



# FRIENDS OF TOKAI FOREST

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**NEWSLETTER No 8**

**MAY 1998**

**FROM THE TOADSTOOL**

- ***THE CAPE PENINSULA NATIONAL PARK TAKES SHAPE***

April 29th 1998 marked the single most significant event in the creation of the CPNP, which is the only National Park contained within a metropolitan area anywhere in the world. Three local authorities have signed over control of over 700 hectares of nature reserve, including Cape Point, Silvermine and Table Mountain, to the new park. This area of 2 900 hectares is uniquely rich in plant species and eco-systems; the Cape Peninsula, 104 kilometers in length, is home to 2285 plant species, of which 174 are on the threatened list.

An agreement between the Parks Board and SAFCOL regarding the future of the Tokai and Cecilia Plantations is now the main priority. We are talking to both parties and continue to emphasise that the Porter Trust area forms an integral part of Tokai's tranquil gateway to the central part of the park.

- ***SAFCOL "RIGHTSIZING" TO  
CONCENTRATE ON CORE BUSINESS***

We can expect significant changes in the management control structure of the Tokai Plantation which is currently being brought under the control of Grabouw as SAFCOL eliminates layers of management in order to become more cost competitive. We are in close touch with management and are emphasising that these changes must not destroy the excellent co-operative working relationship that we have built up over the past two years.

- ***CONCERN ABOUT WILDLIFE &  
ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY (WESSA)***

WESSA has withdrawn from discussions with the new CP National Park management. We, along with other Friends groups such as Newlands Forest, Silvermine and Cape Point, are very concerned that WESSA West Cape management have not been able to develop a networking relationship with the management of the new park. We will increasingly need to work closely with all levels of park management, and are reviewing formal links to WESSA.

- ***SAFCOL WEST CAPE REGION***

This region has been awarded the international Forest Stewardship Council Certification (FSC). We were interviewed by the auditors of the process (covered in our January newsletter).

- ***NETWORKING WITH OTHER FRIENDS  
GROUPS***

Following WESSA's failure to act as a catalyst to develop networking among Friends' groups, we held a very successful get-together/walk and braai with a number of Cape Friends in the Arboretum during February. We have subsequently joined Silvermine and Liesbeek River Friends on walks; we had a very informative tour and braai with Helderberg Friends; attended lectures on bark-stripping for herbal medicine; went on seedling collection walks with Newlands/AMIF; are working on a tree policy for the fringes of the new park with Friends of Constantia open spaces; and plan an overnight trail in Cape Point later this year.

Our mission is "To promote public participation in caring for Tokai Forest". Never has our forest needed our care more than now. Care doesn't necessarily mean getting our hands dirty in hacks, or pulling up alien seedlings. It is much more multi-faceted, as we learned from our visit to the Helderberg Friends who run an Information Centre, Nursery and Education Centre (which together cost hundreds of thousands of rands to develop). We have boundless opportunities to care, and there is an increasing void of management with all the major changes. Caring can provide plenty of fellowship and enjoyment. None of us are experts. We encourage you to get involved: every drop contributes to the wave.

**WHY DON'T YOU TRY AND FIND A NEW FRIEND TO JOIN AND CARE TOGETHER IN SOME SMALL WAY.**

***JOHN GREEN, CHAIRMAN***

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## ARBORETUM

You may have noticed that the Arboretum is currently receiving some much needed house cleaning. A team is busy destroying invasive aliens, paths are being cleaned and new labels are appearing on many of the trees. Sidney Schonegewel, a forestry graduate, has been contracted for a few months to assist Chris Botes, our Plantation Manager, on eco-tourism issues. Sidney has also been very helpful on the education side. You have probably also seen the new "Welcome to Tokai Plantation" sign boards. Other information boards will soon be erected.

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## PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION



We are proud to announce a photographic competition.

- Anyone may enter: members free and non-members R5.
- The subject : To convey the beauties of the Cape Peninsula Mountain Chain, Tokai or Cecilia plantations i.e. scenic shots of the mountains or forests, close-ups, hiking etc.
- Each entrant may submit up to 5 slides.
- Hand your entries over to any committee member or post to Sibyl Morris,  
20 van der Poll Avenue, Tokai 7945
- Closing date: 15 July 1998.
- The Judge will be Roy Johannesson FPSSA  
Hon FPSSA, distinguished nature photographer.
- The winners will be announced at the AGM on Saturday 29 August, and will be shown along with the best of the other entries at this meeting.

- Some magnificent prizes have been donated!

