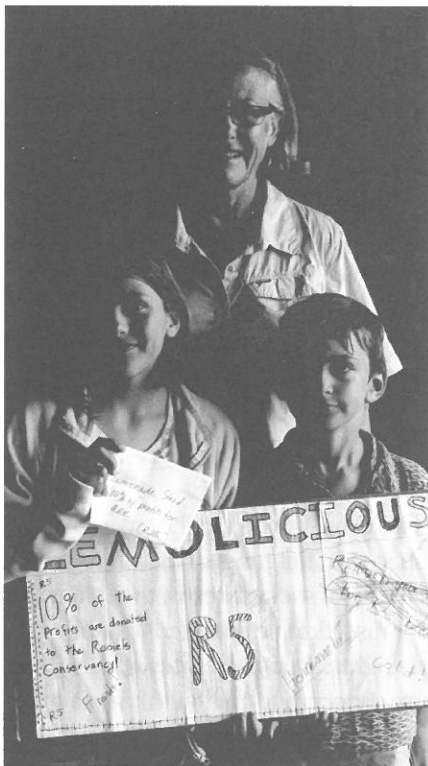
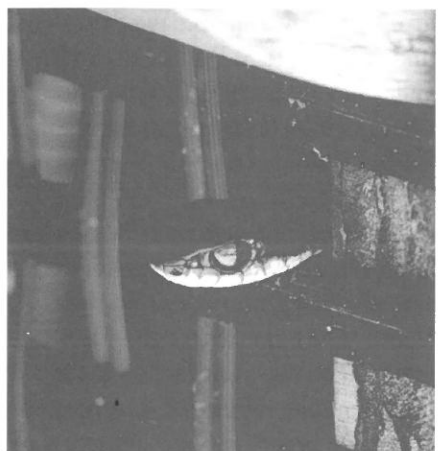
I didn't do all I could have done. It isn't enough to love a child and wish her well. It isn't enough to open my heart to a bird-graced morning. Can I claim to love a morning if I don't protect what creates its beauty? Can I claim to love a child if I don't use all the power of my beating heart to preserve a world that nourishes children's joy?

Loving is not a kind of la-de-da. Loving is a sacred trust. To love is to affirm the absolute worth of what you love and to pledge your life to its thriving – to protect it fiercely and faithfully, for all time.

Excerpts from Mother Earth by Kathleen Dean Moore

What looks like a boomslang in a basket, is the underneath part of a stoep coach. On 24 October Diarmuid and Jenny Baigrie had this visitor at their Rooi Els home.

While Diarmuid was fiddling with the camera, the snake disappeared under the couch, and Jenny, after checking the garden, realized it had to be in the sofa. Diarmuid: "I turned the sofa over, then saw that little head peeping out. I am, by the way, going to put shade cloth over the sofa's hideaway otherwise no-one will ever sit there again."



REC chief Anuta Scholtz with Mitra and Nikou

REC's youngest supporters

REC's youngest supporters; Mitra and her brother Nikou Nourbakhsh live in America in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but they spend their Decembers in Rooi Els with mom and dad, Martie, and Illah. Last year they made and sold lemonade on the beach and some of their profit was donated to the Rooi Els Conservancy. Well done.

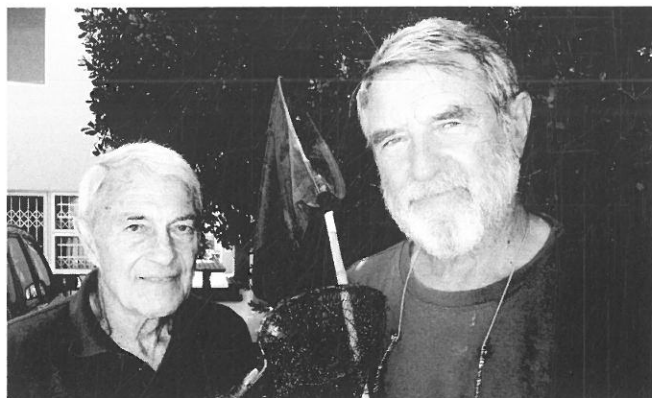
Froggy went a-courting

No doubt you've heard of the 'Chinese Water Torture', which turns a continual drip into a horrendous pounding and eventually results in madness. In an updated local version, a relentless frog croaking, especially when you are trying to sleep, has much the same effect. And we are not talking about our tiny 'click' frogs, but fine specimens of 'frogensis majesticus'.

This all came to a head one summer's night towards the end of January at Jenny Starke and Koos Smit's guest house, Wonderlings. We were enjoying a quiet supper and a sip or two of wine (or was it perhaps beer – or both?) when Jenny held her hands over her ears and said, "There he/she goes again". Despite our best efforts and finely-tuned hearing-aids, neither Koos nor I could hear the offending frog. So we turned our deaf ears to her anguish and re-addressed our respective thirsts.

But not for long! Hell hath no fury ...

Duly chastened, we grabbed some kiddies' fishing nets and stumbled down to the goldfish pond, where, after some diligent searching, Koos' flashlight revealed not just one, but two frogs serenading each other. We netted them and after some consultation took them to Ernst Thompson's pond where it was felt they would be very happy regaling that household with their music and hopefully diminishing any mosquito population.



