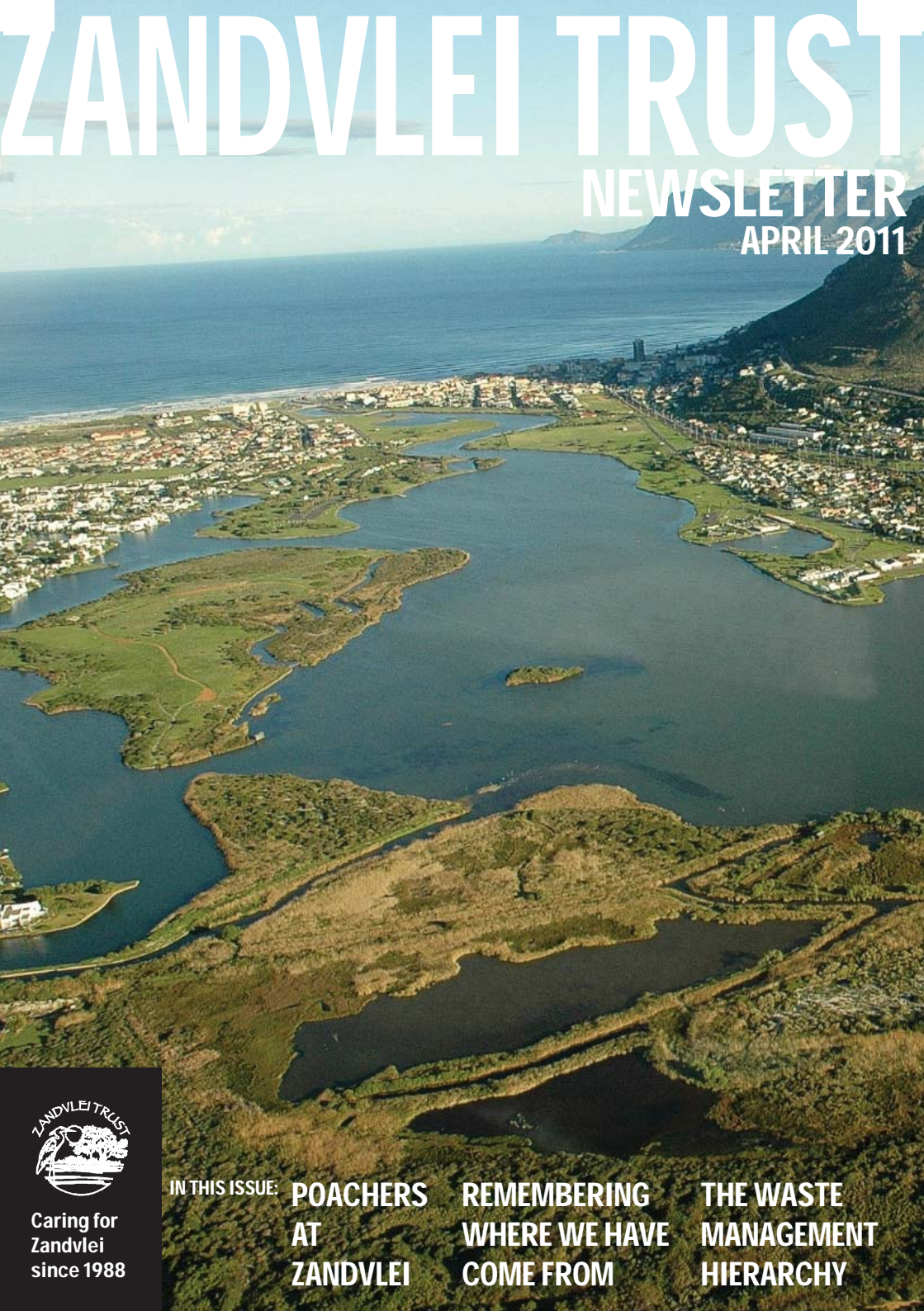


ZANDVLEI TRUST

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2011



Caring for
Zandvlei
since 1988

IN THIS ISSUE: **POACHERS
AT
ZANDVLEI**

**REMEMBERING
WHERE WE HAVE
COME FROM**

**THE WASTE
MANAGEMENT
HIERARCHY**

THE ZANDVLEI TRUST

Non-Profit Organisation - Fund Raising No: 004-011-NPO

Fax: +27 (21) 705 5224 • P O Box 30017, Tokai, 7966

Enquiries: David Muller on +27 (0) 21 788 1086

www.zandvleitrust.org.za



Caring for Zandvlei since 1988

Application for 12 month membership - valid from January 1 to December 31

Tick appropriate box: New Member Renewal

Title(s):..... First Name(s):.....

Surname:.....

Address:.....

Postal Code:.....

Tel (H):..... Tel (W):.....

Mobile:..... Fax:.....

e-mail:.....

