



FRIENDS OF TOKAI FOREST

P O Box 442 Bergvliet 7864



WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY OF SA

NEWSLETTER NO 12

AUGUST 1999

FROM THE TOADSTOOL

John Green 7121341(Tel)

7132448(fax): email greenhse@nis.za

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vision of being
beautifully dec
an example in
please give us

SAFCOL PRIVATISATION: There is concern that the successful bidder for SAFCOL's assets in the Boland Region, under which the Tokai and Cecilia Plantations fall, will strip the assets and attempt to develop hotels and other high value structures. The new owners may have scant regard for proper public participation and impact assessments (EIA). We are lacking experience.

SAFCOL and Peninsula National

tabled below, have been given to **DAY 4th SEPTEMBER**

need to be extremely vigilant: **STUM**

Jeremy Croud
on his Redhill
control fires.

* Tokai and Cecilia plantations show he has cleared extensive areas Protected Natural Environment (no worked with indigenous plants to development is permitted).

Kirstenbosch Nu
urban fringe of t

* SAFCOL does not own any of the land. (Hopefully the public will be able to participate, under our new democracy, before any change of land use).

After briefly co

* The recent fires in the Western Cape have destroyed huge tracts of pine plantations. The two major sawmills need all the remaining plantations as a source of timber to remain viable.

* SAFCOL is being privatised as a going concern; the new owners will have to take over all commitments and all staff.

* SAFCOL's Board has constituted a clear Environmental Policy which specifies, inter alia, that "all new development is subject to proper EIA relying on expert advice and full public participation."

CAPE PENINSULA NATIONAL PARK (CPNP)

INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (IEMS)

We are participating in the first step of the IEMS: to develop a vision for the Park which will form the basis of the future management policy. We are emphasising that the management should:



Cape Peninsula
National Park

*Concentrate on conserving diversified habitats (including pockets of endangered Afro- Montane Forest and Acid Sandveld) rather than individual species.

*Gateway activities should be clustered and as far as possible confined to existing buildings.

*The SAFCOL areas need to be integrated into the CPNP IEMS.

*Redundant Porter School facilities, such as the Tokai Manor House, could provide a magnificent HQ for the CPNP.

*High Impact recreational activities, such as mountain biking on the slopes, must be properly controlled.

*Streams and Views must be managed from crest to coast.

PLEASE FEED IN YOUR IDEAS WHICH CAN BE INCLUDED IN OUR ONGOING INVOLVEMENT.

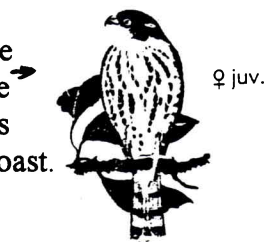
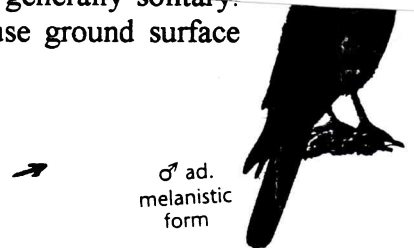
- **SAFETY IN THE LOWER FOREST:** Regrettably yet another assault has been reported in the Lower Forest and the Constantiaberg Bulletin writes that it is no longer safe to walk there. I can only repeat what I said in May. We must, individually and as a community, find ways to manage this threat and repossess our space. The alternative is to retreat further behind security fences and give up the very reason why we live in this beautiful place. Many women wanting to walk their dogs wait at the main parking place and then walk with, or within sight or earshot of the next person to arrive. I am sure that most of us would welcome company and the forest has enough space for all the dogs to sort themselves out. If, however, there is a consensus that we need to organise specific times for people to arrive together (as was done on Sunrise Beach after attacks some years ago), I judge at the moment that we will implement a call on 7122282, and we will consider the options.

Failing which, Can you imagine our surprise when at the base of the young Wat Swaanswyk Rd at 8pm the other e This loosens the long root at Cape Fox (Silwervos *Vulpes ch* ur little saying: "If one person p, from the Golf Estate into the fore:th saw one early in the morning some y And if two peop| Steenberg was developed. Accordirth. Of Southern Africa" their habitat Now if five pe open grassland, or scattered thicket

open dry woodland and into the fynbos in the southwest Cape. I have seen that one was knocked down near Kirstenbosch. Has anyone else seen a success of being sold in our area? Very little information is available on the habits of this nocturnal Activity peaks just after sundown and before first light and they are generally solitary. During the day they may lie up in holes but are more inclined to use ground surface cover. Mice and insects rank high in their diet.

