

Bries Breeze

DECEMBER 2001

Rooiels Ratepayers Association

PO Box 89 Betty's Bay 7141

Editorial Redaksioneel

Die jaar loop leeg en "die tyd van die mense" is weer hier.. Die spekvetgevoerde fisante hou oë oop vir 'n toeloop van motors. En die grysmuishondjies is op hulle pasoppens vir nuwe honde in die dorp. Die gelag van kinders waai weer deur ons stofstrate en hier sal fees gevier word met die ryk oeste uit die see.

This was a year of extremes: first a drought and then massive rainstorms in the Cape. Wet baboons sought shelter in the lee of houses. We were forever drying muddy dogs after an evening walk, as the roads had become small lakes and streams. Everywhere people were sanding or planing down their rain-swollen wooden doors that were continually jamming. We were glad for the rain though!

Ons internasionaal verklaarde biosfeer is ook 'n jaar ouer. Party van ons het koppe bymekaar gesit oor hoe om die vreugdes en verantwoordelikhede van "lewe binne 'n biosfeer" weer onder almal se aandag te bring. So het o.a. ons bobbejaan kompetisie ontstaan. Speel gerus saam! Ook in ons propvol vakansie program vir oud en jonk, vier ons die biosfeer. Kom neem gerus deel saam met ons!

I believe Rooiels has a spirit that is quite unique. When looking at her history I see she has avoided becoming the jetset town she was conjured up to be in early real estate promotion. She would have become more hectic and far busier if the main road to Pringle Bay ran right through her as originally planned. She would have become more suburban if we had opted for tar roads and street lamps. Yet she has eluded all these changes and insists on being her untamed self and a haven for fynbos, wild creatures and those who love them.

Evette Weyers

OUR VISION IS TO BE
AN ECOLOGICALLY
WELL BALANCED AREA
WHERE MAN AND
NATURE
CAN LIVE AND THRIVE
IN HARMONY

In this Breeze we look at some of the creatures that inhabit our area and sometimes cross our paths. The playful otters seem to be one of the favorites. You have to be very lucky to see these beautiful, but elusive animals. They are mainly nocturnal, but can be seen in the quiet winter months when there is much less human activity at Rooiels. You can sometimes even see them frolicking at midday. On such a winter's day I saw seven otters surfing the waves on our big beach.

From the Chair

At last, after one of the wettest winters in decades, storms and unbelievable seas, rockfalls resulting in temporary closure of the R44 (Clarence Drive), the sun is burning down and Rooiels has dried out. Fortunately there was no serious damage to our village.

A number of issues have been worked on recently by the EXCO of RERA, the major ones being possible further development of Rooiels, and the intended siting of perlemoen hatcheries. We are opposed to both the above and also to any form of road widening.

Other matters which affect all of us daily, such as traffic, parking, rubbish removal etc. are being monitored constantly. A heartening development was a recent meeting with Mr Steven Hansen, acting regional manager for the Hangklip-Kleinmond area of the larger Overstrand Municipality, and Mrs Marylyn van Rensberg, our councillor. We were assured by Mr Hansen that he has a very open door policy, and is keen to improve communication with all stakeholders in our area, which has been one of our problem areas since we became part of the large Overstrand.

Our initiation and ongoing support for the Breeze is part of an ongoing effort to encourage an environmentally sensitive approach among people in Rooiels.

Another initiative to improve our communication with members is our website:

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

This site is updated regularly with news, including the recent "Baboon Bosberaad", and our formal response to the scoping report on Erf 324.

In a further effort to improve communication, stimulated by a helpful discussion with Dennis and Jean Cowen, we decided to place the minutes of our EXCO meetings on the website.

Our meetings are held on the last Friday of each month at 19h00 and are open to all members of the association. You may also suggest agenda items by e-mailing our secretary, Julia Aalbers. All EXCO members' e-mail addresses are on the site.

While not all members may have access to the world wide web at home, a visit to your nearest library, or Postnet can provide you with information on matters affecting Rooiels.

In these turbulent times which are stressful to many, I and all members of the RERA EXCO, take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and New Year holiday. We hope to see you around during the festive season, enjoying the refreshing breezes of an unchanged and peaceful Rooiels.

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Portfolio Reports

Your RERA EXCO members work specifically to keep Rooiels as unspoilt as possible and to implement the Rooiels Vision. We believe that you want to come back to the same Rooiels each year, little changed (except for a few less potholes.)

ACCESS MANAGEMENT

At the 1999 AGM, the RERA EXCO was asked to investigate a security system for our town. We did so and suggested security cameras at the entrances and full-time monitoring by security personnel in Rooiels. We sent you details of the proposed system by mail. Thank you to all who replied. We received replies way after the cut-off date. Only four letters rejected the system. However, we did not receive the 75% support we saw as a minimum for implementing the system. As everyone would have to pay to make the system work, we had to have the vast majority on board. So, we have put the project on ice while keeping our ears to the ground for imminent new technology in the security range that might be more affordable.

In the meantime we suggest the following:

- ❖ Install an armed response alarm system.
- ❖ Switch the alarm system on when you go to bed or even while watching TV.
- ❖ Programme emergency numbers into your cell phone and keep it handy.

HACKS AND BEACH CLEANUPS

Continuing our tradition of hacking, which we started 20 years ago, we have had hacks every first Saturday of the month. We aimed at clearing all the Rooikrans we could legally remove, south of Anemone road. This was in keeping with the strategy of working from the least infested areas towards the more infested areas. It became clearly evident that we were often cutting re-sprouts from previous hacks. Using poison when you hack is essential! We have a good stock of spray bottles and poison for your use at a hack.

Thank you for all your help. We are the least infested town in the Biosphere Reserve!

We also had two beach cleanups this year, including one on International Coastline Cleanup Day. From the forms we (and others) had to fill in last year (about what type of rubbish we had collected), it became clear that Styrofoam take-away containers were the biggest polluters. Next in line are plastic bottles and plastic bags. The data is collected world wide and analysed.

A penguin "ring" was found during the last cleanup. Pretoria Zoo confirmed it to have come from an African Penguin that had been ringed at Robben Island in 1985.



