



#### OUR VISION

To be a highly effective and well-supported champion of the environment.

#### OUR MISSION

To implement high impact environmental and conservation projects which promote public participation in caring for the Earth.

### **WESSA EDEN Newsletter DECEMBER 2013**

Dear Friends of the Environment,

the end of 2013 draws nigh and we look back on another busy year where our networking has developed further. The effect of this is that team work shows better results than small solo performers chipping away.

Our new Committee members have contributed hugely to the success of this small local organisation and new avenues continue to open up ... including outreach using permaculture as the point of entry to different communities. **Let's keep up the momentum – volunteers always welcome!**

We are currently actively involved with the Permaculture Garden at Pacaltsdorp High School as well as a competition for gardeners in Blanco running under the title of “Kos & Fynbos”. Keep an eye on the local press – the George Herald in particular - for weekly updates .

If you have a pet project that needs a little push, do contact us. Perhaps we can find the right partner or assistance for you.

On a personal note, I took up the position of Secretary at the AGM in 2008 and have decided to step down at the AGM in April 2014. It is time for fresh ideas and energies to come aboard - especially ones who are less technologically challenged than myself!

Please consider offering your help. It may well be best to divide the function of Secretary into smaller, more manageable parts. Apart from fielding all incoming mails – and they are very varied – I have compiled the monthly Newsletter, written up the monthly Minutes of Committee meetings, organised events and outings, written or compiled articles for the press and sent out bulk e-mails on upcoming events or topics of interest. Let us know if you would like to assist.

## **WESSA PROUDLY PRESENTS**

As always, a reminder to tune into our weekly **WESSA Eden Enviro slot** on **Eden FM Radio 93,8**

**Thursdays from 07h40 'til 08h00** - there is always an interesting topic and a wide variety of excellent speakers. Thanks are due to Monica Vaccaro who is organising the speakers. If you would like to participate – let us know!

**Saturday 14 th December 2013 ( 08h00 – 14h00 )**

**Sustainability Info Stall at the Outeniqua Farmer's Market**



To demonstrate sustainable cooking, Roz Schubert will be offering a taste of savoury rice cooked in a **Wonderbag**, made by Michelle Schubert who also offers courses) [www.http://nb-wonderbag.com/](http://nb-wonderbag.com/)



We also hope to have a small mobile worm farm ([www.homemakersonline.co.za](http://www.homemakersonline.co.za) - [www.working-worms.com/content/view/40](http://www.working-worms.com/content/view/40)) and a **rocket stove** (<http://permaculturenews.org/2013/05/20/how-to-build-a-rocket-stove-mass-water-heater/> ) on view, as well as **solar lamps** and **solar bottle lamps** ( <http://www.instructables.com/id/How-to-build-a-SOLAR-BOTTLE-BULB/> )

**If you miss us at the market, do visit the Sustainability commons at the Moriarty Environmental Centre, Garden Route Botanical Garden, 49 Caledon Street, George during normal working hours.**

WESSA implemented the USAID funded Stepping up to Sustainability programme.

Visit your local sustainability centre at the botanical garden, to get ideas on living sustainably by:

- reducing, sorting and managing waste better
- installing renewable technologies
- conserving and teaching about water management
- providing experiential courses on biodiversity

About R40 000 of materials was provided to the GR Botanical Garden. This includes two 5 000 l water tanks for rain water harvesting at the propagation yard. Lighting throughout the environmental centre was changed to low energy bulbs and an LED tube. Workshop and course participants learned how to make vertical gardens for growing food in small spaces whilst re-using materials. There are two varieties of sun cookers and a wonder bag which are used to reduce electricity consumption. Compare electricity consumption of different items by visiting the display board and seeing the potential for lighting up small and informal house with LED lights run off small solar panels. The Shack Pack also charges cell phones.

**And here is the Work in Progress for 2014 :-**

These are the planned events so far, most of which need confirming, but perhaps earmark the dates for now .....

**Tuesday 4 February ( 18h00 )** – a film relating to **World Wetland Day** at Glenwood House Auditorium. (Awaiting confirmation)

- Saturday 29 March** (morning) – Visit the winners of the **Kos & Fynbos Garden Competition** of Blanco
- Saturday 12 April** (full day) – **Gamkaberg Succulents** – self-drive guided tour.
- Tuesday 22 April** ( 17h30) – **WESSA AGM.** Venue Moriarty Centre. Speaker Viv Harpur on **Biodiversity and Wines.**
- Saturday, 10 May** (full day) – **Geology of the Klein Karoo** - guided self-drive Geology Tour (back by popular demand!)

## ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATES

### A great big feather in our cap for the Garden Route Botanical Garden Trust!

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has officially been entered into by and between the Garden Route Botanical Garden Trust (GRBGT) and South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). This is really something very special, thank you to all the support and contributions from each of the Members who have helped to make this possible.

**Through this MOU, the SANBI formally recognizes and acknowledges the contributions made by the Garden Route Botanical Garden as an associated and SANBI-endorsed botanical garden fulfilling certain criteria established by the SANBI.**

**The purpose of the MOU is to set out the working relationship between the GRBGT and the SANBI in the following areas:**

1. Research
2. Human Capital Development
3. Management of botanical gardens and herbaria and their associated biodiversity collections
4. Environmental education and outreach programs
5. Collaboration with botanical collections, including field work.

#### **Criteria undertaken by the GRBGT for SANBI endorsement**

- Promotes plant conservation / restoration programs
- Promotes environmental education / awareness programs
- Accessible and open to the public
- Makes biodiversity information available to visitors through interpretation (labels, brochures, publications, display boards)
- Promotes biodiversity awareness
- Promotes local heritage / cultural awareness
- Offers natural history courses available to the public
- Vision / Mission / and Business Plan / Model compatible with SANBI mandate

- Promotes the cultivation, display and long-term maintenance of local / regional indigenous South African plants and collections
- Includes an herbarium (the Southern Cape Herbarium)
- Promotes plant collections of wild origin
- Committed to staff developments, training and capacity development
- Committed to eradication of alien invasive plants on the estate
- Committed to generating new biodiversity knowledge through research and strategic partnerships
- Committed to promoting sustainable development practices
- Association with, but not necessarily supported financially by, the Botanical Society of South Africa or other relevant environmental NGO's
- Committed to promoting the conservation and awareness of wildlife on the estate.

**The aims of the working relationship between the SANBI and the GRBGT are to:**

1. Maximise the outputs of research programs through developing collaborative projects and building on the critical mass of expertise already in the two institutions
2. Avoid duplication of projects and resources
3. Enhance training of students in conservation and related studies
4. Expose students to possible careers in the biodiversity sector
5. Improve the use of available biodiversity information in regional policy development, decision-making and monitoring of the Southern Cape
6. Improve the services that each partner can provide to beneficiaries.

What a great achievement!

*Thank you for your continued support!*

*Kind Regards, **ROBIN CLARK** (GRBG Trust Chairman)*

**MMU Professor leads a R 13 million international study on adaptations to climate change**

A team of researchers from Arizona State University in the US, CIRAD, IRSTEA and CEFE (France) and Exeter University in the United Kingdom, lead by Professor Christo Fabricius of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's Sustainability Research Unit have recently received funding from the Belmont Forum, which includes the National Research Foundation and Dept of Science and Technology, for a three-year study to assess adaptations and perceptions of risk and vulnerability in coastal areas.

Called MAGIC (Multi-scale Adaptations to Global change In Coastlines), this 940 000 Euro (almost R 13 million) project addresses a complex problem: how to best respond to risk and vulnerability in coastal zones. Professor Fabricius will soon depart for France where the team will get together to finalize their research plans, with regular project team meetings being envisaged over the next three years. The project will also involve a group of post-graduate students and for that purpose NMMU has recruited several Master's and Doctoral students specifically for the project.

The project addresses four linked questions: 1) How do people's perceptions of risk and adaptability, and their ability to adapt, influence their decisions and actions? 2) How do such adaptations affect the vulnerability of other groups, places or resources? 3) What happens when people participate in dialogue, social learning and critical thinking? And 4) How do perceptions change when decision makers are actively involved in, learn and reflect together with scientists?

More information about the Belmont Forum and its coastal vulnerability projects can be accessed at <http://igfagcr.org/index.php/featured/87-2013-funded-projects>

## **UPDATE and ACTION... Facebook newsfeed post by 'Africa, this is why I live here'**

### **RHINO FRIDAY**

**848 poached in SA, so far this year - 2297 rhino poached since 2010 – of which 1343 have been poached out of our Kruger National Park.**

Clearly, whatever we are doing is not enough to stem the tide never mind actually put a stop to this. As the year goes by, and as the poaching numbers climb, we become increasingly outraged.

Each year, to our horror, the number passes the previous year's record high leaving us who can do very little if anything to stop this, feeling ever more helpless and hopeless.