SPARROWHAWKS IN TOKAI PLANTATIONS

We have a number of keen birders among our members and Tokai is renowned in the Cape Peninsula for its raptors. I see Black Sparrow-hawks daily at about 4pm when they checkout out my chickens and ducklings and nab a dove for supper. Redbreasted Sparrow-hawks and African Goshawks are also common. Chris Botes, now SAFCOL's Cape Eco-tourism Manager, is fairly sure that Little Sparrow-hawks are active around his house. Although their range is only recorded down the South East coast as far as Riversdale, he knows them well and considers that their call and behavior is similar to those he has seen up the East Coast. Would anyone be interested in helping Chris get a positive ID ?

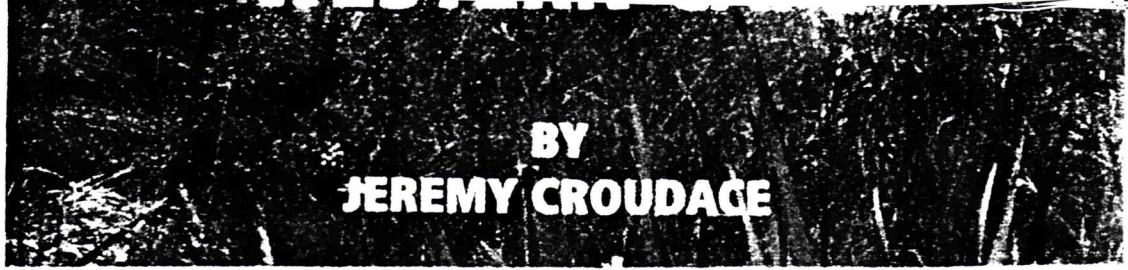


The following members have indicated an interest in birds. Maybe you can put your collective skills together and advise us on our local ornithological happenings:
 Dr Roland Graser(7882179 EMAIL graser@solsc.uct.ac.za); Mrs F.Heald(757840);
 Dr PS Hartley(7121704 EMAIL phartley@ich.uct.ac.za); Mrs M Lennett(7128442);
 Yvonne Viljoen(7885620 EMAIL yvonne@pixie.co.za); Mr&Mrs Wood(7946689);
 B.Sampson(7122801); Caroline Fuller(7624775); Ed& Irene Malherbe(7124472);John Basson(7943917); Ann Damain- Harris(756287).



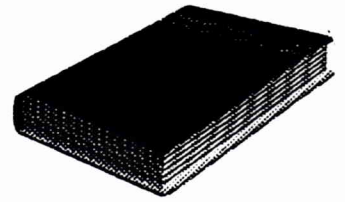
ALS

* FOSTER RESONANCE AMONGST DIFFERING INTERESTS



**ARBOR WEEK & OUR AGM ON SATURDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER
* THE ARBORETUM AS AN EDUCATION RESOURCE**

Next week 30 August to 3 September is Arbor Week, and the Arboretum will be alive with groups of school children. We guided 2 grade 4 classes from Kirstenhof Primary last week and led a team of teachers from Noordhoek around the Oak Leaf Trail to empower them to lead their classes next week. A number of other school groups, including St Cyprian's were using our recent self guided trail leaflet as an education resource and were very complimentary. The Arboretum is indeed living up to our new vision of being "A Resource for Education and Recreation." We received over 20 beautifully decorated letters of thanks, and if they copy reasonably well, will reproduce an example in this newsletter. If anyone would like to be a trail guide a few times a year, please give us a call: you will find it a wonderfully enriching experience.



***GETOGETHER & AGM ON SATURDAY 4th SEPTEMBER
AT 3pm IN ARBORETUM**

Jeremy Croudace will show slides and talk about how he has cleared extensive areas on his Redhill estate of serious alien invaders and worked with indigenous plants to control fires.

Kirstenbosch Nursery will loan examples of plants suitable for planting on the urban fringe of the Cape Peninsula National Park.