Annual subscription: single member R80, couple (each may vote) R100

Can't afford the fee, but want to remain a member? Call David Muller on +27 (0) 21 788 1086

Deposit into bank account:

Paid Electronically (fax deposit slip):

Cheque enclosed:

Account name: Zandvlei Trust

Bank and Account number: ABSA savings account - 116 774 453

Branch and Code: Tokai - 632 005

Subscription sum R..... single couple

Donation sum R.....

What skills can you offer the trust?.....

I/we will uphold the aim of the Zandvlei Trust to conserve the indigenous fauna and flora of the Zandvlei and to enhance this natural resource for all.

Date:..... Signature:.....

The Zandvlei Trust

NPO 004-011 • PO BOX 30017, Tokai, 7966

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The Zandvlei Trust aims to conserve the indigenous fauna and flora of the Zandvlei and to enhance the natural resources for the benefit of all.

Office Bearers

Chairperson: David Muller
Tel./Fax: +27 (0) 21 788 1086
+27 (0) 72 986 5311
merryscholar@telkomsa.net

Vice Chair: Sharon McCallum
+27 (0) 21 788 8592
soitgoes@iafrica.com

Secretary: Julie Dunkerley
+27 (0) 21788 6968
julie.dunkerley@intecbilling.com

Treasurer: Gerrard Wiigram
+27 (0) 21 788 7622
wiigram@iafrica.com

Executive Members:

Joyce Brandt
+27 (0) 21 788 8071
+27 (0) 82 408 0960
joycebrandt@telkomsa.net

Lucia Rodrigues
+27 (0) 21 788 5580
+27 (0) 83 325 8881
signet@webafrica.org.za

Peter Kruger
+27 (0) 21 788 4578
prkruger@telkomsa.net

Muriel Darke
+27 (0) 21 788 7226
darkem@iafrica.com

Task Team Leaders

Recycling: Una Hartley
+27 (0) 21 788 5854
hartlge@iafrica.com
(Details above)

EE Programme: Sharon McCallum
Webmaster: Gavin Lawson
+27 (0) 21 705 5224
glawson@xsinet.co.za

Newsletter: Peter, Sharon, Muriel

Westlake Edge: John Fawkes
+27 (0) 21 788 7123
john@metaplan.co.za

Park Island: Pam Hepple
+27 (0) 21 788 1715

Development Monitoring:

Vincent Marinowitz
vincentm@iafrica.com
(Details above)

Rehabilitation: Gavin Lawson
EIAs: Bowen Boshier
+27 (0) 788 6851
sally@mail.ngo.org.za

Friends of Bokmakierie Park: Lief Petersen
+27 (0) 21 788 1256
ief@acta.org.za

Zandvlei Inventory and Management Programme (ZIMP)

ZIMP Flora: Robin Burnett
+27 (0) 21 788 5914
ropat@absamail.co.za

ZIMP Fauna: Cassy Sheasby
Tel./Fax: +27 (0) 21 701 7542
cassandra.sheasby@capetown.gov.za

Greater Zandvlei Estuary Nature Reserve - a declared local nature reserve within the City of Cape Town

Manager: Cassy Sheasby
(Details above)

Environmental Education Centre Manager: Mark Arendse
Tel./Fax: +27 (0) 21 701 7542
markclive.arendse@capetown.gov.co.za
P O Box 30028, Tokai, 7966

Regional Conservation Officer: David Morris
+27 (0) 21 713 0510

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This newsletter comes before the AGM in May where we will have Louise Stafford speak to us about aquatic weed management, early detection and rapid response programme and invasive species policy. Perhaps some sanity will prevail and we will understand why some many of us are at logger (pardon the pun) heads regarding those spiny issues about pine and other alien tree removals along the slopes of Table Mountain. I look forward to listening to Ms Stafford and her solution and I hope you will join me on May 18th.

The other day I watched a movie about a few monks discussing what they deemed to be of value to their daily lives on earth. A good question: what is important to us? We cannot take anything with us when we die. What could we leave behind? Clean air and potable water. But what can we do to ensure there will be clean air and water? Frack the Karroo? Build another nuclear power station? Cut down all the alien trees? Dig for more coal? Dig for more gold? What about rare earth? Geologists would love to get their hands on some of that.

I believe that the only time we should disturb the earth is when we plant something that should have been there in the first place. While the Trust is busy commenting on various proposals and future proclamations the city is putting down on the table and making sure the environment gets a good hearing during future development Neil Major is preparing to green parts of the island on Prince George Drive, i.e. restoring parts of the land to its original state. While he is planting Gavin Lawson is hacking every second Saturday afternoon. Gavin needs more support so, please, dear members, give a few hours a month and join him just off Old Boyes Drive every second Saturday at 2pm. On the mindset side of life, Sharon McCallum and her team of educators consistently bring learners to the reserve to learn. I often receive endearing letters from the school authorities and the children about the good work they are doing. Talking about the Reserve, please remember those open days. Even though it is understaffed Cassandra and her team have given up some of their valuable private life to be there for you to see

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Cover photograph:

An aerial picture of the Zandvlei Estuary taken by Gavin Lawson in July 2009

the gates are open and your questions are answered regarding one of the quietest spots on the peninsula. Please check www.zandvleitrust.org.za for the dates and times of our open days.