"ROOIELS. DIE STORIE VAN WAAIGATBAAI" deur Rita Blake is nou weer beskikbaar in Afrikaans. Ons het dit laat herdruk. Kyk gerus daarvoor by die Sea Horse Inn of The Village Shop.

ROADS

Basil Moss spoke to Mike Bartman, and the municipality fixed the potholes in the roads. Then the big rains came. So we had potholes galore and roads running downhill, vertical to the sea, became challenges even for 4x4s. The roads will be graded before the December holidays though.

The good news is that our roads are not going to be widened and the whole community agrees!

ALL ROOIELSERS WANT OUR ROADS TO REMAIN NARROW !

There was a great outcry and many letters in response to Rory Price's suggestions to widen the roads.

Ernst Thompson wrote how he regularly rinses the dust off his plants to prevent them from smothering. Dust pollution would definitely increase if roads were to be widened and we could lose valuable fynbos species.

Richard Truran wrote :

"Here in Devon (England) most of the lanes, which serve bigger communities than Rooiels, are only single lane with occasional passing bays to cater for two-way traffic. These lanes also serve to give the farmers access between their fields and home-stead, so one can encounter tractors and trailers in the lanes as well as oncoming traffic. The ability to reverse is a necessary skill here.

The people of Devon are determined not to allow the car to spoil the countryside, and there is no intention ever to widen the lanes to accommodate traffic. Rather, the attitude is to use the width of the lanes to control both the speed and the volume of traffic."

WASTE MANAGEMENT

RERA is steadily upgrading the waste collection area. We acquired the recycle bins, erected the wooden screens and recently Basil Moss had the trailer painted and obtained a fine metal mesh to make it more baboon proof.

**REMEMBER:
REDUCE , RE-USE,
RECYCLE**

ONS HET 3 ROOIELS BRIES UITGAWES UITGESTUUR VANJAAR. LAAT ONS GERUS WEET WAT JULLE NOG DAARIN WIL LEES.

Living in a Biosphere

In 1998 the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve became the first internationally recognised biosphere in S.A.

Rooiels, Betty's Bay and Pringle Bay are part of the important buffer zone. We are the custodians of the biosphere. Our actions in what we plant, destroy or otherwise do in Rooiels environmentally, affects the heart of the biosphere.

A FEW WAYS OF LOOKING AFTER OUR BIOSPHERE

1. Remove all alien and invasive vegetation such as Rooikrans, Port Jackson, Manatokas, Kikuyu grass, etc.
2. Plant local indigenous fynbos. It attracts and nourishes birds and small animals.
3. Make sure your rubbish bin and compost heap is baboon proof.
4. Recycle glass, tins and newspapers. We placed recycle bins at the entrance to the village for your convenience.
5. Despite the good rains we need to conserve our water.

EENS WAS BUFFELS

Rooiels se soogdierryk trek nou al by 'n telling van 31 spesies. Dis meer as wat baie lande het.

Hier volg 'n lys, miskien kan julle dit aanvul: Bryde se walvis, suidelike noordkaper walvis, gewone dolfyn, stomp-

neus dolfyn, Kaapse pelsrob, aardvark (ons het al twee die afgelope 10 jaar gesien), Chacma bobbejaan, luiperd, groototter, rooikol muskejaatkat, kleinkol muskejaatkat, klein grysmuishond, kommetjiesgat muishond, vaalboskat, rooikat, aardwolf (ek het een op die pad net anderkant Rooiels brug doodgery gekry), vaalribbok, grysbokkie, steenbok, klip-springer, dassie, Smith se rooi klipkonyn, kolhaas, ystervark, Kaapse duinemol, Kaapse kruipmol, streepmuis, fynbosrot, rondoor klaasneus, vlermuis (waarskynlik verskeie spesies).

Eens was buffels, leeus en elande hier. Die laaste olifant is in 1710 op die Kaapse vlakte geskiet.

Ons het dus 'n besondere verantwoordelikheid teenoor ons diereryk, en kan gerus op die volgende let:

- ❖ *Beskerming – hou asseblief honde op u eiendom, of onder beheer te alle tye.*
- ❖ *Habitat – vermy rommelstrooiing, rioolputsyfering die see in, vernietiging van natuurlike bos en padreserve plantegroei, aanplant van uitheemse spesies, buitebeligting, gifstowwe, vullisbesoedeling.*
- ❖ *Katte is een van die grootste bedreigings in die biosfeer. Al kry hulle kos, sal hulle steeds jag en so kleinprooi in die voedselketting uitwis. Sit 'n klokke om jou kat se nek om die voëls te waarsku.*

André Wagener



BE ON THE LOOKOUT! The African Black Oyster Catcher - Red Data Species

Rooiels is fortunate enough to have two pairs of Black Oyster Catchers, South Africa's rarest endemic coastal birds. They reside on our small beach. These conspicuous black birds with their red beaks have been listed as an international red data species, meaning a species under attack.

These birds mate for life and can live up to 35 years. They start breeding around 4 to 6 years of age. In the summer they lay their eggs in a scrape just above the high water mark. Breeding success on the mainland is very low as holiday makers, 4X4s and dogs interfere with their breeding cycle.

Oyster Catchers feed exclusively in the inter-tidal zone. If you see an agitated Oyster Catcher, you might be keeping her off her nest, in which case her eggs could literally cook in the sun's heat. Please move away from the area quickly! When humans come by, chicks can sometimes drown when signalled by the parents to 'stay put' for too long.

Evette Weyers

LANK LEEF DIE WITKRUISAREND!

Ons het weer 'n arendjie. Vier jaar moes ons wag vir hierdie een. 31 Augustus 1997 was die laaste wat 'n kuiken op die nes te sien was. Die dag daarna was alles verby vir die maand-oue kuiken.

2001 se eerste eier is waarskynlik op 6 Junie gelê en die kuiken het tussen 15 en 16 Julie uitgekom. Hulle gebruik nou die ou nes. Die baie swak weer was duidelik net mensebakkommernis. In die Drakensberg is daar elke jaar sneeu, nê!