After briefly concluding the necessary business of the AGM we can informally discuss the many current issues affecting Tokai Forest over a cup of tea from Lister's Place or a glass of wine or fruit juice.

All very welcome: our Forest Needs Your Care

***TREE OF THE YEAR**

Since our inception in 1996, at each AGM we have planted the Tree of the Year. For 1999 the Dept of Water of Water Affairs and Forestry have chosen trees which are not suitable for the West Cape and even if they were, are very difficult to get. Neither is available from or grows at Kirstenbosch. This gives us the opportunity to choose our own "Tree of the Year" for planting on Arbor Day.

We may be able to get a Common Wild Pear (*Dombeya rotundifolia*) from Toos vd Berg but the Cape Onionwood (*Cassipourea flanganii*) is not available commercially anywhere. Can anyone help?

The Wild Pear, ranges down from the North as far as Durban and is an attractive flowering tree, good for bees, with a hard wood suitable for implements and firewood. Cape Onionwood is a very scarce tree, confined to the Eastern Cape, and is highly threatened due to over-usage in traditional medicine.



D. rotundifolia: flowers

Jeremy has some very practical advice as to which Afro- Montane tree species are most suited to our habitat.

7 Newark St
Kirstenhof

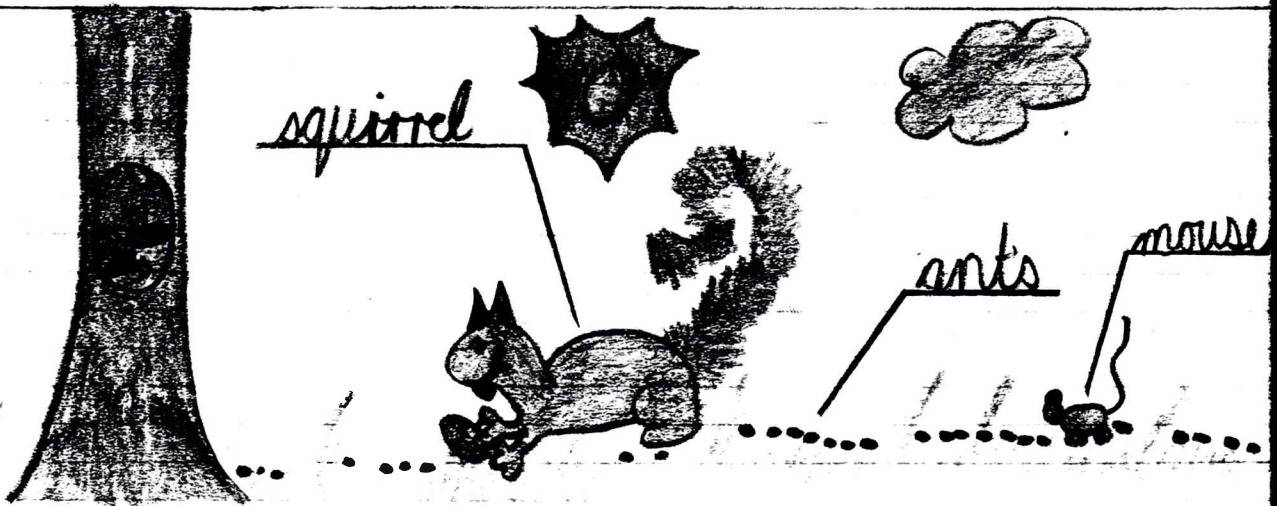
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25 August 1992

Dear Mr Green

Thank you for taking us on that stumping
walk yesterday. I especially liked looking
for the numbered oak leaves. I also liked the
forest floor with all the ferns. But the
tree I liked the most was the cork tree. I
think that story about the princess was
really cool! Well that's all from me.