It's not just days that are opening up for us. Thanks to Denise Green and her Coca-Cola Corporate Social Investment, John Fowkes and his team have successfully got rid of most of the Hyacinth in Westlake Wetlands. That's the good news. The bad news is that someone returned from Mexico the other day with a yellow water lily, *Nymphaea mexicana*. It may decorate a garden pond but it's certainly not welcome in our wetlands. Unlike the water hyacinth which is a floating plant, says John, the lilies are rooted and much more difficult to remove. Overall, however, they have made tremendous progress: water bodies are now open; the fish life has improved; the birds and otters are returning. It's time to pay John a visit to see just how successful they have been. PenBev's support for this project has led to unexpected benefits not only for the environment but also for people who live on the margins of our society...

Meanwhile back indoors Gerrard Wigram and I have just finished studying Dr Alice Ashwell's proposal to the Lottery for funds to continue educating our children. This time with weekend and four to five day camps during the spring, summer and autumn months. Please hold thumbs that these funds are awarded for we desperately need to sustain that which has been laid in our hands. Those whom we educate will emerge, guide and facilitate an even better life for our fauna, flora and folk around Zandvlei.

A friend sent me this extract from Lyall Watson's *El-ephantoms*. As a teenager he and his friends spent a month in the wilds with nothing but their bare hands and nature with which to survive,

"It was fine foraging for food, but wringing water out of the rocks or dunes was rewarding in an entirely different way. There was something more spiritual about that. Something which resonates in us, which satisfies not just thirst, but also soothes the soul. Making sense of the reflex which sends us rushing for glasses of water for victims of shock, injury or sheer stage fright, and

leads in dry climates to ritual offerings of water as part of a welcome ceremony.

You can push your chair back from the dining table with a word of thanks or a grunt of gratification and a summary demand for the bill. But a draught of cool, clear water requires a different response, something softer, more gracious, much more like benediction. Water is a gift, and being asked to pay for it amounts almost to blasphemy. "

As we head towards our rainy season let's spare a thought for Zeekoei Vlei which has once more found itself contaminated with toxic algae and let's hope that the upcoming flushing will return the vlei to an attractive place for all who use her. Let's also spare thoughts for those without proper drainage and runoffs. As we find ways and means to prevent fracking in the Karroo and as we enjoy Zandvlei, let's look to keeping our waterways healthy and inviting. See you at the AGM.

E F F E C T I V E C O M M U N I C A T I O N
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MONKEY SHADOW



MICHAEL LAMBRECHT
Art Director • Designer

0 7 3 5 4 8 6 6 4 1
michael@monkeyshadow.co.za

www.monkeyshadow.co.za
Marina da gama, Muizenburg

POACHERS AT ZANDVLEI

The Zandvlei Nature Reserve is a proclaimed reserve under the Provincial Nature Conservation Ordinance Number 19 of 1974. The section of the Zandvlei Estuary which is included in the Reserve stretches northwards from the False Bay coastline where it enters the sea.

There are reports of people collecting bait and fishing in the Zandvlei estuary at night. Headlamps on the water and the stooped position of the people in the water, is usually a give away for people collecting prawns to use as bait. People have been seen using cast-nets and even nets to catch anything that might come into their nets. Anglers are seen fishing at night and anglers admit to fishing without licences.

Firstly, no bait or fish may be taken without a permit and the person doing the fishing or bait collection has to have the permit on them so that it can be shown to any law enforcement person who asks to see it.

Secondly, the law states that 'no person may engage in fishing and collecting shellfish and bait organisms between sunset on one day and sunrise on the following day.' So no fishing or bait collecting are allowed at night. Furthermore no bait may be taken from a Nature Reserve.

The same applies as far as nets are concerned, the Zandvlei Estuary is a Nature Reserve and no netting is allowed in a Nature Reserve except for research purposes.

Elzette Krynauw who was a student at Zandvlei Nature Reserve says the following about the prawns:-

'The Sand prawn forms an important food source for long-billed waders, such as common terns, and many fish species, an example of one being white steenbras. They are therefore an important part of the food chain in estuarine ecosystems and any disturbance will have a ripple effect influencing many components of the ecosystem.

The prawn pump, which is used by anglers to collect prawns, disrupts the sediment structure which has serious detrimental impacts on organisms living below the surface. Organisms which have been physically damaged by the prawn pump or that have not managed to burrow back successfully are either left to die or eaten by opportunistic kelp gulls. Trampling also has a negative effect in

that it causes the burrow to close up, trapping the organism and causing it to suffocate'.