By hierdie skrywe is die kuiken al agt weke oud en lyk nie uitgehonger as die ma 'n dassie vir hom verskeur nie. Hy stel soms eerder belang in iets wat die blare teen die rotswand laat roer. Hy stap rond in die nes, noual in 'n kleed wat duidelik bont raak, maar sit nie op die rand van die nes nie. Die ma het pas 'n yslike miktak op die rand ingedruk teen 'n oor-nuuskerige kleintjie. Ons hoor hom amper 'n kilometer ver piep, veral as die ouers in sig is.

Ma en pa gaan sit nie soos gewoonlik op rotse hoër op teen Klein-Hangklip nie, Hulle verkies die "tandrots" naby die mik tussen die kop en die tweede een. Daar kan jy 'n volwasse arend soms tot twee uur lank sien dassies bespied wat aan die oostekant dalk onbedag wei of die sonnetjie opsoek.



As alles goed gaan, en dis 'n "as", want so baie kan nog verkeerd loop. Nou lê die baie interessante eerste vlieglesse voor.

Louise du Toit
11 September 2001



NUUSFLITS!!! EERSTE VLUG

31 Oktober 2001; 11:00

Ons manjefieke jong arend het nou-net met 'n effense duik en 'n selfversekerde swiep op na die nek tussen Klein-Hangklip en die tweede kop, sy eerste vlug uit die nes geneem!

Louise du Toit
31 Oktober 2001

EAGLE ACCESS

Many bird clubs visit the eagle area. Please note that the owner of Erf 324 has decided to close the old footpath to the public. Please park your car up on Porter drive. Hikers who want to get to Porter drive from Ocean View Road can use the servitude to the right (south) of Erf 248 (the Mc Neils) going up past the pole to Porter drive.

**THANK YOU TO THE ROOI
ELS BOAT CLUB THAT
DONATED R2 500
TOWARDS THE
REPRINTING OF THE ROOI-
ELS BOOKLETS BY RITA
BLAKE**

MAKING A ROOIELS CHRISTMAS WREATH

As many of us spend our Christmas in Rooiels, it's perhaps appropriate to adapt the things we find here to interpret an African, seaside, Rooiels Christmas.

Instead of trying to locate or import conifer and ivy to create a traditional wreath, how about using kelp that can be found readily in circular shapes or can be wet and shaped into circles. Once properly dried out, one can add bits of sea wrack.

Bits of weathered rope could be used to twine around the wreath. Bleached twigs, bark and wood, shells and sea urchin shells, bits of smooth glass that have been tumbled in the waves, bits of net and snarls of fishing line could all be arranged around or at the lower inner edge of the circle. These items are stuck down with strong glue. All bits and pieces should be dry **before** you glue them down. Some of these bits could be sprayed silver and gold if you wish to add a less natural, but sophisticated look to your creation. A bit of wire twisted out of sight becomes the loop on which you can hang the wreath on the door or in the window.

Instead of rope, use the wiry roots or grasses. Even the beautifully coloured pebbles of Rooiels can be used. When using stone, find a sturdy support to hang this wreath, as it may become heavy. Experiment! Create a Rooiels original!

Debby de Vries

NAASBESTAAN

Ons lewens raak baie verweef met dié van die diere en voëls in ons kontrei. Ons hou hulle dop, voer hulle en geniet hulle teenwoordigheid. Die bobbejane het egter ons gasvryheid en vrygewigheid meer ter harte geneem as ander diere en doen nou gereelde ongenooide huisbesoeke.

Rooielsers moes dus plan maak om die slim spesies op 'n afstand te hou en ons het in Julie 'n Bobbejaan Bosberaad gehou, met Tom Paschak en Craig Spencer as sprekers. Die publiek het ook deelgeneem. Nog een word vir Desember beplan. Kom gerus as julle in die dorp is.

Intussen speel ons, as dorp, 'n nuwe spel met die bobbejane. Ons sluit ook die spel reëls in by hierdie Bries. Ons wil die bobbejane klop, want in die verlede was hulle loshande die wenners. September het ons gelykop geëindig met 90 punte elk. Gaan kyk gerus na die puntetellings sover in The Village Shop, of op die kennisgewingsbord.

Evette Weyers

BEST BABOON BEHAVIOUR

What to do when baboons visit:

NEVER FEED BABOONS... DELIBERATELY OR ACCIDENTLY. Once a baboon sees people as a source of food it will come back again and again.

TELL YOUR FAMILY THEY ARE TO DROP WHATEVER THEY ARE EATING IF A BABOON APPROACHES. It may grab the food and injure the holder while doing so. Baboons are not naturally aggressive towards man. They just want the food, and in their society baboons take food from one another by force.

KEEP ALL FOOD OUT OF SIGHT. Don't tempt a "hit".

KEEP NON BABOON-PROOF WINDOWS AND DOORS CLOSED.

DON'T PANIC! Should a baboon enter your house, do not frighten it, but tell it firmly to leave while driving it back towards the door or window it came through. Waving a catapult or stick helps.

THE BIOSPHERE ACTION GROUP ARE ORGANISING ANOTHER BABOON BOSBERAAD FOR DECEMBER. WATCH THE NOTICEBOARD FOR DATES!

UNFORTUNATELY IT SEEMS ONE OF OUR BABOONS HAS BEEN POISONED.

His body was found on the roof of the house on erf 77. He had no injuries but had a lot of loose stool around him and had been dribbling a lot- all signs of poisoning. Craig Spencer has sent samples to a pathologist and will notify the authorities.

SHARE YOUR SPACE WITH THE BABOONS NOT YOUR FOOD.

Things to do in the Biosphere

Explore the Harold Porter waterfalls

When last did you marvel at the multitude of waterfalls that cascade down Leopard's Kloof, or the peaceful, fern fringed pools along Disa Kloof? Entrance to the Harold Porter Gardens, (on your left as you go through Betty's Bay), is just R5.00 pp. The Leopard's Kloof walk requires a key (pay at the entrance before 14h00), good balance (there are several stepping-stone crossings to be made), a fair head for heights (to climb the good log stepladders towards the top) and a camera (to capture the beauty of it all)! Feed your Spirit!