848 rhino already dead and November & December (historically being the biggest months of the year regarding poaching), upon us, which means that the end figure for the year will leave us reeling like never before.

And then, conveniently, 1 January rolls around and we start with a lovely clean slate... 0 rhino poached...1 rhino poached... and the whole process starts all over again with seemingly no real action plan to stop the poaching of our rhino in its tracks.

MOU's are signed with consumer and trading countries, well – some are still in the draft stage, as yet unsigned...

Diplomatic, behind the scenes meetings are held between SA and these countries...

Experts are brought in, re-employed/consulted... etc, etc... the focus and attention and awareness is there, but the stopping of it all is not! What are we not doing, what could we be doing better or more of, what are we missing or not seeing here?

**I believe, that there is ONE thing that South Africa can do to put the brakes on... And it won't cost ONE CENT.** With all the monies being donated to the cause, all the monies being spent by NGO's/NPO's, all the monies raised for rhino but never actually seeing the rhino, all the monies being spent to protect rhino by both SANParks and private rhino owners, the ONE thing than be done that will not costs a cent, is the very thing not being done...

**Our rhino need to be declared a protected species by Number One, nothing less will do the trick.**

A strong, clear and vocal message must go out that our rhino have the President's Protection, that anyone who harms our rhino can be expected to feel the full might and weight of the law. That a **ZERO TOLERANCE** stance has been taken, mark the day, sign, frame and hang an official decree up for the world to see!

Why not, nothing else is doing the trick, just do it, it won't cost a cent, and it may just turn the tide! You may consider dropping an email to Albi Modise – Chief Director: Communications/Spokesperson at National Department of Environmental Affairs [AModise@environment.gov.za](mailto:AModise@environment.gov.za), respectfully requesting such a decree.

It is just about here:



### **“The Ultimate Companion for Birding in Southern Africa”**

**By Peter Ginn & Geoff MacIlleron**

**Due to launch in April 2014!**

**Pre-order TODAY and get R500 off:**

- The **most powerfully visual bird book** EVER for southern Africa
- Two volumes with **over 1400 photographs** of birds covering all **960 species** recorded
- Fascinating descriptions** from 18 top bird authorities who reveal their personal observations and knowledge in an easy to read style

#### **Peter Ginn**

24 years after the record-breaking success of his last big book, *The Complete Book of Southern African Birds*, Peter Ginn has done it again. Four years in the making, *The Ultimate Companion for Birding in Southern Africa* takes bird books as we know them to a whole new level with his incredible insight, specialist bird knowledge and exceptional photography. An Associate of the Royal Photographic Society and the Photographic Society of Southern Africa, Peter pioneered the use of photographs to illustrate bird books in the 1970s, and has already put together more than 10 iconic bird books for the southern African region, each one building on the success of the previous one.

#### **Geoff McIlleron**

With over 35 years' experience co-authoring a number of popular bird books, Geoff McIlleron has teamed up again with Peter Ginn for the second time since the resounding success of their book, *The Complete Book of Southern African Birds*. Honorary President of the Plettenberg Bay branch of BirdLife South Africa and a member of the Photographic Society of South Africa, Geoff's life-long love of the natural world and dedication to its photography has seen him put together a personal collection of photographs covering well over 600 southern African bird species.



**Pre-order before 31 December 2013 – 2 Volumes R 1095 (excl VAT) AND get a FREE e-book valued at R350. [www.birdbook.co.za](http://www.birdbook.co.za)**

Peter has kindly offered to assist our fundraising by donating R100 from every book purchased as a result of this Newsletter to OUR coffers.

When ordering you MUST write in the code: **pjg1234** which will transfer the R100 to Peter.

I must claim this from him, so PLEASE send a copy to me at [wessageorge@isat.co.za](mailto:wessageorge@isat.co.za).

## **This festive season, give a gift that supports the planet – shop online at WWF!**

WWF is pleased to announce the much-anticipated launch of our online shop! Our popular range of WWF-branded goodies is now available to buy quickly and conveniently from [shop.wwfsa.org.za](http://shop.wwfsa.org.za). We have a variety of gifts to choose from, ranging from fashionable t-shirts, hoodies and headwear to soft toys, mugs and water bottles. Show your support for WWF by proudly wearing the panda – or give the gift of a better tomorrow by buying for friends and family.

Following payment confirmation, your order will be delivered anywhere in South Africa within 48-72 hours, or you're welcome to collect from our head office in Newlands, Cape Town, free of charge.

Proceeds from the sale of our products help support our vital conservation work, so you can rest assured that choosing a WWF product contributes to a healthier and happier planet.

