D R A F T -- background information to inform the Pamphlet John will produce – and the further development of the Information Briefs

1. **Welcome to Rooiels**

We hope that you will enjoy living here as much as we all do, please contact us for any assistance or other information.

Rooiels has a number of organisations which you are welcome to join. These include the Rooiels Ratepayers Association, Rooiels Conservancy, Rooiels Boatclub and the Rooiels Security Association which incorporates a block watch and a disaster management initiative.These voluntary organisations help to represent us at local government, support our love of nature and help to secure us. There are also village social and security WhatsApp groups, a Facebook page, a Wildlife Facebook page and a [website](https://rooiels.weebly.com/).

Rooiels is part of the [Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve](https://www.kbrc.org.za/) an area of some 100 000 hectares with the highest density of different plant species in the world. There are over 1800 indigenous plant species, and of those, 77 occur nowhere else in the world. It stretches from the Steenbras river to the Bot River Lagoon and includes the farming areas of Grabouw and Elgin. Biosphere reserves incorporate a range of different levels of conservation with a core preservation area, buffer and transition zones. Rooiels is committed to supporting and enhancing the KBR (See KBR brochure in the Welcome Pack)

[Fynbos](https://rooiels.weebly.com/fynbos-and-the-flora-of-rooiels.html) is the generic term used to describe the group of plant families growing naturally in our area. These include proteas, ericas, restios, bulbs, perlagoniums, daisies and many other species. Our wild road verges act as seed banks and are essential to the natural aesthetic value of Rooiels and important to the flora and fauna in the KBR.

Invasive alien vegetation takes its toll on our indigenous fynbos and eventually “crowds it out”.  These alien plants also create a serious fire hazard. The most common problem plants are rooikrans *(Acacia cyclops)* and fountain grasses (*Pennisetum setaceum)* which are both declared pests and should be removed wherever they are found. Rooiels has a local [Hack](https://rooiels.weebly.com/rec-projects.html) group that spends the first Saturday morning of each month cutting down alien vegetation in the village. You are encouraged to join us. (See information brief)

[Gardening in Rooiels](https://rooiels.weebly.com/tips-for-gardening.html) (see Website) requires patience and persistence! Our soils, wind and sea air make it tough. You are encouraged to grow water-wise gardens or to just landscape the natural fynbos around your home in support of nature. Any vegetable or fruit gardens will need to be totally protected from the baboons. Please avoid growing invasive alien plants which spread to the road reserves and also be careful with fynbos hybrids which can sometimes cross and eradicate natural species.

[Birding](https://rooiels.weebly.com/birds.html) in Rooiels includes sightings of the Cape Rockjumper which is endemic to the Cape mountain fynbos.  We also have several pairs of breeding Black Oystercatchers and in some years Verreaux’s (Black) Eagles nest on Klein Hangklip.  On the website there is a Rooiels list of  "All Time Sightings" compiled by Alison Ayre and Helen Jones (our local bird experts).

[Marine Animals](https://rooiels.weebly.com/marine-resources.html) include a seal colony year round out on the point at Roman Rocks across from the nature reserve. Southern Right Whales visit between June and November. Bryde’s whales and dolphins and seals can be seen throughout the year. Rooiels is a popular crayfishing spot.  Please note that there is a limited season and permits are required. Mussels can be collected from the rocks all year and permits are available from any post office.  Galjoen, Red Roman, Blacktail, White Steenbras, Musselcracker, Geelbek, Kob, Red Stumpnose and Hottentot occur in our waters. You need a permit and restrictions may apply e.g. Galjoen has a closed season.
Please report any poachers you see to ……………. but do not try and apprehend yourself.

[Baboons](https://rooiels.weebly.com/baboons.html)
Single males, family groups, or the troop of around 20-30 can be seen moving around the village. Watching them is fascinating - especially the youngsters frolicking around and babies riding on their father's back. But they are also a nuisance and given the slightest opportunity they will enter homes in search of food. Most homeowners have experienced invasions and know they can leave an awful mess!
Baboons are not naturally aggressive towards humans or their pets.  They are essentially focused on your food.  For the sake of both the baboons and your sanity -  remove all food opportunities.  If confronted by a baboon drop the food you are carrying and they lose all interest in you.  Don’t give them a fright when they are in your house or they void their bowels - be sure you are not blocking their exit and calmly insist they take what they have grabbed and leave.  Feeding, shooting or harming baboons is unlawful. (See the pamphlet and brochures or go to the website for information on living with baboons, protecting your home and reducing conflict.)