"Pop" into the "iron" museum

To discover how lines like "too many irons in the fire" or "pop goes the weasel" originated, pop into the Iron Museum on the right as you enter Kleinmond (just past the Harbour Road turning). Miriam or her husband will take you around their amazing collection of over 400 irons (and a host of other collectors' items) with such enthusiasm you'll never see irons in the same light again! Entrance R7.00 pp

Sand-ski the Silversands dunes

Take the first tar road to the right after Pringle Bay, and the first right off that road and you will find yourself on the dirt road that leads to the Hangklip Hotel (an old World War 11 radar station) and back to Pringle Bay through the Sea Farm Nature Reserve. On your right you'll see the most glorious mountainous sand dunes. This is Silversands. If you're fit enough to try the climb, take a piece of cardboard with you for the most exhilarating and speedy descent!

Catch a glimpse of wild horses

It is not clear whether they were escapees from British troops or the Boers during the Anglo-Boer War, or released by a local farmer, but what is known is that by 1940 a herd of some 400 wild horses roamed the Kleinmond wetlands. Most were rounded up and sold... a farmer tried to eradicate the balance...but three escaped! Today a herd of some fifteen wild horses can be seen racing through the shallow waters of the Bot River lagoon, coats gleaming and black manes streaming!

To find them, either walk up the Kleinmond beach (from the Beach House Hotel or Palmiet caravan park), using the dunes to look over the lagoon area, or drive to the Rooisands Nature Reserve. (Go through Kleinmond and take the first un-gated road to your right after the Lamloch Protea Farm. Park and take the path to the dunes.)

Take a walk on the wild side!

On the Gordon's Bay side of the Rooiels beach there's a rough fisherman's path winding through the rocks, parallel to the road. Along the way you will come across many of the over 100 memorial crosses for fishermen who have been swept off the rocks... tragic evidence of the freak waves that converge on this stretch of the coast due to the rock formation at the entrance to False Bay. See Rooiels from a new perspective.

Chris Burlock/ Jenny Stark



Features Hoofartikels

"For man, as for flower, beast and bird, the supreme triumph is to be most vividly, most perfectly alive. Whatever the unborn and the dead may know, they cannot know the beauty, the marvel of being alive in the flesh"

- D H Lawrence

These words must surely have been inspired by the otter. It enjoys life with total abandonment, celebrating the pleasures of being an otter and the perfection and glory of being alive and living at Rooiels.

ONS OTTERS

Ons is gelukkig om 'n gesonde otterbevolking op Rooiels te hê. Otters word wêreldwyd beskou as 'n teken van 'n gesonde omgewing. Hulle is skugter diere wat gevoelig is vir die druk van mense en vir die oorbenutting en besoedeling van die omgewing.

Die eerste tekens wat mens gewoonlik van hierdie skugter diere bespeur, is hulle mis. Dit het 'n kenmerkende skerp reuk en bestaan hoofsaaklik uit krap-en kreefdoppe.

In ons omgewing is daar meer kos vir otters in die see as in die riviere en hulle jag dus hoofsaaklik in die see. Omdat hulle egter hulle pelse in vars water moet afspoel, is die beste plek om vir hul tekens te soek daar waar 'n stroompie in die see in loop.

As daar vars mis en spore in die omgewing is en jy die otters graag wil sien moet jy vroeg opstaan en geduldig wees. Otters is gewoonlik vroegoggend en saans aktief. Hulle beweeg vinnig van hul skuilplekke na die see, maar wanneer hulle uit die see kom bad hulle eers in die vars water, rol in die sand en bak droog in die son.

Die beskerming van die kuststrook met sy digte bosse wat skuiling bied, asook die behoud van onbesoedelde varswater stroompies, is belangrik vir die voortbestaan van hierdie besondere diere.

Bron: Dr Neill Fairall
Fynbos 61/1994 (Kleinmond Natuurbewaringsvereniging)

ARE THERE ANY CAPE CLAWLESS OTTERS IN CAPTIVITY?

Yes. There are 11 in North American zoos - two at the Detroit Zoo, three at the Toledo Zoo, four at the Phoenix Zoo and two at the Ross Park Zoo in Binghamton, New York. Otters have great personalities and are a favorite with zookeepers. They are curious and smart. They respond to their names being called and are always fun to watch.

OF WHALES AND THINGS

"WHALE... Hval. Swedish and Danish. This animal is named for roundness and rolling; for in Danish, Hvalt is arched or vaulted."

Webster's Dictionary

The old whalers, who were a rough and ready lot, couldn't be bothered to preserve their knowledge of whale behaviour for later generations. Thus the knowledge gained from observations today is important. For scientists and the average whale watcher though, Rooiels pales to insignificance compared to the De Hoop and Walker Bay sanctuaries. But we have a whale secret that might be unique to Rooiels. We cannot only see our whales at close quarters; we can hear them as well!

Last year a massive female cruised into Rooiels Bay in the early afternoon. (By the way, I refuse to call them bulls, cows and calves. It sounds so pastoral. I prefer males, females and young.) In any case, this female was single

and she languished around very close to the little beach, to the left of tooth rock, which is the last outcrop on starboard as you launch from the slipway. No other whale was in sight. She then proceeded with the most peculiar behaviour. She would roll onto her back, arch it and present a prominent swollen vagina. Although this was the first time we had observed this behaviour, we concluded that she was in heat. But now comes the intriguing part: while lying on her back, she slapped her chest alternately with her immense flippers, and on the downbeat she slapped the water surface. The sound of the slaps was incredibly loud and sharp.

Now we all know that whales communicate at incredible distances with a series of squeaks and squeals that the human ear cannot hear. Was this an additional mating call? Whales are always so laid back (excuse the pun), but in this case this behemoth was quite agitated. This singular performance went on well into the night and we could hear her in our bedroom. It was a sad phenomenon. Next morning however, she had three males in attendance, and the rest is rated SPG; that is *scenes containing no violence, no bad language, but sex and nudity. Parental guidance advised.*

André Wagener

REMEMBER PLASTIC
STARVES, CHOKES
AND KILLS WHALES,
DOLPHINS AND SEALS!

DIE OORSPRONG VAN KERSBOME

Lank gelede in die koue noord- Europese winters is die sonkeerpunt (21 Desember) met vreugde en feesviering begroet want vanaf daardie langste nag van die jaar, sou die son weer nader kom, die dae langer word en die koue begin te wyk.

