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**Quarterly edition /Kwartaallikse uitgawe
Editorial / Redaksioneel:**

DIE ONTWIKKELING VAN DIE KLEINMOND HAWEGEBIED

Na meer as 'n dekade se oorweging, beplanning, bespiegeling, geredekawel, aansoeke, ondersoek, herbeplanning en uiteindelijke goedkeuring deur alle betrokke amptelike instansies, het die ontwikkeling van Kleinmond se hawegebied einde laaste begin.



Die ontwikkeling vind plaas in 'n grotendeels stedelik gesoneerde deel van Kleinmond en raak slegs marginaal aan klein oorblywende natuurlike aangrensende areas. Laasgenoemdes bestaan uit twee erg verwaarloosde en besoedelde vleilande. U vereniging se bestuur was eers van mening dat die vleilande onherstelbaar is en nie juis volhoubaar bewarenswaardig is nie. Van die professionele konsultante wat deur die ontwikkelaars aangestel is, het egter 'n ander mening daaroor en het aanbeveel dat veral die grootste deel van die een ten weste van Haweweg wel gerehabiliteer en bewaar moet word. Ons is gelukkig met die bevinding en sal dit vorentoe steun met die oog daarop om te verseker dat dit wel so gebeur. Om die rede, dien Rupert de Kok namens u vereniging op die toesighoudende omgewingsbewaringskomitee van die ontwikkeling.

In die lig van bogenoemde, is die komitee se versigtig positief/neutrale houding teenoor die ontwikkeling makliker te verstaan en hopelik te aanvaar.

Die ontwikkeling behels die daarstel van verbeterde noodsaaklike infrastruktuur, verskeie sake- en kantoor-ruimtes en 'n verskeidenheid wooneenhede. Verder sal die hawe herstel, meer gebruik-ersvriendelik en veiliger gemaak word. 'n Baie belangrike komponent is die herbou van enkele vissershuisies en die rehabilitasie van die "kerkgrot", alles 'n essensiële erkenning van die verontregting van die vissersgemeenskap daar gedurende die apartheids-era.

Soos met enige ontwikkeling van die aard, sal daar diene wees wat dit verwelkom en ander wat ongelukkig is daaroor. In die geheel gesien, behoort dit beslis 'n bydrae tot die ekonomie en belastingsbasis van Kleinmond te maak en tot voordeel van beide die kommersiële en ontspannings-vissermanne te wees.

Peter Müller, Vise-Voorsitter.

FIRES AND BIRDS

by Margie Wilson

The Kleinmond Bird Club had an outing to Harold Porter Botanical Gardens recently. Prior to going, opinion was that we wouldn't see much in the way of birds. But since the gardens were always worth a visit, we should go as it is close by. With petrol being as expensive as it is, we are always looking for bird watching spots closer to home. Once there, we split into two teams and set up a competition to see how many different species we could find. Surprisingly, at the end of the day the two teams had seen a total of 22



different kinds, including some unusual ones for us, in a kingfisher, and the melodious sound of a Victorin's warbler, which had one group perplexed for quite a time. The thing to do now however is to go back again after the fires to see whether the bird tallies have increased in the same way that ours have with food for our feathered friends being in such short supply. I am sure we would be pleasantly surprised.

However, to get back to our fires.

The sad reality of how nasty fires can be, struck home when they raged uncontrolled through our mountains for five days. This was a terrible blow and to see the devastation afterwards was heart rending. But, there has been a perfect plus side for us, albeit at

the cost of the beautiful natural surroundings. With the blackened vista before us, we now find our gardens much in demand by the birds.

Whilst hanging out washing last week, I was treated to a fascinating opera of birds who were busily feeding in the bottlebrush, the coprosma with its fine yellow berries, the water-berry in dark maroon and the elder-berry which changes which looks like wine when ripe (no wonder it elderberry wine was such a favourite Victorian tippie). Despite the fact that these are not native to this area the lack of food in the mountain ensures visits from the birds who are looking for sustenance in whatever shape or form.

My feeding bottle has been filled over and over again as birds queue up for their share of the spoils. And the variety of avian life is quite amazing. Normally the sugarbirds shun all except the proteas now they are supping regally on bottle-brush and seemingly enjoying it. We have had the Southern bou-bou visit quite frequently, malachites are acting bossy with the other birds, the little lesser double collared sunbirds sitting quite happily on the edge of the stoep whilst we dine nearby, weavers chirrup away in the shrubbery, and take baths fairly often in our bird-bath.