Research is being done on the sand prawns at the recreated mudflats near the Zandvlei estuary mouth. The research is to establish the rate at which they colonize this recreated habitat providing information which is helpful in managing this important resource and restoring other mudflat areas. Just 3 weeks after the mudflats were recreated, prawns were seen to start colonising them, with over 40 prawn holes now present 12 weeks later. This rate of prawn bed growth is a indication of the health of the Zandvlei estuary and the suitability of the habitat.

Besides the water organisms there are other things being poached in the reserve. One of the plants being exploited is endemic to the area. It is a type of Gonnabos called *Passerina paludosa*. The plant looks a bit like an *Erica* and grows in the marshy flats of the Peninsula (limited between Zandvlei and Rondevlei.) It is listed as being critically endangered - affected by urbanisation and alien plant invasion - mainly Port Jackson wattle (*Acacia saligna*) and Rooikrants wattle (*A. Cyclops*).

It is used as a filler by flower sellers and thankfully successful prosecutions have been made where persons have been found in possession of the plant.

Of the collection records of this species the remaining population of plants are the most westerly records of its distribution. In times of climate change as we are beginning to experience now it is these populations on the extremities of a plants distribution that are the most likely to survive. This makes this population of *Passerina paludosa* critical to the survival of the species.

What can we do?

- Lobby for better anti-poaching signage around the Zandvlei Nature Reserve.
- Keep ears and eyes peeled for poaching activity and report it.
- Tell the poachers that they are doing something illegal and that Law Enforcement is active and could go as far as confiscating their vehicle.
- Call Law Enforcement on (021) 713 0510

WHAT'S ON

AGM

Wednesday 18th May (Election Day!)
at the Imperial Yacht Club.
6.30 for 7pm

Guest speaker:
Louise Stafford of CTCC on Alien control.

Untamed Exhibition at Kirstenbosch

Visit the UNTAMED exhibition at Kirstenbosch for an absorbing and thought-provoking experience. UNTAMED explores the lost balance between humankind and nature. It is a collaborative exhibition between Dylan Lewis, Enrico Daffonchio, Ian McCallum and Kirstenbosch. This exhibition opened in July 2010 and will run for one year.

Cape Bird Club has outings to Rondevlei Nature Reserve on the first Saturday of the month. These outings are for Rondevlei enthusiasts and beginners are welcome. From the M5 turn East into 5th Avenue and then at the first traffic lights turn right into Perth Road. Follow the signs. A small entrance fee to the Reserve is payable at the gate.

Our website - www.zandvleitrust.org.za - is regularly updated with information about the nature reserve and our activities. Please visit it regularly. If you have photographs/anecdotes about your experiences and sightings around the estuary, please send them to Gavin Lawson at glawson@xsinet.co.za. We would love to post them on the site for everyone to enjoy.

PHOTOS FOR THE NEWSLETTER.

We are keen to publish good, clear photos of our special environment, but so often we are unable to publish submissions because they quality is unsuitable for printing purposes. What looks good on a PC screen may not be of a high enough resolution to print on paper. Please remember that we print in black and white so a green frog against a green background reproduces as a black splodge. Wait for the subject to get into the light or open shade, if possible, with a clear background. Also, please set your cameras to record the image at a resolution between 150 and 300 dpi. The file size of the image should be atleast 1mb-1.5mb. Also, photos taken with a cellphone are just not good enough.

ENVIRONMENTAL CALENDAR 2011

World Environment Day	Sunday	05 June	Equinoxes	Solstices
World Tourism Day	Tuesday	27 September	September 23 11h04	June 21 19h16
World Habitat Day	Thursday	03 October		December 22 07h30
World Aids Day	Thursday	01 December		
National Arbor Month	September			
National Marine Month	November			

ZANDVLEI NATURE RESERVE – OPEN DAYS

Open Days for 2011 will coincide with the CWAC (Co-ordinated Waterbird Counts).

These days will run from 8am to 1pm.

The dates are as follows:

23 April

23 July

22 October

21 January 2012

GULL WATCHING

The two common gulls which we get in the Zandvlei Nature Reserve are the Kelp gull, which occurs right around our coastline, and the smaller Hartlaub's gull, which occurs mainly along the West coast and around the tip of the country.

But it's the Kelp gull that has learnt some interesting habits and which are worth watching out for. This gull feeds on a wide range of things – amongst others, any fish or molluscs it can get its beak into. It is a scavenger and is often seen around harbours, rubbish dumps and also feeding on scraps and debris which wash up along the beaches. One of its favourite delicacies is white or sand mussel (*Donax serra*).

The white or sand mussel is a filter feeder which means that it buries itself in the wet sand and then filters the water for any particles of food that it finds in the water. They have an inhalant siphon through which the water is sucked and an exhalant siphon where the inedible particles, such as sand, are discarded.