Kind regards
Sandra and Iain



Friends caring for the Earth

We have some 180 names on our list and it is very time consuming and expensive to keep

7947850(fax) :Email mountain@iafrica.com

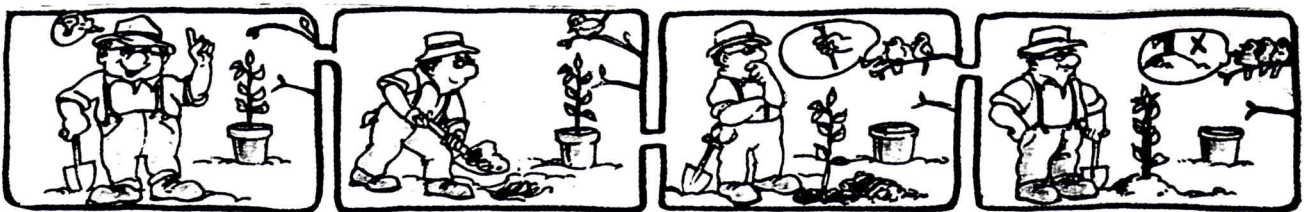
The Peninsula Mountain Forum(PMF), a grouping of non governmental organisations with whom we network, held a "Working with Indigenous Vegetation" workshop to encourage us to understand and use more of our local vegetation on the mountain fringe.

Jeremy Croudace shared his first hand experience of mechanical eradication of aliens, rather than poisoning, to take out invaders first time and to minimise major follow up. His practical knowledge has been gained over a period of 15 years on his estate at Redhill in which time he has refined his techniques, established a team of very competent workers, and regained vast tracts of fynbos at a fraction of the cost of conventional control methods. He was awarded the Green Trust award for outstanding contribution to conservation this year. He has also authored a "must read" practical booklet "**The Alien Clearing Handbook for the Western Cape**" available from the Wildlife and Environment Society in Kirstenhof. His practical suggestions have inspired us and are most appropriate for ridding the Arboretum and Lower Forest very effectively without spoiling our backs. **Jeremy will again share his experiences at our AGM in the autumn on Sat 4th September.**

Last year in the Low emphasised the need for a working knowledge of the rock types and subsequent characteristics of the soil before rushing in and planting masses of proteas and other expensive indigenous plants. He stressed the importance of knowing the Ph level, texture and nutrient availability of the soil and the needs of the different fynbos plants in terms of aspect, water and soil type. Good nurserymen should be able to advise on matching vegetation material with local conditions. Pixie Littlewort again reminded us that what the Red Wing Starling eats for breakfast at Starke Ayres invariably ends up as another invasive alien in Newlands Forest! **Jeremy will advise us on appropriate plants for our area at our AGM and Anthony Hitchcock is providing sample plants from Kirstenbosch.**

Rod Tritton followed on Barrie's talk and linked plant material with relevant environmental needs. The participants realised the extent of the knowledge required to become a successful ecological landscape designer and had to come to terms with words such as myrmecochory (seeds dispersed by ants), serotiny (seeds retained by plants for at least a year after maturation eg hakea), and sclerophylly (woody plants with leathery green leaves)!

The workshop was a vital step in gathering knowledge which will hopefully lead to nurserymen, landscape designers, townplanners and keen gardeners utilising much more of our indigenous plant material in our incredibly rich floral environment.





7 Bracken St

FROM THE ROOT

LES KEITH (7129859H/ 9381047W) Email:

lesk@foschini.co.za

The following members have indicated an interest in **Tree Planting & Watering**: Mike & Pat Jackson(753448), Alan Nathan(759619), W.vdPoll(7128836), A&HMaquire (7615269), and John Basson(7943917). Doug Chadd(7127013), Michael Fowkes & Les report that they found that Jeremy's methods made a major difference to their August clean- up in the Arboretum. Please keep in touch with one another and agree when and where we should concentrate our efforts; what tools we need to do the most effective job; and whether we could get "an Adopt a Plot" scheme going to clear priority patches in our own time and replant with appropriate indigenous material. Our previous plantings took great strain in the past very dry summer and late winter rains. We need to organise now for a major new effort **Millenium 2000**.

FROM THE PINECONE

Michael Fowkes (7124663)

ARBORETUM SURVEY

The dry winter conditions have allowed better progress than expected on this project. (Michael is too modest to say that his expertise has increased immeasurably with practice). He has uncovered a wonderful grove of very old cork oaks above the stand of Canary pines, as well as Monkey Puzzles (Auracaria) and Cypresses which are in a grove which could have existed in Gondwana.

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The check of the trees against the 1953 & 1983 Arboretum plan is now almost complete and a systematic update of a "Fair Copy" has been started. Mike hopes to finish this in the Spring when it will be mounted outside "Lister's Place" as a guide to those who want to better know the Arboretum and its wealth of trees.