The white-eyes are present, as are the sweets, canaries and siskins too, whilst the recently fledged fiscal shrikes dart in and out, and we have seen the olive thrush and the paradise flycatcher. A huge congregation of doves of all sorts and rock pigeons gather on the telephone wire at the back twice a day, and during the heat of the day shelter on the lawn adjacent to the coprosma. They sit with their wings outstretched, first one side then the other, getting rid of lice. Some squat down and gleefully give themselves a sand bath.

Guinea fowl are more persistent, turning once pristine lawn into scratch patches to rival any sandpit at any nursery school. Hadedas drop in daily as well, cawing loudly and insistently, waking slumbering souls from sleep. The gymnogene has been visiting various tall trees on the edge of town calling mournfully to anyone who will lend an ear. I'm not sure if he/she is looking for a mate but he sure sounds lonesome. One resident complained that he was 'painful' to listen to, but there are others who love the sound of his plaintive cry. On the dog walk one encounters the orange-breasted sunbirds low down on the edge of the mountain, also fighting among themselves for territory. Yes, it's been quite a busy time down 'south'.

The Helmeted Guineafowl (*Numida meleagris subs coronata*)

by Penny Palmer

Before the 1900's these birds were seldom seen south of the Orange River or west of Uitenhage in the Eastern Cape. Since then they have expanded their territory more than any other game bird in southern Africa.

These birds were found on the tables of wealthy ancient Greeks and Romans. Imported live from Africa, they were also bred in Europe and still are widely distributed in Southern and Central Europe.

Apart from the savoury flesh, these birds have always been known for its egg laying capacity, some estimate up to 100 eggs a year per hen.

There are three subspecies, the other two being *N damarensis* found in Angola and Botswana and *N mitrata* on the eastern side of Africa.



There have been many investigations into the diet of these birds over a long period and it is clear that their diet is mainly invertebrates many of which are agricultural pests such as fruit weevils and locusts during their breeding season, crickets and seeds and bulbs for the rest of the year. They scratch up the bulbs of cyperaceous plants and certain grasses and eat the stems as well. Grain where available is readily taken and this sometimes causes conflict on crop-growing farms. Because of the conflict between crop growers and these birds, a considerable amount of research has been done in various parts of Africa, where the bird's stomach contents were given special attention.

The results surprised many – almost the entire meal was of insects. Where grain lay on the ground after harvesting, it was eaten and the reports that Guinea fowls pecked at the maize cobs they could reach was stilled when it was found that these cobs were infested with termites, and that these were the main attraction, not the maize. The comment was made that given the major damage that insects cause to agricultural crops, and the huge numbers consumed by

these birds, surely a few grains of whatever crop, was fair payment! Among the other things they also eat are the seeds of the duiweltjiedoring. (*Tribulus terrestris*).

The generous handouts they receive from many households are always welcome.

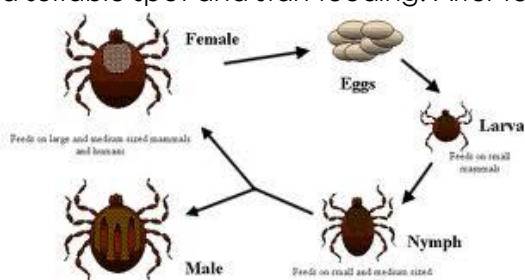
In our area breeding usually takes place between September and December. This period after the winter rains, usually provides an abundance of food and the cooler weather is kinder to the chicks. The female builds the nest which can hold up to 20 eggs. This is caused by egg-dumping by other females. The eggs have very thick shells as a protection from rodents. The incubation period is from 24 to 27 days. The female almost starves herself during this period, but when the eggs begin to hatch, the male reappears and takes the chicks over for a few days until the female has eaten and slacked her thirst. Thereafter both parents guard the chicks, sometime fiercely, even attacking large dogs. Immediately after hatching the chicks are able to run fast and to feed themselves. They have a habit of 'freezing' instantly when a parent gives a warning, and their cryptically coloured feathers allow them to blend into the background. Within 14 days they are able to flutter about and plane a few centimetres off the ground, when threatened. The likelihood of their reaching the adult stage is about 50%.

Given the abundance of food available to both these birds and the Francolin, there appears to be little competition between these species. Their natural enemies are mainly the mongooses, Genets and domestic cats. There have been very few reports of chicks being taken by raptors. Perhaps their habit of foraging near human habitation keeps them reasonably safe.