Die mense van 'n dorpie het 'n boom op 'n heuwel aan die brand gestee en die naburige families of dorpies het dieselfde gedoen, tot die donkerste van nagte uitgestippel was met brandende bome of "kersbome".

Met die koms van die Christendom is die simbool van hoop en verlossing van die donker koue oorgeneem en bome met kerse in is gebruik om 'n groter verlossing te vier.

Evette Weyers

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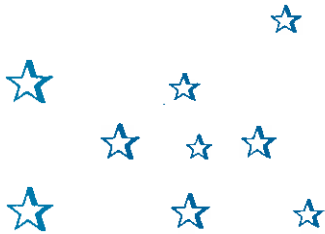
Narrow Path

The planet turns slowly
Under our footsteps
Not a drop of sea
Falls off into stars

Not one person slips
Except my music, except
By choice, into larger ways
Of looking without eyes

Out of our space falls stars
As we whirl, body dizzy,
Dancing in sea wind

Russell Salamons



GETTING TO KNOW THE NIGHT SKY



Ancient monuments testify to the fact that as long as we humans have been on Earth, we have marvelled at the night sky. With the advent of agriculture, even in its simplest form, some kind of calendar became necessary. The sky became our first calendar and clock.

As the Sun sinks out of view below the horizon, the first stars appear one by one, like small candles being lit somewhere far away. Each night, the first bright stars seen after sunset in the west move a little closer to the horizon, while those in the east are set a little higher.

Some of the brightest of all the stars are clearly different from the rest. As the months pass, these special, bright stars change their positions in the sky. Moving at different speeds, they wander from one group of stars to another. But they all follow the same route that the Sun itself travels on its year-long journey around the sky. These special stars are called planets – a word that conjures images of spheres spinning through space. But the word originally comes from the Greek meaning "vagabonds". It distinguishes these wandering stars from the great mass of stars which form lasting patterns in the sky.



These star patterns are the same today as when the first human being looked up at the night sky. We see something that was a familiar sight to all those who have preceded us in history, and to those who walked the Earth long before the beginning of written history.

These constellations would have been easily recognised by any soldier in Caesar's army, by the citizens of ancient Athens and by the wandering Israelites.

These are the creatures of legend whose names have been familiar for two thousand years or more, Perseus and Andromeda, Hercules and Pegasus, the hunter Orion with his glittering belt of stars, followed by the Great Dog – a constellation which contains the brightest star (Sirrius) in the entire sky.

Above all there is the splendour of the Milky Way, the ancient "highway of the Gods". It is a cross-section of the enormously great community of hundreds of millions of stars in our galaxy - which numbers our own Sun among its lesser members. All the stars we see in the sky (including those which appear to be farthest from the Milky Way) are in fact part of the Milky Way.

The sky has many surprises. Falling stars (meteors) give no hint of their coming, but can be seen at a rate of five to six per hour on any given clear night. Sometimes they appear not singly, but in a shower,

pouring from a single point in the sky as though there were some hidden secret supply from which they are poured by an unseen hand. Meteors were significant in KhoiSan culture and are depicted in rock art.

When we look at the sky we see back into history, seeing the stars not as they are at that very moment but as they were light years ago.

The sky is free. It stirs both the intellect and the soul. In a modern world that is fixated on looking inward, it once again draws our gaze upward and outward. It reminds us that we are all part of something infinite and immeasurably great...

(Source: "The Sky at Night" by Terry Malony)
Estelle Raymond



NATURE'S FIREWORKS

One of the best kept "open secrets" at the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens is the few magical nights, when the moon is dark in November and the glow worms come out in their thousands. The word spreads quickly along the rumour lines in the community. Mysteriously the gates of the Gardens are open on these nights. People traipse up the mountain path; some with young children on their shoulders, to the upper bridge area where one can best see this gentle fire works display of nature, all in the cause of love.

Evette Weyers

COME STARGAZING THIS DECEMBER



WIND? WATSE WIND?

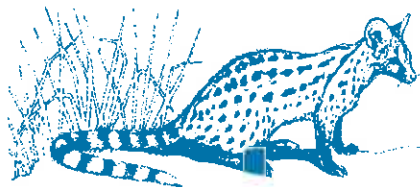
As die ou Griekse filosofe 'n draai in Rooiels kon gemaak het, sou hulle nie Wind, Water en Vuur as die drie primêre elemente beskryf het nie. Hulle sou sommer met Wind volstaan het, en basta.

Rooielsers ken van. Hul huise word eerbiedig na die wind vernoem; soos *Against the Wind*, *Emoyeni* (In die Wind of In die Gees), *Windward Ways*, *Waaigat* en *Wind Gat*, terwyl name soos *La Cotte*, *She Cottage*, *Spirit Skies* en *Mount Happy* respekvol probeer om die wind te ignoreer. Waar is *Gone with the Wind*, of is dit deesdae passé? Wel, hoe dit ookal sy, die wind van Rooiels laat hom nie ignoreer nie. Ons het nie 'n wind spoedmeter nie. Ons gebruik die seetoestande en Beaufortskaal om windsterkte te bepaal

Terwyl ek nou hierdie bydrae skryf, het ons 'n Noordwes Naas Stormwind, 7 op die Beaufortskaal. Dis maar 'n vulletjie vir Rooiels. Die Noordwes sal selde 8 op die Beaufortskaal oorskry, omdat hy oor 'n plat Valsbaai aankom. Die Suidoos is egter 'n perd van 'n ander kleur. Hy versnel oor die berge en ons kry soms Storms, 10 op die Beaufortskaal, wanneer ons glad nie die Kogelberge kan sien nie, net melkweit seesproei. Die geskiedenis is egter deurspek met monster storms, soos die Groot

Kaapse Storm van 1865 en die Groot Storm van Port Elizabeth in 1902. Ek weet nie of ons 'n werklike grote in mense heugenis in Rooiels gehad het nie. Iets soos 60 knope (± 120 km/u). Miskien sou Oom Skakel Kriek geweet het. Miskien weet Paddy Main. Feit bly egter staan, op een of ander stadium gaan hy kom.

André Wagenaar



GENETS

Exclusively nocturnal, genets are not often seen, but their spoor proves their presence in our community.