This mussel migrates up and down the beach with the rising or receding tide. It 'surfs' up the beach on a wave and then buries itself in the sand and filter feeds while

it waits for the next wave to come along. It then repeats this performance when the tide is going out.

It is when this mussel is 'surfing' up or down the beach that they expose themselves to possible predation by the Kelp gulls. Just watch a gull that is wading in the surf zone and you will see it pick up one of these mussels. Once the gull has a mussel in its beak it flies off and gains elevation. It moves over an area where there is hard sand and then drops the mussel onto the sand in an attempt to break the shell of the mussel. If it succeeds in breaking the shell it can then settle and eat the mussel.

Gulls also scavenge from each other and there is often competition from other gulls to get the mussel away from the one that has done all of the work.

These gulls have learnt to use hard sand, rocky areas and in some cases tarred surfaces to crack the shells of the mussels.

It is quite fascinating watching them so keep an eye out the next time you are at the sea side and there are gulls in the vicinity.

PK



A kelp gull. These birds have learnt an interesting way of getting at the to the flesh of white mussels. Photo courtesy of Gavin Lawson.

HA – DE – DA HA – DE – DA HA – DE – DA !

A familiar, early morning sound to those of you who happen to live in the vicinity of a large tree where these birds have decided to make their communal over-night roosting place. It is the raucous sound you will hear every morning when they leave the tree to begin the day's work of looking for food and doing whatever Hadedas do.

If you have lived in the same area for about thirty years you will also know that it is not a sound with which you were familiar when you arrived where you are. This is because this particular species of Ibis is one which is said to have 'an expanding population and distribution.' When an organism gradually expands its former distribution by moving into new areas it is called a 'spreading movement' and this is what the Hadedas has been doing over a period of time. It also seems to adapt quite happily to the urban situation.

The Hadedas is one of the birds that illustrate what is known as Onomatopoeia in bird calls. 'The sound of the birds name is remarkably descriptive of the actual call the bird makes'. Try it! It does seem a pretty raucous sound to have such a lovely description!

Another bird that is also in this bracket is the African Hoopoe.

In South Africa there are four types of Ibis – Hadedas, African Sacred, Glossy and the Southern Bald Ibis. The first three do occur in the Zandvlei Reserve although the Glossy is not a frequent visitor. All of the other Ibises have the same body shape as the Hadedas. They differ, however, in colouration and size.

All Ibises have a strong decurved bill which is used for probing soil and mud. Just watch the Hadedas that frequent any lawn areas. They are experts at getting their bills down a hole and usually happy to pull out a fat earthworm.

Why 'experts'? Well they have a system in their bill which allows them to detect pressure and vibrations from prey in the soil. They have chemo-receptors and tactile sensors in their bills which are very sensitive to all depths to smells and movements of their prey.

Hadedas eat mostly invertebrates which include earthworms and insects. Most of their food they get from the soil – using that especially adapted bill.

That raucous sound of Hadedas leaving their roosting perch en masse early in the morning can be quite alarming for persons who are not used to it. That noise certainly wakes one up if you are close enough to the tree where they roost and it can scare the odd cat or dog that may not be used to their call



The raucous Hadedas which has now established itself in parts of the Zandvlei Nature Reserve.
Photo courtesy of Greg Morgan.

REMEMBERING WHERE WE HAVE COME FROM

Facing up to the environmental issues of our time, the exponential growth of the human population and with it, our contribution to global warming, climate change, the increasing loss of wild and pristine habitats, biodiversity loss, species extinction ... the list goes on ... is not going to be easy.

We all know that we have to live differently but before we can do that, we have to think differently – about ourselves and about our relationship not only to the immediate and visible environment but to the biosphere itself.

It is crucial that we begin to see and to understand that the integrity of the natural environment – the land, the seas, the sky and the living creatures that survive and thrive in these elements are not merely aspects or utilities of human life but the conditions for biological life itself. Without them we would not be here.

This may seem obvious, but more obvious is our disregard for this fact. Why? Is it simply a matter of ignorance because if it is so, then the way to go is clear – the focus has to be on school, tertiary and adult education. Life sciences and good old fashioned Nature Study have to be elevated at school level at least, as compulsory subjects. University faculties from commerce and social sciences to chemistry and medicine must include the relevance of their subjects to the natural environment. This may sound feasible as well as possible, but as we know, there is more to it than this.

Education is no guarantee that our life styles will change. We don't have to look far to find that some of our most educated and informed political leaders, corporate executives, financiers, developers and shareholders are high on the list of environmental culprits and dare I say it – criminals? Why? They will say that they have no choice, that they are tied into contracts and commitments that are difficult to get out of, that the economic pros nationally and personally, outweigh the cons.

The excuses – economic, cultural, religious and so on – are numerous, outrageous, often understandable and

indeed, plausible. The fact remains, change is difficult.

