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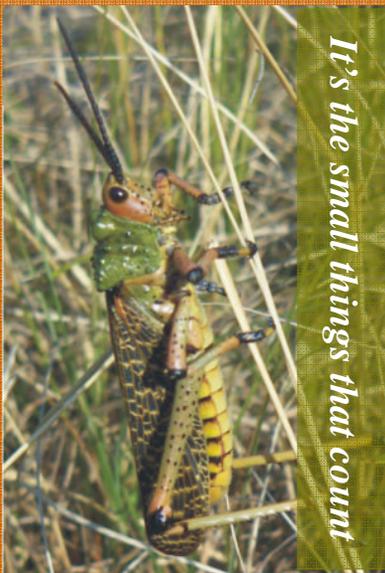
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Geoff McIlleron
Guy Hayward

Editorial

Dr Steve du Toit, newly appointed Manager of WESSA (Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa) kindly contributed the editorial for this newsletter.

Our oceans are the new “Wild West” with large tracts being raked sterile by massive trawlers. The globe is undergoing climate changes that will affect every species. Africa's human population is exploding, resulting in human fingers digging and tearing ever deeper into the fragile fabric which maintains life.

In the Western Cape, there are three globally recognized biodiversity hotspots: the Fynbos biome, the Succulent Karoo biome and the Subtropical Thicket biome. A biodiversity hotspot comprises of at least 1 500 species, 40% of which are endemic and **70% of the original biome has been lost** due to human activities.

On a local level, the Garden Route with its surroundings **is the only place in the world where 3 hotspot biomes interconnect**. What are we, who know this, doing to sustain the remaining species, including ourselves?

The Garden Route, the Western Cape, Africa, the other continents and the oceans face some formidable challenges. The question we need to keep foremost in our minds is “For what will future generations remember us?”

There are several exciting initiatives “on the cards” at present and two of these include the Garden Route and Eden to Addo Initiatives. Both of these aim to establish links and corridors between areas rich in biodiversity,

thus ultimately protecting massive stretches of land between Mossel Bay and Addo National Park. In addition to this, civil society and NGO's, such as the Nature's Valley Trust, are becoming more and more active in lobbying, providing support and initiating projects which all collectively benefit the bigger picture.

While there are some extremely positive actions taking place on the ground however, this same area is currently the focus of large-scale urban development, huge shopping complexes, “up-market” golf and polo estates: tens of thousands of houses are proposed, significantly expanding the coastal towns of Mossel Bay, George, Sedgefield, Knysna and Plettenberg Bay.

BUT the aquatic ecosystems which are the core of life as we know it are already stretched to the limit. In the Western Cape, industrial and domestic effluent released into our environment already totals 433 000 m³ per day*. Ecosystem functioning has broken down, and species associated with the system have been lost in 97% of Western Cape rivers*. The Eden District Municipality, which encompasses the Bitou Municipal area, falls within the Gouritz Water Management Area. 275 million m³ of water is available per year in this area; the human requirements are 339 million m³ per year, resulting in a deficit of 64 million m³ per year*. The anticipated water

requirements for the Gouritz Water Management Area by 2025 is 445 million m³ per year – nearly double the available amount of water**.

As Ian McCallum states in his book *Ecological Intelligence*: “Is there any cheer in this speculative analysis of our fate and of what it means to be the human animal? I think there is.... The human can make choices that no other creature, as far as I am aware, can make. We can choose to drift into oblivion, to turn our heads, pretending we did not see... (Or) we can choose the hard path – the one that demands accountability: the one that demands that we give beauty and meaning, in our own way, to the Earth and to the countless living things that share it with us.”

Choices. Every thought, every thought behind the thought, every word and action, and lack of action, counts. Let's show firm support towards projects that promote sustainable management of our environment and express our dis-satisfaction with those that do the opposite. Let's remember to tread softly.