Both the Small-spotted genet (*Genetta genetta*) and its cousin the Large-spotted genet (*Genetta tigrina*) occur here. Alike in size, (1.7-2 kg, with a total length of almost a metre, half being its tail!), the two species are quite differently marked but still difficult to tell apart as all you usually catch at dusk or in your headlights is a glimpse of a low-slung, spotted body followed by a long, black and white striped tail held horizontally to the ground. But look at the *tip* of the tail...if it is white, it is the Small-spotted genet...if black, it is the Large-spotted.

When asked what genets eat, a good reply would be

"whatever is available!" Researchers analysing the stomach contents of genets have found the remains of insects (from harvester termites to grasshoppers, spiders and centipedes), rats and mice, skinks and geckos, birds (usually not bigger than a dove), frogs, scorpions and snakes (including remains of a puffadder!), as well as wild fruits!

Genets move out from their daytime resting places a couple of hours after sundown and forage until about 02h00. They tend to keep to the ground, stalking their prey, then pouncing, using their front feet to hold the prey while biting repeatedly.

Normally solitary, occasionally pairs do move around together. Breeding normally takes place in summer when food is more available. Two to four young are born after a gestation period of 10-11 weeks. The young are weaned at around 9 weeks but stay in the secure, sheltered breeding site until able to hunt for themselves at about 6 months of age.

Chris Burlock

STOFVISSE EN SPIKKELKATTE

Tydens droogtes het my pa altyd gesê die ouens gaan vandag stofvisse vang. As Karookind het mens nie die bestaan van stofvisse betwyfel nie. Die enigste vis wat daar kan oorleef, is stofvisse. Maar toe beland daar so agt jaar gelede 'n skool stofvis in Rooiels. Rêrig.

Dit het só gebeur:

'n Vislorrie van Hermanus het so nou en dan hier verby gery op pad Kaap toe. Die betrokke middag het die lorrie die Rooiels draai geïgnoreer, reguit aangery en daar waar die vulliswaentjie nou is, omgeval. 'n Hele vrag *stokvis* het op 'n hoop uitgestort.

Dis toe dat Dine daar verby en sien hoe die inwoners vragte vol pragtige groot, vars *stokvis* wegkarwei. (Maande daarna was daar nog gereeld vis op Rosie se spyskaart. Vissop, gebakte vis, gesmoorde vis, geposjeerde vis, viskoekies, nog vis, en nogmaals vis.)

Dine jaag huis toe om 'n paar kratte te gaan haal om ook te kan vis laai. Maar toe sy terugkom, lê die lorrie nog daar, maar al die mooi vis is klaar weggedra. Al wat toe nog oor is, is dié vis wat op die grond geval het. Stofvis.

Dan maar laai vir hondekos. Maar toe die kratte volgepak is, is dit te swaar om in die bakkie te laai. Dis toe dat die manne van die vismaatskappy daar aankom onder leiding van 'n vername man, en sy hom vra, "Oom, help asseblief inlaai, jong". Die man gee orders en die kratte word gelaai. Om die waarheid te sê, hulle gaan help haar nog by die huis die kratte weer aflaaï ook.

Sy pak die stofvis in rye op die grasperk en begin dit skoonspuit in die skemer. Toe lui die telefoon. Klaargepraat gaan sy terug en skakel die buitelig aan. En daar loop een van die stofvisse weg. Hy het so 'n spikkeljas bo-oor sy lyf aangetrek, met 'n lang stert

met swart ringe. En hy trap weerskante met sulke ougat katpootjies, en daar gaat hy. En sy lag, en hy gaat, verbete muskejaatkat met 'n prooi twee keer swaarder as hy tussen sy bene.

André Wagener

Talents

(HIDDEN OR OTHERWISE)

Chris Burlock has joined the Breeze Committee. She comes with considerable talents as graphic designer and artist and she has a fynbos green heart.

In Julie het Marius Weyers sy twaalfde toekenning" as "Beste Akteur vir sy teater opvoering van sy eenmans-vertoning "Weyers" gekry. Marius also received a "Life Time Achievement Award" for his contributions to Theatre, Film and TV.



PLEASE NOTE

25 Black Mussels per day per permit holder

Abalone season:
15 Dec 2001 - 19 Jan 2002
Sat and Sun only.
3 Abalone per permit holder

Kreefseisoen:
Daaglik: 22 Nov - 31 Des 2001; slegs naweke en publieke vakansie dae vanaf 2 Jan - 15 April 2002.
4 krewes per permithouer.

Magic Moments

FIRST SIGHTING.

On the rocks there was a stunned silence. Angela had broken the spell that the sense of achievement of having spent a morning rock-hopping and the lethargy the warm sun had evoked.

"There's a dog drowning!", she had called out. We all turned to look where she was watching and all we could see was the kelp breaking through the shore-ward racing swells. We were about to give up on trying to spot what she had seen, when a whiskered snout poked out of a breaking wave and disappeared immediately.

My first thought was one of dismay. The animal was too far out to attempt a rescue. But the next moment, a sleek head popped out of the next crest and with a sinuous movement cut across the aquamarine curl of the breaker.

In a flash the 'dog' dived through the wave and disappeared into the depths. The long, sinuous body with the rudder-like tail, was the give-away. With delight I called out that it was an otter and the children immediately started calling out to it in the hope that it would reappear. Which it did!

Two or three times more, the otter surfaced among the waves to view us. The children, (now all adults), like to believe that it was responding to their calls. I

suspect we were near its usual landing place on the rocks as I later found the well-used holt through the fynbos and the remains of crushed crab and crayfish shells that constitute part of the diet of the otter.

Eventually we accepted that the otter was not going to reappear. We were left with that indefinable feeling of having been chosen to share a moment with a creature that, totally at home in his environment, popped up to greet us in ours.

Debby de Vries

OTTERS

Dit was 'n blinkhelder wintersdag op Rooiels. Ek drink die son, die rustigheid en volmaaktheid van die dag in... Skielik hoor ek 'n vreemde deurmekaar lawaai in die baai voor ons huis. Is dit 'n baba wat huil? Of dalk 'n kat? En dan fluit iemand ook nog verbete? Ek kan die geluide nie plaas nie. Gefassineerd en nuuskierig stap ek versigtig die paadjie af see toe.