To suggest or to demand that we change our lifestyles is not unlike demanding that an addict stop drinking or smoking. We are attached (addicted?) to our lifestyles and to change them is often accompanied by 'withdrawal' symptoms. The initial discomfort of social and personal adjustment to lifestyle change is guaranteed. Let us not forget that long after the initial highs and lows, addicts take drugs not for the 'highs' but to feel normal. It takes courage to change, but for many it is too threatening, too costly in time, money and energy and anyhow ... it is too late.

I think otherwise. It is not too late. To address and redress the human contribution to the environmental challenges of our time, if it translates as an attempt to do the right thing, is worth all the energy we can muster. Yes, it will take time but it will be worth it, perhaps not for us but hopefully, for future generations.

Today, I believe, irrespective of one's career, status or standing in the human community, environmental issues are leadership issues. In other words, if leadership is defined by effective situation analysis and decision making, how on earth, if we fail to understand the human link in the web of life can we possibly make long-lasting, meaningful and effective decisions regarding the present situation of human alienation from a biosphere upon which we are utterly dependent?

Thank heavens for the growing influence of environmental legislation and with it, the stiff penalties for those who disregard the legislation. On the other hand, would you not prefer to be guided by what you have discovered for yourself and by what you understand rather than by what the rule book says? I will suggest that the former is central to the concept of ecological leadership and to meaningful and visionary decision making. Ecological leaders shape future legislation.

Yes, we do have to think differently but before that we have to be willing to be disturbed.

Could it be that the roots of human discontent and the increasing incidence world-wide of depression, anxiety,

REMEMBERING WHERE WE HAVE COME FROM CONT.

loneliness, adjustment (rural displacement) disorders, narcissistic entitlement, anti social behaviour, addiction and substance abuse etc are symptomatic of and better understood in the light of Nature Disconnection Syndromes? Loneliness is another word for the loss of a sense of belonging. It is perhaps the greatest human need. Since when did our sense of belonging confine itself to the human species?

Meanwhile, somewhere in the curves, the creases and verse of the landscape is the message of hope- the homecoming. It is a call to personal and ecological leadership, an acknowledgement that each one of us has a personal role to play in the way we address, explore and restore our sense of balance and belonging to a Nature of which we are a part. It is a call that takes us from the depths of our imagination into the living landscapes of the world and to a greater understanding of the practical reality of the Human-Nature relationship.

Nature needs half, for we all know that for any relationship to succeed we must be willing to go "half" way with the other? How about half of our thoughts, half of our language, our thoughts and our hearts? How about half of our land? Why? Because Nature needs it ... not for its own sake but for what Vance Martin of the Wild Foundation points out "the science of life support has shown us that we need large areas of land and sea, interconnected, if life is to survive ... that if these systems are not at least half their intended size, their ability to provide services is not sufficient to support life. And if these areas are disconnected, they diminish."

Clearly, we have to change the way we live. To take less is one way of giving back to Nature. Do it slowly. Take one less aeroplane flight this month. Leave your car at home for one day this week or in the next fortnight. Find another way of getting to work. Put one less log on the fire. Disconnect electrical leads at the wall outlet. Save water. Make your voice heard when life-giving landscapes are threatened. Take care. Do the right thing. See what it does to you. It all adds up.

Finally, the poem- "The Rising". Engraved in iron at the entrance to the UNTAMED exhibition at Kirstenbosch is my response to Dylan Lewis' huge, fistled and

lion-masked human form unfolding itself.

One day

your soul will call to you
with a holy rage.

"Rise up!" it will say ...

Stand up inside your own skin.

Unmask your unlive life ...

feast on your animal heart.

Unfasten your fist ...

let loose the medicine

in your own hand.

Show me the lines ...

I will show you the spoor
of the ancestors.

Show me the creases ...

I will show you

the way to water.

Show me the folds ...

I will show you the furrows
for your healing.

"Look!" it will say ...

the line of life has four paths -

one with a mirror

one with a mask,

one with a fist,

one with a heart.

One day,

your soul will call to you
with a holy rage.

Adapted from an article Ian wrote for Environment magazine about the Untamed exhibition at Kirstenbosch Botanic Garden.

Ian McCallum

THE WASTE MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY

All of the rubbish we throw away goes into a landfill site or if you like - the municipal rubbish dump.

In South Africa the average household produces about 1000kg (that is a ton!!) of waste a year. This, as you know, consists of a wide range of items such as food, wrapping, glass, packaging material, organic waste, etc. Other waste items include electronic waste. Things like toasters, kettles, old television sets (and the packaging of the new one!). All of this ends up on the rubbish dump where it slowly rots away and at the same time poisons the soil and any water in the vicinity.

The immediate city of Cape Town, has three landfill sites at present.