* Taken from the Western Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework (November 2005) and the Western Cape State of the Environment Report (Summary) 2005.

** Taken from “Proposal for the establishment of a Catchment Management Agency”, DWAF July 2005.

Status of Projects

The past months, since our April newsletter, have flown with so much happening ... mostly good, although we face some challenging development and land issues. Briefly, and as outlined below, the highlights of the past few months include the arrival of a new NVTrust staff member, Bethany Hansen; the CAPE conference; the Kids in Parks Programme; the launch of the Eco Guides and a visit by the IUCN ... and Covie's new and exciting development plans.

- ✘ **Coastal Fynbos and the Brenton Blue Butterfly:** The Fynbos Reserve, at present, is displaying the gorgeous white bell-like flowers of the *Erica Formosa* while the flush of red *Erica discolor* is dying off. Interestingly, the *Erica discolor* proved true to its name when, amongst the usual red flowers, we discovered a bush with cream coloured flowers – just as beautiful, just the same, but just a different colour.

We still hold our breath in anticipation of the flight of the Brenton Blue butterflies. Their next flight period is in November and, from October, we will be doing some serious monitoring of any flying creatures in the vicinity of the Fynbos Reserve. It has been recommended by Cape Nature that, should the reintroduction of the Brenton Blues not be successful this time, that we persevere and try different introduction methods.

Prof Lubke visited the reserve with two Botanical research students in May this year to monitor the

plots on the Fynbos Reserve. One of his students is doing her Masters on the host plant of the Brenton Blue butterfly, *Indigofera erecta*, and she did a follow-up visit in July, scouting the area for plants in order to gain further understanding of the phenology of the plant.

Partnerships: Cape Nature, Green Trust and WWF-SA, Dave Edge, Professor Roy Lubke, Bitou Municipality, South African National Parks (SANParks), Willing Workers in South Africa (WWISA)

- ✘ **The Phyl Martin Park:** The park, during the April holiday season, was visited by the Easter bunny. It was the scene of much excitement as Valley children scattered in all directions, following clues from the Treasure Route, in search of hidden eggs.

Oom Danie Muller's indigenous nursery is thriving and we would encourage you to make use of this facility for any new plants that you may require.

WWISA volunteers will be working on the Interpretive hut, updating and creating new displays in readiness for December.

Partnerships: Bitou Municipality, Nature's Valley Ratepayers' Association (Open Spaces Committee), WWISA

- ✳ **The Salt River:** The Salt River came under the spotlight at the recent CAPE (Cape Action for People and the Environment) Conference held at Kirstenbosch Gardens in June. The presentation which was done by our Eco Guides and school children focused on the river and the NVTrust was awarded a certificate of recognition for the Salt River project.
- **Research:** The six temperature monitors which were installed by Ferdy de Moor have again been replaced and ongoing monitoring of the temperature and water quality of the system continues. In previous newsletters we reported that funding for this project was to be made available through one of the polo estates. This has unfortunately fallen through and a funding application has been submitted to a funding agency and we await feedback from them.
- The official launch of the **Tsitsikamma Eco Guides** (funded by IUCN Netherlands' Tourism Micro Fund) took place at Emily's overlooking the Bitou valley on the 31st July. Dr Robbie Robinson opened the evening with a really uplifting talk on the Tsitsikamma – its past, present and future. The launch coincided with a visit from one of IUCN's representatives, Mieke Kuiters, who was shown the forest by the Eco Guides and was fortunate to have some wonderful birdlife displaying for her. The guides have been assessed by Theta (Tourism & Hospitality Education & Training Association) and have been given their guiding certificates, are fully equipped with uniforms, binoculars, backpacks, first aid kits, field guides and brochures. Signage has also been erected at the base in the Nature's Valley Rest Camp and at the start of the Salt River trail.