This has been very much a learning experience, to the extent that many species marked on the Plan, about which there was some doubt in the early stages, have been reassessed and either positively identified or, where clearly no longer there, removed. This revised plan will be over- laid on the previous survey and will form the basis to record and monitor new plantings and the other natural changes which are constantly occurring in the Arboretum.

MEMBERSHIP

The annual subscriptions were due in July and Renewal forms were sent out with the May Newsletter. (I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Gerry Higgs for the huge amount of effort which she put into its production. We have received very favourable comment. I regret that the tardiness of this August letter is due to my attempt not to let the standard decline too much!)

Thanks to those who have sent in their renewals; another renewal notice is included with this letter. Michael greatly appreciates the courtesy of those members who have informed us that they have left the area or have terminated for various other reasons.

We have some 180 names on our list and it is very time consuming and expensive to keep sending letters to those who no can no longer be involved. It is particularly gratifying to note the number of members renewing and new members who have indicated their particular interests and willingness to get involved. This information has been recorded and we will try and put people with similar interests in touch with each other or involve them in specific events, ask their advice and look forward to their assistance. As a group of volunteers wanting to "Care for Tokai Forest", we will need to be largely self starters with an almost blank canvas in front of us and each blessed with different talents. Please don't hesitate to give Michael a call to learn the names of others with similar interests to yours.

OTHER SEEDS WAITING TO GERMINATE

The Fire- Ravaged Sandveld Floor in the Lower Forest is showing plenty of signs of regeneration. It is also pleasing to note that, apart from a few young stinkbeans, there is little evidence of wattle invasion after the fire. Possibly Sybil Morris(7124150); Yvonne Morris(7885620); and Mrs M Lennett(7128442) could exchange notes on what flora species are resprouting in our rare remnant of Acid Sandveld?

Last year we were looking for a volunteer to initiate low key **Environmental Education in the Picnic Forest**. Carol Carver(082 5715911/ 7156657) is eager to take up this WIN-WIN challenge. Anyone out there wanting to give her moral support?

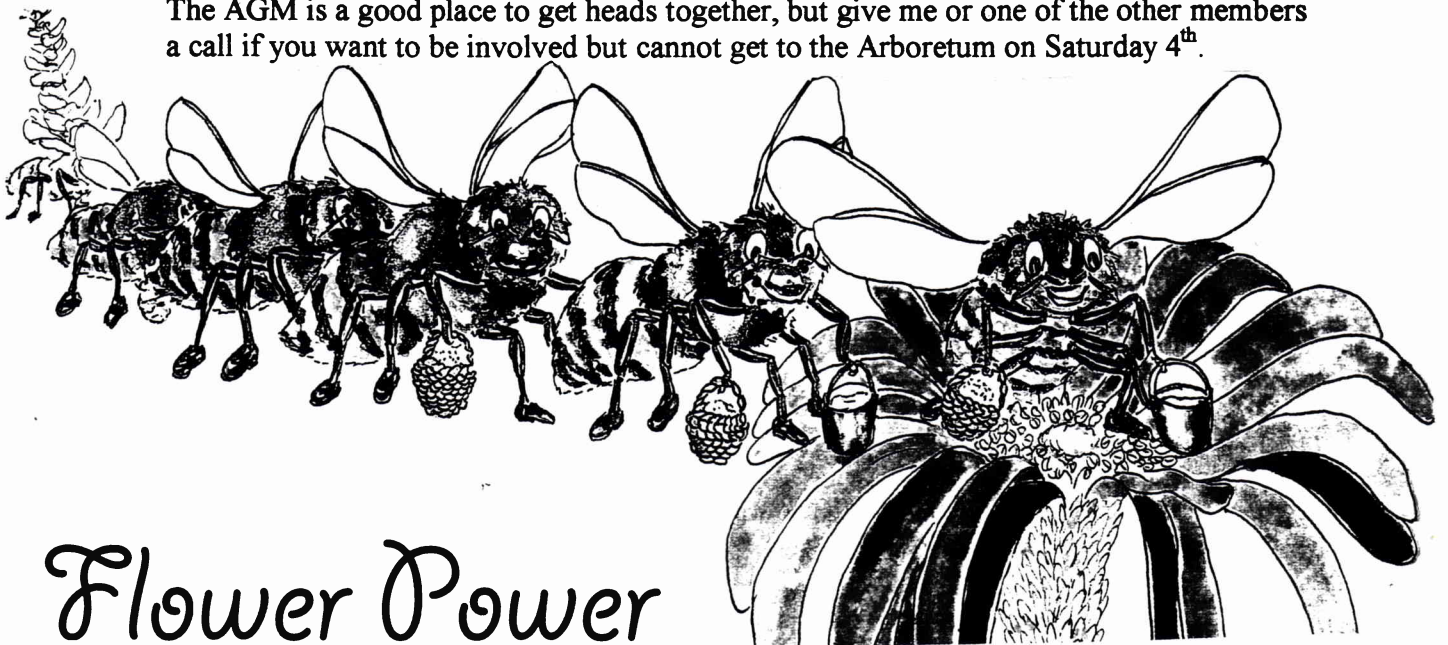
Albert Myburgh(7018363), a retired teacher from Kirstenhof learnt about us last week from his granddaughter on a school outing, and has volunteered to get involved by making **Notice Boards for the Lower Forest and outside Exhibits for the Arboretum**. Myrtle Edwards(7621622); Mike & Pat Jackson(753448); Caroline Fuller(7624755) have all indicated an interest in artwork or exhibitions.