- The closest to the southern Suburbs is the Coastal Park dump which is visible if you travel along Baden Powell Drive. It is also visible from Boyes Drive from where it looks like a massive new development out on the Cape flats.
- Next to the N7 highway travelling towards Malmesbury the Vissershok landfill site is on the left hand side of the road. This is the one where most of the toxic waste goes along with the usual waste.
- The third one is the Bellville landfill site and it is off Sacks Circle.
- The 'new mountain' that you see on your left hand side, as you enter Stellenbosch is their landfill site.

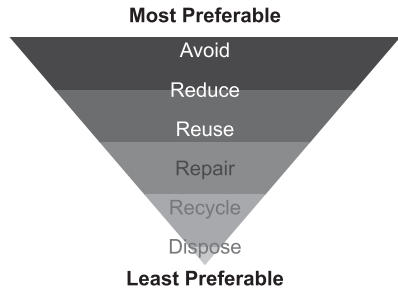
The hierarchy of waste management is a guide to all of us to try and follow these principals. Where the most preferable action (Avoid) is on top of the pyramid and the least preferable action is to dispose of is at the bottom of the pyramid. By following these principals we will be able to reduce the amount of waste that goes to the landfill sites.

- Avoid - do not buy certain items which are going to end up in the dump. An example is to filter your own water and not buy bottled water. Ask your self 'do you need it or do you want it?'
- Reduce - buy goods with as little packaging as possible. Use your own bags when going to the supermarket.

- Reuse - reuse where you can, like jars, plastic tubs, etc.
- Repair - rather try and have things fixed instead of throwing them away.
- Recycle - separate your waste and send recyclable material for recycling.
- Dispose - only when there is no other way, should the waste be sent to the dump.

Vantru computing, based in the Lakeside Centre in Main Road, Lakeside is also an electronic waste drop off point for recycling of all household appliances, consumer electronics, computers & office equipment. They support charity related projects with working used and unwanted equipment. It is called ECYCLING!

Extracts from the Nakekela Newsletter. Issue 14 of February 2011



'Trucks queue at the Coastal landfill site from 8am until 6pm each day of the week to off load the waste we generate'.

THE RIVERS OF THE ZANDVLEI CATCHMENT

Zandvlei is the largest of eight estuaries on the False Bay coastline and provides 80% of the estuarine area on the bay.

Zandvlei receives the bulk of its fresh water from three river systems draining the eastern slopes of the Peninsula mountain chain.

The Diep River which later becomes the Sand River, has the longest course, it is approximately 15 kilometers from source to the Zandvlei Estuary. This river rises above Constantia.

These rivers are the life blood of Zandvlei and have to be carefully monitored to make sure of the sustainability of Zandvlei.

In recent years, developments along the water courses have impacted negatively, in that excessive nutrients (fertilizers) and sediments (top soil erosion) are being deposited in Zandvlei in the high run off periods.

Also seriously affecting the rivers is the lack of road gutter and storm water drain sump cleaning. The silt ends up in the storm water drains which feeds into the rivers and then into Zandvlei. If damming and water extraction of these rivers is not carefully controlled, the inflow to Zandvlei can be seriously affected.

Zandvlei is an estuary, which has a delicate, cyclic and seasonal balance of sea to fresh water mix. This mix determines its life supporting capabilities.

The rivers which feed the Zandvlei Estuary are:-

Diep/Sand River

Spaanschemat/Grootbos/Prinseskasteel/Keyser River. This river system drains the Constantiaberg

Westlake River. This river rises on Steenberg mountain.



The Westlake River where it crosses the Main Road in Lakeside on its way to the Zandvlei Estuary

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A WAY FORWARD FOR THE ANNUAL PENINSULA PADDLE

A way forward for the annual Peninsula Paddle

Here are some points about the next Peninsula Paddle. Contact details are included.

I wish to propose the following in enabling the planning and coordination of the 2011 Peninsula Paddle. Please let me know where you can assist or if there are points left out.

- The 2011 Peninsula Paddle will happen on World Environment Day (Sunday, 5th June)
- Prior to the next meeting on 9th May, to use email to coordinate tasks.
- In looking to create a digital platform to assist in the awareness of the 2011 Peninsula Paddle, a Facebook group is to be created to post updates and media links.
- Publicise the Call for Paddlers – so that we can get a firm idea of the numbers of paddlers who will be on the water.
- Write up a press release to publicise the event in the media – both print and digital.
- Update the website as required.
- Begin collating what activities are to happen at various points and at what times along the route – the view is that organisational activities are

activated along the route as the paddlers pass by/ stop over although this may not always be feasible.

- A provisional list of activities will be circulated in a following email.
- Get relevant permissions to use waterways and other facilities.
- Do a reconnaissance of the route to determine what watercraft would be able to be used on the route, or for part of the route (for example, SUPs may not be able to travel on certain canals due to insufficient water depth).
- Design of Peninsula Paddle signage (banners/ flags envisaged as re-usable for future events).
- To look into sponsorship for the 2011 Peninsula Paddle (to assist with signage, logistics as required, tent hire, refreshments on route, safety/ first aid support, etc).