South African Ticks
by David Horne

Tick is the common name for the small arachnids in superfamily Ixodoidea that, along with other mites, constitute the Acarina. Ticks are ectoparasites (external parasites). The oldest example is an argasid (bird) tick from Cretaceous New Jersey amber. The younger Baltic and Dominican ambers have also yielded examples, all of which can be placed in living genera. There are three families of ticks, one of which - Nuttalliellidae comprises a single species. The remaining two families contain the hard ticks (Ixodidae) and the soft ticks (Argasidae). Ticks go through a life cycle consisting of egg, larva, nymph (hard ticks have one, and soft several) and adult stages. The larval, nymph and adult phases are blood feeding. After egg first hatches, the nymph will climb up on grass or bushes, and waits for a passing animal or human. They climb on, find a suitable spot and start feeding. After feeding on a host, the



larva drops off, digests the meal, and then moults into a nymph stage and starts the cycle again. When there are several nymph stages, this is repeated. The nymph then moults into the adult phase, and will take a blood meal again.

Both hard and soft ticks are known to be vectors, or carriers of a number of disease or illness causing organisms. Of interest in this article is African Tick Bite Fever (TBF). TBF is caused by a bacteria which can be carried by some hard ticks. The actual bacteria are either *Rickettsia conorii* or *R. africae*. These bacteria

are introduced into humans by the tick biting (although it seems the tick needs to be feeding for a while first) or it can be introduced through crushing the tick, and its body fluids enter through a skin abrasion, or even by being splashed into the eye. The African TBF tends to be usually mild, thus serious complications and death are rare, unlike some other forms in other countries.

Symptoms of TBF occur after an incubation period has elapsed, which can run anywhere from 5 to 7 days. The most common symptoms of tick bite fever include a black mark where the bite occurred, called an eschar, which usually range from 2 to 5 mm in diameter. The eschars can be hard to find, and they usually appear when symptoms develop. Enlarged lymph nodes are also common in the area of the eschar. Other TBF symptoms vary in severity from fevers, headaches, malaise, and skin rashes, to confusion, swelling and pain in the joints, shortness of breath, palpitations, and vomiting. Tick Bite Fever is treatable with antibiotics such as doxycycline.



Tick-bite fever is widespread in South Africa – but especially common in the bushveld areas of Mpumalanga and the coastal belt from Port Elizabeth to the Mozambique border. There is still much research that needs to be done to determine the full range of the ticks, and tick bite fever. As with most infections caused by organisms carried by parasites, only a relatively small number of people bitten by the parasite are infected with the organism.

However, as with all parasites, it is best not to get bitten!

1. Avoid tick bites - Wear long sleeved shirts, long pants and shoes. Apply insect repellent to exposed skin.
2. After being in bush or long grass, and regularly while walking, do a quick body check. Feel and look over your legs and arms for ticks before they settle down. When appropriate, check the top of your legs at your underwear line and your feet at the sock line. Ticks often tend to move to the groin and feet areas as they are moist and warm, but get held up by clothing.
3. When clearing ticks off your dogs (or yourself), do not let tick body fluids enter your skin or eyes. If crushing the ticks, crush them under a rock or brick.
4. Early diagnosis - If you've been in a known tick bite fever area and are suffering from a fever, headache, swollen lymph nodes and have located the eschar, seek medical attention. The eschar is not always visible so don't rely on its presence as a diagnostic sign. Be sure to draw your doctors attention to the bite area, and that you have been in a tick area.

While TBF cannot be ignored, it is fairly rare, and not a very dangerous disease. It is not something to worry about, and certainly not something to fear and prevent us from enjoying nature, especially when it is just on our doorstep.

Tick removal.....

Traditionally people say to use vaseline, cold cream, oils, nail varnish and/or remover, etc, in an attempt to smother the tick, so that it dies or detaches. Other thoughts are a burning match, cigarette tip, etc.

However, these appear to be counter productive, and usually cause the tick to bite and burrow deeper. Furthermore, and also with grabbing the body of the tick and pulling, these tend to cause the ticks to inject more saliva (and pathogens if they are carriers) which can cause greater problems.

The best ways are to use fine tipped tweezers, or even ones like from a Swiss Army knife. They allow you to grab the head of the tick, as close to the mouthparts as possible. So therefore, grab the tick by the head or mouth parts right where they enter the skin. Do not grasp the tick by the body. Then, without jerking, pull firmly and steadily directly outward. Do not twist the tick as you are pulling.