Koos and Geoff about to hop off for some frogging

This frog saga started about eleven years ago when Wonderlings' guests complained about a raucous noise keeping them awake at night. Egyptian Geese were prime suspects and Koos made a scarecrow of an old lab coat with sleeves to flap in the odd times that we have wind in Rooiels. That didn't work, so the scarecrow was moved down to near the river as the Gypos' noise was thought to be funnelling up from there. No luck, and after reports were received of a 'ghostly figure waving its arms', the apparition was quietly removed.

Being very territorial, the 'Lawaai Paddas' have been occasional visitors since then, but it is hoped they will be now be comfortable and satisfied with their accommodation and the menu at Ernst and Rina's.

Geoff Harris

Wine on the house!

Gary and Karin Isenberg, who run The Hanging Rock in Pringle Bay, offer Rooielsers a complimentary glass of wine with their meals.

They have a fantastic new chef, Derek (who assists Karin), specialising in steak, chops and fresh fish, besides their usual pastas and wood-fired pizzas.

"We do not have a microwave oven in our kitchen and everything we can, we make fresh." There is also an up-to-date gym on the premises for those who would like to work off extra ounces.

They are open every evening of the week except on Tuesdays. Contact no: 028 273 8413; 079 898 3481.

What's on the menu

New owners Dave and Zaresa Poltney invite all to an unforgettable New Year's party. Please book and pay by 1 Dec to ensure your spot. The pub will only be closed on Christmas Day, but will be open on all other days. Dave, Zaresa and all the staff wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Drummond Arms – 028 273 8458

The restaurant specializes in seafood combos of calamari, hake and prawns and then offers breakfasts, light lunches and steaks and burgers. They are open 9 am to 9 pm during season, except on Sundays when it is open 9 am to 5 pm.

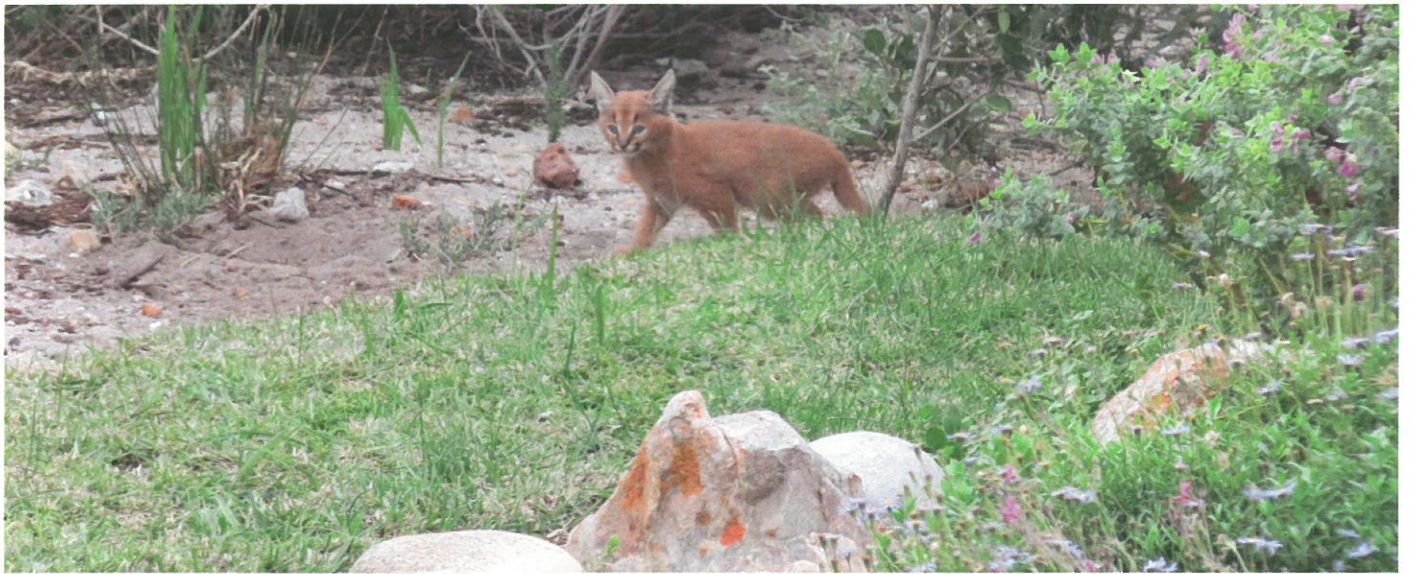
Something Els – 083 3701960

Viskoekies

- 500 ml (2 k) gevlokte gaar bankvis
- 125 ml (½ k) bruismeel
- 1 klein ui, fyngekap
- 30 ml (2 E) fyngekapte pietersielie
- 2 geklitste eiers
- 30 ml (2 E) asyn
- 5 ml (1 t) suiker
- 1,25 ml (raspertjie) neutmuskaat kookolie om te bak

Meng alles deeglik. Verhit kookolie 1 cm diep in die pan. Bak lepels vol viskoekiemengsel in die olie. Keer om, bak tot goed bruin en skep op kombuispapier uit om die ergste olie te klad.

Rina Thompson



News from the Rooi Els Conservancy, Rooi Els Ratepayers' Association and Rooi Els Boat Club

Nuus van die Rooi Els Bewarea, die Rooi Els Belastingbetalersvereniging en die Rooi Els Bootklub