Best wishes
Glen Thompson
Paddler

Vice-President: Stand-Up Paddling South Africa (SUPSA)

www.supsa.org.za, email: glen@slt.co.za,
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COAL - FIRED POWER STATIONS

In Ian McCallum's article on page 7 & 8 of this newsletter he says that 'environmental issues are leadership issues.' He also says that 'Ecological leaders shape future legislation'.

Recently, in the March 18 to 24 edition of the Mail and Guardian Newspaper there were two pages devoted to the goings on at the country's power generator, Eskom. It made interesting but scary reading.

There was an accident on 9 February at the Duvha power station which is situated near Witbank (now called Emalahleni - this means 'place of coal'). This accident wiped 600MW of power from the national grid when one of the turbine units that was undergoing routine tests malfunctioned, causing it to 'fly' apart. The force of this accident was so great that parts of the unit were flung through the roof of the turbine hall. A similar accident happened in 2003 at Duhva also resulting in extensive damage (R2Bn) to the generator. It was blamed on "untrained contractors," as the permanent staff had been laid off.

It is alleged that this latest accident was caused when three independent protection systems on the turbine system failed. The manual override system had been left unmanned. It is going to take years and another few Billion R's to repair the turbine again. It is said that the turbine exploded while performing 'over-speed' testing. The units are over-speed rated at 3600 rpm and the last recorded speed before failure on this unit was 4250 rpm. Scary stuff!

Construction of the Duvha Power Station commenced in November 1975 and final commissioning took place in 1984. Duvha cost R1.6 billion to build. Its chimneys are the largest freestanding concrete structures in Africa and its mine the largest open-cast colliery in the Southern Hemisphere.

At present the Medupi and the Kusile power plants are being constructed. When the first 700 MW unit of the new Medupi power station comes on stream - expected in 2012 - the extra capacity it was meant to add to the system will do little more than plug the gap created by the Duvha accident.

I am told that the money being used in building the Medupi power station would be sufficient to place a solar panel and geyser on every house in the country. Now wouldn't that have made a lot of environmental sense? Sadly we probably have to acknowledge that decisions regarding the power supply in our country are made by persons and institutions with vested interests and are not made in the interest of the future of the country!!

PK



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ZANDVLEI TRUST - ALIEN VEGETATION CLEARING (HACKING)

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Where

Currently we are working the area of Old Boyes Drive between Main Road Muizenberg and Boyes Drive above on the mountainside.

What to bring

Bring your energy and enthusiasm, gloves, a garden lopper or a small bow saw. There is various litter about, you can fill bags, which will be supplied. Dress suitably for the weather. Wear sturdy footwear. Training will be provided.

When

On the 2nd Saturday afternoon of each month at 14h00 till 16h00.

Only 2 hours of your time and effort.

Contact Gavin Lawson on glawson@xsinet.co.za or 021 705 5224, for more information.

Why

This area is the remaining biodiversity corridor linking the Muizenberg mountain to Zandvlei and helping to extend this corridor along the coastline to the Kogelberg Biosphere in the east.

The idea is to remove these invasive species, so that the biodiversity of indigenous plants may be encouraged. This also promotes the diversity of other living species, insects, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, birds etc, which make up or are part of habitats and ecosystems.

The invasive vegetation dominates areas, where it grows and often suppresses the indigenous plants. These exotic plants grow very quickly, removing large amounts of water from the soil and also creating a shady canopy. This prevents the sunlight reaching the ground, where the low growing ground covers, bulbs and seedlings struggle to grow.

The exotic plants can, and some do, alter the soil characteristic by adding nitrogen to the soil. These invasive plants tend to dominate, as their host insects and parasites are not present.

Fynbos vegetation usually grows in nitrogen poor soils.

Come and help us, and you may learn much and see the benefit and the results of the work we do.

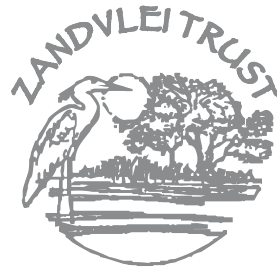
History

The Cape Bird Club has had a long history at Zandvlei, and monthly 'hacks' were initiated for the Cape Bird Club by Alan Morris back in 1978.

Bill Rudings took over as leader in 1985 and subsequently Gavin Lawson in 1991.

Zandvlei Trust members have regularly cleared the invasive species from the Reserve area for more than 20 years. Since the GZENR (Greater Zandvlei Estuary Nature Reserve) was proclaimed in October 2006, we have worked in the extended area beyond the "old" Reserve boundary.

See the website www.zandvleitrust.org.za then look under the heading Task Teams.



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09:00 to 21:00 Sundays and public holidays

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Friday 8.30am to 6pm

Saturday 8.30am to 1pm

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