This will usually remove the tick. Sometimes, rarely, the tick will break, and its mouthparts will remain in the skin. Remove what can be removed, and the rest will come out soon, much like a small splinter.

It is always good to apply a disinfectant cream or solution in the area, just to reduce chances of secondary infection. If however, the tick bursts when removing it, wash the area with soap and water as soon as possible, as well as your hands. If in doubt, call your doctor.

Do NOT crush the tick with your hands. Kill them by dropping them in alcohol, or crushing them under a brick, where the body fluids cannot splatter onto you. Ticks do not die by being flushed down the toilet.... they may crawl back out.

**Kleinmond Natuurbewaringsvereniging /
Nature Conservation Society
Voorsitters Verslag / Chairmans Report
20 April 2010/11**

'n Goeie jaar vir u vereniging het afgesluit op 'n dramatiese en traumatiese wyse. In Maart het ons 'n mensgemaakte vuur ervaar wat groot oppervlakte Fynbos, asook indringer-ruigtes, vanaf Arabella tot Kogelbaai afgebrand het. Na die vorige brand op 6 Januarie 2010, wat deur weerlig begin is, bly daar weinig Fynbos oor in ons omgewing wat nie binne die laaste drie na vyf jaar gebrand het nie. Daar is dus 'n bedreiging dat daar nie genoeg saad oor is om die Fynbos ten volle te laat herstel nie. Slegs die Wes- en Oos-banke van die Palmiet suid van die R 44 en die Kusstrook voor Kleinmond is nog goed groen. Laasgenoemde strook het 20 jaar laas gebrand, is erg besoedel met indringers en ander uitheemse plante en erg oorgroei deur Taaibos. Dus is die voorkoming van veldbrande en die beheerde brande waar nodig, 'n prioriteit vir die volgende 20 jaar. U vereniging sal sy deel moet doen om die saak te bevorder.

Die begin van die langverwagte Haweontwikkeling het ook sy stuk drama tot gevolg gehad, waaroor meer inligting later in die verslag sal volg.

Ten spyte van die gebeure, kan ek u verseker dat u Vereniging gesond en aktief is in die nastrewe van sy doelstellings en ook sy hoogtepunte gedurende die afgelope jaar beleef het.

Management Committee.

Following her inauguration as our Honorary Life-President, Dot Aves continues to fill this position with dignity, for which we are grateful.

The following members served on the committee:

Chairperson: Peter Müller.

Vice Chair: Annette Mason

Treasurer: Peter van Zyl.

Secretary: Henriëtte Botha.

Additional members: Neil Fairall, Jeanette Fischer (News Letter Editor), Frans van der Merwe, Anna Marie Shutte, Mariaan Guest and Johan Loubser.

Hettie Smit served as co-opted member for the Hiking Club, while Robbie Hill served as leader of the hack group and Dirk van Velden was organiser of the Astronomy group. Members served on various advisory committees and as co-ordinators for the different special interest groups. Peter Müller is our ward committee representative. I want to thank all the committee members for their ongoing devotion to the activities and objectives of your Society. My special thanks to our treasurer, secretary and Frans van der Merwe, who took most of our committee meeting minutes, tasks I consider particularly burdensome.

Finansies.

Die finansiële state sal deur die tesourier voorgelê word. U vereniging se finansiële posisie bly gesond. Donasies wat ons gereeld ontvang, veral van die Frank Robb Trust asook ander individue, word aangewend vir die instandhouding van wandelpaaië in ons onmiddellike omgewing. Dit word op kontrak met ons deur Rupert de Kok en sy span met groot vrug en tot die blydschap van alle stappers gedoen. Graag bedank ons alle donateurs, groot en klein, wat ons in staat stel om te help om ons pragtige omgewing te bewaar en vir ons besoekers toeganklik te maak. Spesiale dank kom ons tesourier Peter van Zyl toe vir sy harde en noukeurige werk om ons finansies behoorlik te dokumenteer.

Lidmaatskap.

Ons lidmaatskap bly redelik konstant op ongeveer 350 lede meeste waarvan lewenslede is. Dit bly 'n uitdaging om nuwe lede te werf en ook meer van hulle aktief betrokke te kry by organisatoriese pligte van die vereniging. Dit is 'n taak waarmee almal kan help. Dit kan nie uitsluitlik aan Retha van Huyssteen, ons kranige lede-werwer, oorgelaat word nie.

Fynbos Nuusbrief.