Ek kry hulle in 'n vlak rotspoeletjie - 'n klomp uitbundige blink otters wat hulself totaal oorgee aan die vreugde van die dag en die plesier van mekaar se geselskap.

Sodra een otter by die poel uitklim of sy kop bo die water uitsteek, trek die ander hom terug in die water en dompel hom onder om verder te speel. Die otters is mal oor mekaar. Hulle speel, gesels, fluit en baljaar in die helder water.

Dit lyk so lekker. Ek wens ek kon tussen hulle induik...

Na 'n tydjie, klim vier vet volmaakte otters uit die water. Hulle spoel hulle pelse af in die syferstroompie en drink lank en diep. Hulle het ondeunde oë en stekerige snorbaarde. Hulle sysagte bruin pelse glinster in die son. Ek sou so graag net vir 'n oomblik aan hulle wou raak.

Van nou af spits ek elke aand my ore vir die otters se gefluit tussen die branders. Wanneer ek hulle hoor, slaak my hart 'n sug van verligting. *Julle is nog daar! Dankie dat ek vir 'n paar sorgelose minute die wonder van Rooiels deur julle oë kon geniet.*

Estelle Raymond



ADD CARACAL TO THE ROOIELS WILDLIFE LIST!

On Monday 5 November, while enjoying lunch and Scrabble, Estelle suddenly started babbling and waving her hands furiously. Sure that she was having a fit of some sort, I missed seeing the cause of her excitement... a Caracal! As large as life and in broad daylight, this usually nocturnal feline had walked across the rocks not even 20 metres from our house and disappeared down them towards the sea.

Unfortunately there was no sand to track its spoor, and by the time I got to the point where it had been seen, there was no sign of its chestnut-

gold body and pointed black ears. As our last Rooikat sighting was in Botswana, this was a unexpected privilege - and another excellent reason to protect the ecology of the biosphere how ever we can.

Chris Burlock

Book Reviews

PLACE NAMES IN THE CAPE

By Ed Coombe & Peter Slingsby, Creda Press. ISBN 0-620-24965

This book is about place names in the Cape, what they mean and where they come from. These place names reflect the diverse and rich heritage of many cultures as well as our history, hopes, aspirations and tragedies.

The book contains references to some landmarks in our area:

Pringle Bay: Formerly known as Gordon's Bay, the name was changed when the present Gordon's Bay adopted that name. It was re-named after Thomas Pringle, Rear-Admiral in charge of Simon's Town Royal Naval Base. (1796-1798)

Rooiels: Means "red alder". The Dutch named many animals and plants after the European species they knew from home. In fact, the rooiels tree (*Cunonia capensis*) is quite unrelated to the "real" European red alder.

Hangklip: Was originally named Hanglip. This prominent, sheer-fronted peak was often mistaken in the early days for Cape Point and so was identified as the "False Cape".

False Bay: Ships' captains who thought that Cape Hangklip was Cape Point, would sail into False Bay only to discover that they had entered the wrong bay and had not yet rounded the Cape.

Kogelbaai: The name is thought to have originated from the sound made by large round stones on the beach front banging together in the receding waves, reminiscent of the sound of cannonballs banging together on the deck of a ship. Kogelberg (Cannonball Mountain) is the home of the extremely rare protea, the Marsh Rose.

Estelle Raymond

Lost and Found

We have had a spate of burglaries in Rooiels recently. More or less on the 14th of August Oom Johan Visser found a table standing forlornly in the rain alongside Bather's Road. I checked the houses in the immediate vicinity, but couldn't find any evidence of a burglary. I reported the matter to the police, but they couldn't throw any light on it. The table is now in my garage. So, if you are minus a table, please phone me at (028) 273-8424.

André Wagener

ALOES & GOODBYES

Some years back, I managed to lay my hands on three aloe ferox plants which had been chopped out of the ground during a landscaping project. Although they had no roots, I confidently potted the plants and within a year all had developed significant root systems. With great enthusiasm I brought them to vacant mountainside plot at Rooiels and carried my prickly friends up the mountainside, one weighing about 25kg, and planted them well clear of the proposed construction area but close enough to complement our future house.

For the past two years they have done well, still being low enough to hide amongst the mountain vegetation so as not to be visible from the road

Then, unexpectedly, all three simply vanished. As there have been builders nearby, my first thought was that the plants may have been used for medicinal purposes by the workmen, but then it occurred to me that they would only take the leaves.

Let's just hope that my aloes are still somewhere in Rooiels, so that one day we can all admire them when flowering as adult plants.

Harold Scott
Cell: 083 438 9864



**A fed baboon
Is a DEAD baboon**

Bird Chat

Greetings! We have just returned from our annual European migration much like the European Swallows (518). We left as Autumn's frosty fingers were clawing at England's September days. Seems we missed 'nothing' and a great deal of rain, but Spring, we think has finally arrived. We are now attempting to contact 'Duck, Goose and Co.' for the homeward bound swallows to advise them of the necessity to ship a consignment of webbed feet, but I digress. It is indeed very sad to note that the future of the swallow in the U.K. is endangered because of the widening of the Sahara and the increasingly difficult task of finding water en route.

The BIG news on the Rooi Els Bird Front (REBF) is the arrival of a chick for the Black Eagles (131) as Louise reports elsewhere.

The Black Eagle chick took his first flight on 31 October 2001 at 11:00. The first flight was perfectly and flawlessly executed according to Louise du Toit. WELL DONE!

We had hardly retrieved our luggage when 'our' francolin rushed to greet us. The Cape Francolin (195) population of Rooiels would appear to be

increasing, this in no small part due to the generosity of the human creatures of our area. Francolin breed between August and January and depending on the conditions' lay a large clutch of six to eight eggs, occasionally more if two females are involved. Keep your eyes open for the females with a string of fluffy balls from now on. Of the 13 species of francolin in Southern Africa only the Cape Francolin is endemic to our area.

The as yet relatively undisturbed smallholdings area between Rooiels and Pringle Bay along the old main road is rich in flora and fauna. We hosted the Cape Bird Club on this very walk on 16th September, beginning near Greg Goddard's at the Pringle Bay end. What a day we had too ! Not only did the sun shine but we were treated to a feast of birding.