**First prize: A pair of Bushnell 8 x 25 binoculars, kindly donated by Scala Cameraland.**

**Two runner-up prizes: three Fuji Sensia 100 ASA 36 exposure 35 mm slide films, plus processing and mounting, kindly donated by Scala Cameraland; and**

**a meal voucher to the value of R250 kindly donated by The Cattle Baron.**

- **Slides may be collected after the AGM. If you wish them to be posted back to you, kindly enclose a cheque or postal order to the value of R7 to cover return postage by registered mail. Don't forget to put your return address on the entry form! All queries tel Sibyl on 72 4150, or Gerry on 724176 or 61 7076.**

**An entry form is enclosed with this newsletter. and will also be available at various outlets such as local camera stores, libraries etc. Please tell your friends!**

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## **EDUCATION**

- **Fadhiah Abbas of Levana Primary School, has taken over the Education portfolio.**

**Networking with Wendy Hitchcock, NBI Kirstenbosch Education Centre, Dr Debbie Hall, WESSA Education, and Sidney Schonegewel of SAFCOL, a series of Workshops are**

currently taking place with teachers from local schools. The workshop on 20<sup>th</sup> April was attended by 20 teachers, and included a walk around the Arboretum to assess its value as an education resource for the new Outcomes Based Education (OBE) syllabus which is currently being phased in. There is a high level of enthusiasm about the potential for students from pre-primary right through to high school. We also have some excellent education resource pamphlets developed in the 1980's, when there was an active extension programme which lapsed because of lack of funding. The next workshop will be held on 6<sup>th</sup> May in the Information centre, and the programme will focus on appropriate teaching aids which the NBI and WESSA are currently developing. We have invited Debbie Atkinson to join our Friends' team to assist in getting this exciting project off the ground.

At the end of last term, Earl Williams of Prince George's Primary School brought 25 pupils up to the Arboretum in the SAFCOL school bus for an energetic morning's environmental hike up the Prinseskasteel riverbed to Elephant's Eye. John Green egged them up the stiff lower slopes with the motto "The way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time!" The walk covered many subjects ranging from Gondwanaland and the earliest forms of trees; early foresters and the introduction of pines, gums and the invasive wattles; our own lovely Afromontane forests; butterflies and pollination; dungbeetles and porcupines; Black Eagles and Dusky Flycatchers. We all agreed that even in an area where pines predominate, there is an amazing diversity of natural interest to stimulate potential ecologists of the future.

FADIAH ABBAS AND JOHN GREEN

## COMING MEETINGS

**Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June at 3.00 p.m., Arboretum.** John Green will report back to us on meetings held between the CPNP and SAFCOL, so that we can all be informed as to the future of Tokai Forest. After this, several keen photographer members will show some of their slides to encourage you all to enter your best slides in our photographic competition. This will be followed by snacks and wine. Come along and celebrate World Environment Day!

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August at 3.00 p.m., Arboretum.** Our AGM. The usual business, followed by the announcement of the winners of our Photographic competition and slide show.

## LOWER FOREST

The long hot summer has forced us to delay our river bank planting programme, but we hope that a number of you will join Les Keith (tel 72 9859) on Saturday 16 May to begin our 1998 season planting. (Sorry that I cannot join you as I will be dodging hippos on a canoe trip down the Zambesi at that time). SAFCOL workers have cleaned out the river bed and removed an accumulation of logs and other jetsam to prevent flooding when the serious rains come. Please encourage others to use the new rubbish bins in the plantation and help create a culture of caring. Many little wattles are springing up now that the rains have started. Pull a few out when you walk around to avoid the foresters having to poison them later when they develop.

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## WALKS WITH GERRY HIGGS

*Put up your walk notices on the fridge – they are included in this newsletter – and do join us on some interesting walks. The Orienteering one especially is not only fun but also informative. You will find out how to use your senses and knowledge to find your way home. This is done in small groups, so you needn't worry about getting lost!*

*Then there is the Mushroom Pickin'-n -Cookin' walk in June, when we can share recipes and the delicious results. Later in the year there will be a Fynbos walk, a bus ride to Lourensford in Somerset West, a weekender at the Cape Point Nature Reserve, and our end-of-year Champagne Breakfast in the Arboretum, coupled with a short walk.. In December we are trying something quite new – Carols by Candlelight in the Arboretum. The New Year will start off with an evening walk in the Lower Forest on 24 January. Come howl at the moon!*

*We planned this year to make a point of meeting other Friends' groups and taking a look at their environment. With the Friends of the Liesbeek, we went on a birdwatching walk along the Black River. A fair amount of interesting birdlife was observed. In February we went with Mark Hawthorne and the Silvermine Friends to look for the Red Disa. Mark is a great character as well as a very efficient Education Officer. and a jolly and informative time was had by all. The most amazing stories were told about all sorts of things from spiders to frogs to seeds in the wind.*

*So we look forward to seeing you at the Arboretum at 9.00 a.m. on the last Sunday of the month (unless otherwise indicated). Give Gerry a call on 61 7076 (o) or 72 4176 for more info.*

GERRY HIGGS