Die nuusbrief is ons hoof-kontak met al ons lede. Dankie aan die redaktrise en almal wat daartoe bydra. Opbouwende kritiek, kommentaar en voorstelle is altyd welkom en gee vir ons 'n aanduiding van u ontvangs daarvan. Die elektroniese verspreiding daarvan spaar ons posgeld en stel ons in staat om beter gebruik van kleur te maak. Indien u dit nog nie so ontvang nie en dit so sal verkies, kan u gerus laat weet.

Projects and other activities.

Youth Group.

The youth group progressed well up to the end of the school year. The programme for the holidays drew little or no response. Early in the new year a number of the leading organiser suffered the effects of home accidents or the advance of old age to the point where further activities have had to be abandoned, hopefully only temporarily. For this most worthwhile activity to continue, it is essential that younger, more physically able adult members take on both the organizational tasks and the leadership of outings. People interested in becoming involved should please contact Anna Marie Shutte or Peter Müller. The incoming committee will have to address this issue during the coming months to determine the future of this activity.

Exhibitions and permanent wildflower exhibits.

The annual exhibition in the library hall was held again this year with a lighter touch and more space for viewing the fynbos flowers and other materials. It was very well received by the public. The permanent wildflower exhibits in the library and the tourist office in Harbour Road make our natural treasures available to visitors and local residents alike who would otherwise never see them. My special thanks to all who helped create and man the annual exhibition and maintain the permanent ones regardless of rain, sun or fire.

Control of Alien Vegetation.

The "Hack Group" led by Robbie Hill are our unsung heroes as they quietly and unobtrusively continues to rid our area of invasive alien plants. The municipality cannot manage this problem on their own and all in the community owe a debt of gratitude to these people who give so freely of their time and sweat. The group can use any help they can get and we urge members that can to join them. The least all of us can do is to support them by ridding our own gardens of alien plants that provide a source of seed to spread into the open areas around us. It is unforgivable to allow Pamps grass, Australian Myrtle and similar plants to flourish on our properties. Put pressure on your neighbours if needs be.

Instandhouding van paadjies in die berg.

U vereniging loop 'n lang en vrugbare pad met die skep en nou ook instandhouding van stap-paadjies in die omliggende munisipale natuur-reservaat, asook die oorspronklike daarstelling en vergroting van die reservaat na sy huidige omvang. Die stelsel waardeur ons met gebruik van die donateursgelde, die paadjies nou instand hou, werk al hoe beter. Rupert het met ondervinding en insette van ander sy metodiek by die plaaslike omstandighede aangepas om die werk te vergemaklik, kostes te beperk en 'n baie beter produk te lewer. Die sleutel hiertoe is die gebruik waar enigsins moontlik van naby geleë klippe. Soos 'n goeie kaptein, lei hy sy manne deur self in te spring en van voor te wys hoe dit gedoen moet word. Hulle, almal plaaslike mense, waardeur die werksgeleentheid en ook sy werkswyse. Na die onlangse vure, sal heelwat herstelwerk op andersins voltooide paadjies opnuut aangepak moet word. Die prioriteitsorde van werksaamhede word deur die Stapklub aan ons komitee voorgelê en gewoonlik sonder wysiging aanvaar. Die Munisipaliteit het groot waardering vir hierdie werk en verskaf materiaal waar hulle enigsins kan. Rupert en sy span verdien ons almal se dankbaarheid.

Harbour development.

While this development as such is not our concern, its impact on our environment in the vicinity and wider afield certainly is. Work on the development had just begun when Annette Mason was observant enough to note that the manner in which some of the earthworks was being tackled would have serious negative impacts on the neighbouring wetlands. She did not waste a minute before taking this up with the municipal officials and the developers. The result is that earlier vague talk of an environmental supervisory group on which we had been invited to serve, was formed and has started its work in earnest. All indications are that this will lead to good results and a healthy relationship between all the parties concerned. In the interests of a co-ordinated and more effective approach to any problems with this development, members and the public are advised to raise their queries through the Society's committee.

Ter afsluiting wil ek graag al die komiteeledede asook ander wat ons strewende na die bewaring van die natuur en ons omgewing in der breë, bedank vir hul ondersteuning en belangstelling. Dit het my taak nie net vergemaklik nie, maar ook in 'n plesier omskep. Onthou dat u, ons lede, die fondasie van die vereniging uitmaak – bly asseblief met hart en siel betrokke. Elke stem vir omgewingsbewaring tel.

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