More than once in this column I've enthused about the Rockjumpers (611) and with good cause as together with the colony on Sir Lowry's Pass they attract ornithologists from all over the world. On more than one occasion we've 'bumped' into European, American and Australasian 'twitchers' intent on putting a tick on their 'Lifers' list. (For the uninitiated a 'twitcher', originally British slang, is a bird watcher who makes a point of getting sightings of rare birds... and a 'lifer' is a once-in-a-lifetime tick of personal sightings). That's how VERY special these pert, inquisitive robin-

like birds are ! They have an infuriating habit of disappearing between rocks just as you've 'homed in' on their call, and this time was no different. However, the behaviour of one pair was such as to give the impression of a nest close by. Very little is known about the incubation period or the nestling, primarily because the nests are exceedingly difficult to locate.

Orange-breasted sunbirds (777) are prolific in the area. Indeed it was our 'common' bird that day. Buzzy, nectar drinkers, they are winter breeders depending heavily on certain ericas. Presumably this winter their nests had special consignments of DPC and tarpaulins added to their remarkably robust but elegant oval shaped nests to ward off the deluge.



The area is also home to the Ground Woodpecker (480). Their diet is almost exclusively made up of ants, ant larvae and eggs. They also belong to the 'shy' group of birds who refuse to make an appearance when required to. That aside, they have a laboured flight pattern and are very well camouflaged in spite of their woodpecker signature of an area of red plumage, in their case their rump. Spring is their breeding time when they nest in ½ to 1 metre long tunnels in river banks or similar places. The river area is of course ideal. Needless to

say they were not home on the 16th!

The day's sightings were made by a Peregrine (171). This was a huge bonus for us all. This is the Rolls Royce of the falconry world, its unsurpassed grace and its ability to stoop at up to 380 km/h makes it the most complete avian killer. As with almost all birds of prey, the female is larger than the male and in falconry this is reflected in its name 'tiercel' or 'tercel', a derivative of the French 'tierce' meaning 'a third'. This is especially true with Peregrine; the male is at least a third smaller.

Not to be outdone, the eagle made a spectacular pass over and around Klein Hangklip. The chick however was party shy and refused to make an appearance at all. Judging by the Cheshire Cat-like grins from our group a good day was had by all.

It was the very diversity of our environment that meant our group was able to see species from eagles to oystercatchers. Lets all hope that the rape and pillage being threatened on our area won't upset the fragile balance of our unique ecology too much, preferably not at all. As a certain William R Shakespeare once put it... " *In Nature's infinite book of secrecy a little I can read* " — in my case its pages have feathers on. PLEASE no more 'lost' species; as it is, the Bokmakerie (746) is one species too many already ! Happy Birding!

Alison Ayre

Nuusflitse Newsflashes

ERF 324

A meeting was held on Tuesday 6 November at Rooiels at the request of Morgan Griffiths of the Department of Environmental Affairs. Approximately 20 Rooielsers were invited. Representatives of KOBIO also attended.

The meeting explained to Mr Griffiths the strong environmental ethos driving the community's view that the granting any *additional* development rights to Erf 324 (apart from the present right to build one house), would be unacceptable. The long term cumulative impact thereof would be extremely detrimental to the unspoilt area between Rooiels and Pringle Bay and set an unfortunate precedent in the area.

Various shortcomings and inaccuracies contained in the scoping report were pointed out to Mr Griffiths.

Issues such as water, the scarring of the mountain, the cumulative effect on habitat degradation, indirect hidden costs to the community (honey-sucker, fire, road maintenance) were raised. It was pointed out that any additional development would also impact negatively on the flora and fauna, in particular the otters, the black eagles and the rockjumpers - a rare bird that attracts increasing attention from overseas ecotourists.

Mr Geoff Harris, on behalf of those present, thanked Mr Morgan Griffiths for taking the time out to visit the site and obtain a closer insight of the dynamics concerning erf 324. (Visit the Rooiels website at www.rooiels.org.za to get a copy of our comments on the Scoping Report).

TRIMMING OF ROAD VERGES (AND OTHER CATASTROPHES)

The normal cleaning and road maintenance operations in Rooiels before the start of the holiday season took a controversial direction when road verges were cleared and local indigenous bushes such as the kersiebos, jakkalsbessie and even legally protected milkwoods were cut back with enormous vigour by the municipality.

After numerous calls by residents to RERA Members and Mr Craig Spencer, a meeting was held with Municipal Officials.

It was agreed that any further bush cleaning would only take place after consultation between Mr White of the Traffic Department and the Rooiels Hack Group.

The issue of the removal of rocks that protect vegetation and prevent parking on road verges would be reviewed in terms of the Council approved Document "Rooiels Nature Reserve - public access". Discrepancies will be discussed with the RERA and affected landowners. Mr Spencer re-affirmed that road verges play an important ecological role.

EXHIBITION

18 to 24 December 2001
260 Perspicua Road

CUNONIA CAPENSIS

*IN WOOD, TEXTILES, CLAY,
GLASS, METAL, OIL AND
WORDS*

by 10 Rooi Els artists.

UITSTALLING

Perspicuaweg 260 vanaf 18
tot 24 Desember 2001

ROOI-ELSBOOM

*IN HOUT, TEKSTIEL, KLEI,
GLAS, METAAL, OLIEVERF
EN WOORDE*

*deur 10 kunstenaars van Rooi
Els*

NOTICE OF RERA AGM

The RERA Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday, 27 December 2001 at 17:00 for 17:30 at 65 Bathers Road.

Guest Speaker: Ruida Pool, Department of Nature Conservation - "*Living and Working in a Biosphere*". Wine, beer and snacks will be served after the formalities are done!

KENNISGEWING VAN REBV AJV

Die Algemene Jaarvergadering van die REBV vind plaas op Donderdag 27 Desember om 17:00 vir 17:30 te Bathersweg 65.

Ons gasspreker is Ruida Pool van die Departement Natuurbewaring. Sy gaan praat oor "*Lewe en werk binne 'n Biosfeer*". Daar is wyn, bier en verversings na afloop van die vergadering.

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