Be a friend of the planet - place your order today!

If you need more information, please email the WWF Online Shop team: [shop@wwf.org.za](mailto:shop@wwf.org.za) or call +21 21 657 6600.

## **FLIGHT FOR BIRDERS COURSE 23 and 24 January 2014**

### **A 2 day bird identification course for novice and intermediate bird-watchers by Dr Anton Odendal - Patria Family Church, George**

In 2014 we will be celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the course and we will be celebrating our country's birds with photographs of some of the top wildlife photographers in South Africa. Part of the proceeds will be donated to Black Harrier conservation.

We will also again be doing the course at Plettenberg Bay on 30 and 30 January for the area between Knysna and Tsitsikamma. The course is currently being adapted to local conditions and we are drafting regional specific formats, particularly for more difficult sections such as birds of prey and LBJ's. Individuals who would like to know more about birding and their local birds are welcome although the main target groups are those people working in the conservation and tourism industries.

The costs include the course manual and a certificate endorsed by BirdLife South Africa – roughly 1,600 slides and drawings will be used. The contents of the course get updated every second year and this has now been done – in many cases images of similar and potentially confusing species have been combined on the same slide in order to illustrate differences. The development of an infrastructure for birding tourists in local areas will also be highlighted. In the vast majority of the slides English and Afrikaans names of species are printed onto the slide. The course focuses on basic steps in the identification of birds, places heavy emphasis on where to find the rare and often endemic birds in southern Africa and illustrates how ordinary bird-watchers could become involved

in the conservation of birds and their habitats. A new addition to the course is a section focusing on the differences between the various families of LBJ's and how this applies to the region where the course is being presented.

A review of a previous course can be seen at the following link:

[http://www.westerncapebirding.co.za/conservation/458/%93flight\\_for\\_birders%22\\_review](http://www.westerncapebirding.co.za/conservation/458/%93flight_for_birders%22_review)

#### **WHAT PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BRING ALONG:**

- One of the bird guide books (Newman's, SASOL or Robert's), preferably one that you are prepared to make notes in to illustrate key identification features of species
- Notebook and pen
- Binoculars
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Hat and sunscreen
- Lunch picnic basket
- Coffee and tea will be provided.

#### **DETAILS IN BRIEF:**

**DATES:** 23 and 24 January 2014

**VENUE:** Patria Family Church, 121 Cradock Street, George

**COSTS:** R 500-00, that include the course manual and certificate.

**TO REGISTER AND SECURE YOUR PLACE:** Contact Elaine at [mwjasser@mweb.co.za](mailto:mwjasser@mweb.co.za) or 082 455 8402. All further queries could also be forwarded to Elaine.

**KAPUT** is the first herbicide gel on the South African market for cut-stump treatment of alien invasive plants. It is a ready-to-use formulation that requires no measuring, dilution or mixing with dye and wetting/penetrating agents, thereby eliminating the usual risk of spillage of herbicide concentrate during normal mixing procedures with liquid herbicides. Since the product is not applied by pressurised sprayer, but by paintbrush, the usual risks of eye contamination and inhalation of spray mist are effectively eliminated. There is also no risk of over-spraying, run-off or damage to surrounding vegetation, as is often the case with liquid herbicides.

In short, here is a product that is easy to use, safe to operators and friendly to the environment.

Carl Stoltz Herbcon Services (Vegetation Control Specialists) [noweeds@absamail.co.za](mailto:noweeds@absamail.co.za)

## **LINKS**

**Living Off The Grid shared the following link pertaining to Rocket Stoves:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oDpmmSqHwQ>

Read more and comment here: <http://permaculturenews.org/2013/05/20/how-to-build-a-rocket-stove-mass-water-heater/>

Here is a link to a site that has relevant articles relating to the **"state of our green affairs" in South Africa:** [www.thegreentimes.co.za](http://www.thegreentimes.co.za)

**Canned Hunting :** From: CACH. Here is a link to the video:

<http://www.sbs.com.au/dataline/story/watch/id/601799/n/Canned-Hunting>



As always, feel free to forward to others. And of course, all errors are entirely mine!



*The WESSA Eden Committee,  
Lorraine, Roz, Annemarie, Chris, Monica, Aneri, Marzanne, Colin and myself,  
along with Steve and Edith,  
Wish you a wonderful Festive Season with your family and friends.  
Keep well and we look forward to seeing you in 2014.*

*Regards,*

*Christine Ridge-Schnauffer*

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