[Other Animals](https://rooiels.weebly.com/other-land-animals.html)
Rooiels has some seldom-seen animals including otters, honey badgers and leopards and the community supports cameras so that we can get a glimpse of their lives - see the [Leopard Blog](https://rooiels.weebly.com/blog-for-leopard-photos.html) and other blogs on the website and shared on WhatsApp.  There are many other animals which we only rarely glimpse including rooikat (caracal), genet and klipspringer.  Then there are those we see more often including mongoose, tortoise, dassies and baboons.

Because Rooiels is so “close to nature” we want to avoid light pollution. With no street lights and relatively few homes, the village is peaceful at night and the stars shine brightly. There is a municipal bylaw which limits external lights and property owners are asked to comply with the spirit as well as the letter of this bylaw. Reduce your light footprint by installing sensor lights for security and closing blinds - particularly from the upper level of double story homes.

We need to all work together to clean up the environment.  As you go for a walk please keep your eye out for litter, pick it up and put it in the bins. There are no municipal workers to do it here.  We love to feel that we live in unspoilt natural surroundings but there is only us to keep it that way!  Plastic and beach litter is a problem that washes up on our shores. We try and reduce the impact.

Rooiels, like many other communities, advocates a policy of “good-neighbourliness”.  As far as pets are concerned this includes respect for others’ rights and wishes. Please remove all dog mess from beaches, roads and paths (remove it in plastic bags or scoop it deep into the bushes)  The [Overstrand Municipal Bylaws](https://www.overstrand.gov.za/en/documents/bylaws?limit=20&limitstart=0" \t "_blank) restrict dogs on swimming beaches between 0800 and 1800 (especially during the holiday season) and require dogs to be on leashes.

We need to be [Firewise](https://rooiels.weebly.com/fire.html). Rooiels is considered an extremely high fire risk area.  Reducing the risk of fire is everyone’s responsibility. Please note that it is illegal to make a fire anywhere in Rooiels other than in fireplaces and braais on your own property and even they are prohibited when there is wind. Do not throw any old braai or fire coals or cigarette butts into the fynbos.

Sand dunes are our defence against the encroachment of wind and sea and should be kept in their natural state. The beach frontal dunes form a barrier protecting inland areas, retaining sand in the winter months and returning it to the beaches in summer.  [Dune](https://rooiels.weebly.com/rec-projects.html) vegetation is very sensitive and tramping on it can do serious damage.  Please keep to pathways and other demarcated areas at all times.

In addition to the National Building Regulations there are certain local requirements and restrictions in your title deeds. If the plot falls within a natural wetland or is within 100 meters of the sea high water mark, additional restrictions may apply.   When building try to limit the impact on the fynbos, remove special plants before building, and minimise the use of fences and walls which restrict wildlife movement and reduce the aesthetic value of the village. Find useful tips and guidelines on the REC page [here.](https://rooiels.weebly.com/tips-for-building-and-plot-clearingg.html)

Eskom supplies our electricity and all homes have "pay-as-you-go" meters.  Units can be bought at the Village shop. Water is supplied from a dam on the Buffels River and its quality is controlled and monitored by the municipality.  Water restrictions are sometimes imposed in summer.

All domestic waste should be put into your own baboon-proof bins for collection on Mondays. Please do not use the communal bins which are for litter from day visitors and are vulnerable to baboons.  Alternatively take it home or to the Kleinmond waste station. All garden cuttings must be taken to the "green" dump between Pringle Bay and Betty's Bay.

**USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND CONTACT DETAILS**

Fire, Emergencies, Police, RERA, RESA, REC, Village Shop, Restaurants

Social media: Village People tel no to join the WhatsApp, links to Facebook pages and the website.