Others are interested in Commentary (John Basson Bsc Botany 7943917); Woodwork (Brian Sampson); Photography(the Morris and Malherbe families and Alan Nathan); Research/ History/ Talks/ Slide Shows etc all have interested people. How do we make it happen from here?

Carols by Candlelight is planned for Sunday 19th December in the Arboretum.

Roland Graser, Dr PS Hartley, Brian Sampson, Caroline Fuller, and the Maquires (Choirwork) have all indicated an interest. Gerry Higgs has booked a sound system and the Pipers from last year. Mike Fowkes is also interested. Anyone willing to co-ordinate?

The AGM is a good place to get heads together, but give me or one of the other members a call if you want to be involved but cannot get to the Arboretum on Saturday 4th.



Flower Power

WALKS WITH GERRY

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Mushroom Pickin' n Cookin' at the end of June was again a great success. On a beautiful morning about 150 of us listened to Fungi Fundi Dr Nikki Allsopp who hails from the Agricultural Research Council at UWC. She certainly knows her mushrooms and has a wonderful sense of humour and a store of anecdotes. With trepidation the novices went foraging after the talk while the old hands shot off to their favorite fungi forests. All sorts of fungi returned in baskets and Nikki displayed individual specimens and discussed their edibility, while photographers recorded beautiful specimens of the fatal Fly Agaric and a host of other species.

Most foragers returned with delicious Pinerings (*Lactaria deliciosa*), which were enjoyed in perfect weather and tranquil surroundings by family groups, relaxing on the lawns and in deckchairs, with checkered cloths and gas stoves. This is definitely one of the highlights of our year and a must repeat next year.

July saw us on the Vlakkenberg where we encountered a number of cyclists using walking paths. Not only is this not allowed, it is unacceptable. There are extensive areas suitable for Mountain biking and the cycling fraternity are working hard to develop and maintain trails. Self regulation is far preferable to authoritarian control over the selfish few. We trust that SAFCOL and the Pedal Powers can find a way to achieve this. We cannot allow erosion of fragile pockets of forests which are not even in SAFCOL's management stewardship area; or cyclists at speed endangering walkers on winding mountain paths. We have raised the issue of control of high impact recreational activities, like mountain biking off approved routes, as an important issue for new Environmental Management System for the CPNP.

The inimitable Mark Hawthorne was to lead the **Rondevlei for Birding** Outing on the 29th August, but as I write the glass is dropping and Gerry has now called to say that it is now tentatively planned for **27th February next year**: maybe a boat trip to see the Hippo's too Gerry?

Sunday 5th Sept at 2.30pm with Sybil Morris leaving from Dennendal West Ave entrance for a **Fynbos Walk**. This is an opportunity to be guided through the very threatened Acid Sandveld by someone who has been led by her photography hobby to recognise the floral wealth which we have on our doorstep, hidden beneath the canopy of a 4th generation pine plantation. So get your sketch pads out, invert your binoculars for close-up viewing, or produce your magnifying glasses and come and join us for a very informative 2 hours.



ROMULEA ROSEA (Froetang)

24 Oct. Newlands Forest with Pixie Littlewood
Sun Meet 8.30 a.m. at Arboretum or at Stone Pillar
entrance (before picnic area) on left of highway -
Union Avenue 9.00 a.m.

28 Nov. Champagne Breakfast & Pantomime

Sun



See you on the lawns at the Info. Centre of the Arboretum for champagne and a healthy breakfast spread. Bring own glass, bowl, plate, knife & spoon. Walk in Arboretum and paddock surrounds. Come hear the story of the "Ghost of the Manor House".



19 Dec Carols by Candlelight:

Sun



Follow the sounds of angels. Come and join us in the wonderful tranquil and fitting setting of the Arboretum. Bring rugs, candles and picnic baskets.



Our membership base continues to increase at a regular rate. We would, however like to see more active members and would be happy to hear from you telephonically if you have anything to offer.

We are looking at the **Habitat** portfolio being filled and wondered if there is a member out there with an interest in fauna and flora who can help us? Our **Education** portfolio is also in need of assistance. We would be grateful if (ideally) a teacher (although not necessarily) could help us. We really would like to get this off the ground. Education/schools/people/local environment is an essential ingredient to preservation today.



Arboretum Survey: Michael's survey of the trees in the Arboretum has been completed and the plan updated. One copy has been passed on to **Chris Botes** at the Tokai Plantation Office, a second will be used to update new plantings on an ongoing basis by the **Friends of Tokai Forest (FTF)** and a third copy has been coloured, referenced, laminated and posted in the Information Centre at the Arboretum. This third copy has been placed over the previous one so that comparisons may be made by those interested.

A number of the trees marked on the 1953/83 plan were not found. In most cases it was possible to confirm they were no longer there by reference to positively identified adjacent trees. These have been removed from the plan and the numerical key at the top. Comparison with the previous plan will show which these trees are.



Where doubt existed regarding the whereabouts or identification, the positions have been retained and marked as "unidentified" and indicated on the numerical key with (u).

Many of the missing trees were dead, felled or fallen. A number of positively identified dead trees have been retained on the plan and marked "dead". These were, and, in many cases can still be used as references to help identify surrounding trees.

The majority of trees with numbers in the 1400's are not there and it is assumed that they did not survive long after their planting.

The numbers on the white tags to be seen on the trees accord simply with the numbers indicated on the plan and were used to identify the trees against their positions marked on the plan. They do not have any scientific or botanical relevance at all.

To retain this identification on the trees will assist further checks to be made in the future, but even though waterproof ink was used, they are starting to fade already and the baboons love them. How to mark the trees in an acceptable, unobtrusive and economical manner is a problem and any suggestions would be welcome and given consideration.





FROM THE ROOT

-ALIENS-

Les Keith Tel: 712.9859

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d

Please phone Les if you can help clear or hack out the aliens. They are fire hazards. They drink ten times as much water as our indigenous stuff. They "breed" like rabbits and they are slowly taking over everything that is relevant, killing all that is good and slowing down growth.

Work Parties: 3rd Saturday of every month.
Meet Orpen Road car park at 8.30 or aim down to the bridge at the farm. You'll find us in this area, the most infested. Bring implements of destruction – like forks, spades, axes.....etc.

Failing which, if you could, when you take your walk, kick at the base of the young Wattles (they are hellish to pull up otherwise). This loosens the long root and it comes out quite easily. We repeat our little saying:

"If one person pulled out say five a day...
.....that would be 35 a week
And if two people pulled out five a day....
.....that would be 70 a week.
Now if five people pulled out five a day...
That would be an eradication programme!

We no longer have the regular assistance of SAFCOL as they are in the process of being sold and now operate and come in from Grabouw.

An area of concern is the burnt out area of the Diastella, wiped out by a fire caused by youngsters one night last year, leaving only one plant. Many wattles and small pines are coming up here. As this is the **Core Conservation Site** we would like to see it remain "clean". We would be grateful for a concerted effort from all Tokai-ites in particular to join us helping to keep Tokai one of the last vestiges of ecological and aesthetic beauty remaining in the Western Cape.

Perhaps there are children/schools/clubs out there who could be motivated to help us? Do you know of any? Can you motivate something for us?