The Tsitsikamma Eco Guides have undertaken their first two projects. They guided the SANParks / Pick 'n Pay Kids in Parks programme during July / August and assisted on the Eden to Addo hike. They will also be working with Plettenberg Bay Tourism during their Tourism Month programme in September and have bookings from groups in the Netherlands who will be visiting Nature's Valley.



When you're next in the Valley, please visit the guides' office in the Camp Site and make use of their valuable service.

Partnerships: South African National Parks, Albany Museum, Bitou Municipality, Salt River users, Cape Nature, Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, WWISA, River Health Programme, NC-IUCN, CEPF, CoastCare, Storms River Adventures, Bhejane 4X4 Adventures.

- ✳ **Environmental Education:** We can, now officially state, that Nature's Valley is an established outdoor education area, with six established **eco classrooms** and two still to be developed – the **Wetland Reserve** and the **Underwater Classroom**. Wietsche Roets, a hydrologist from Cape Nature visited Nature's Valley residents answering questions about the viability of the wetlands restoration and giving advice on the project (which is currently pending funding decision from Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund). Nature's Valley was a key focus area for the Kids in Parks Programme which was run during July and August.

500 Grade 5 school children have now visited the Fynbos Reserve, Salt River, forest, marine and Phyl Martin Park classrooms. The programme has been an enormous success and, for many of the children, despite living in fairly close proximity to the coast, this was their first visit to the beach.

The second year of the **Tsitsikamma Eco Schools** project was begun with much enthusiasm under the co-ordination of Susan Donald. Two new schools have joined the programme, bringing the total in our area to seven eco schools.

Grade 8's from Coldstream and Craggs Primary Schools have been visiting the Valley regularly as part of the **Adopt-a-Beach** programme.

In May all the Adopt-a-Beach learners auditioned for the **C.A.P.E.** presentation in June and two children from each school participated in the presentation in Cape Town with the Eco Guides. Our congratulations to Solymon Jaantjies, Danielle Plaatjies, Cherylee Michello and Surika Hardy. Carmen Lawack and Sharron Krigga, two of the Tsitsikamma Eco Guides, shared the presentation with the children and they were all elected as the only prizewinners for their presentation.



From left: Sharron Krigga, Surika Hardy, Cherylee Michello, Carmen Lawack, Danielle Plaatjies, Solymon Jaantjies

Partnerships: SANParks, WWISA, CoastCare, DEAT (Dept of Environmental Affairs and Tourism), WESSA (Wildlife & Environment Society of South Africa), WWF-SA

NVT News Bites



Bethany Hansen
Photo: Martine Mouton

Welcome to Bethany Hansen

Bethany Hansen started working with the NVTrust at the end of May to be appointed as Assistant Project Manager. Her focus will be on Environmental Education, the Urban Conservancy and projects within the Valley. It has been great having Bethany in the office with Martine and I and we look forward to many fun times together.

“Hello! I am excited about working with Nature’s Valley Trust and look forward learning about this wonderful community and the people in it. Before arriving in South Africa two months ago, I lived in Oregon, USA in the great rainy Northwest with its wonderful old-growth conifer forests, mountains, and coastline. 4

I come to work with NVT with a Master's in Public Administration with emphasis on Environment and Natural Resources from the University of Wyoming in the United States. My professional experience includes three years as an environmental educator working for a non-profit organization called the Teton Science School in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. I worked as a junior school biology teacher for two years in the St. Louis Public Schools. In the realm of conservation, I worked as a forest ranger for the National Forest Service

Most of my spare time is spent in the outdoors hiking, camping, mountain biking, and rock-climbing. Please stop by the Nature's Valley Trust and introduce yourself to me – I look forward to meeting you.

Sad Outcome for Some of our Coastal Birds

By Geoff McIlleron



Photos: Geoff McIlleron

In our last newsletter we showed the picture of a Gull with line snagged around its legs (picture on left taken on 1 March 2006). We have continued to see this particular gull in the same part of the beach during the intervening months and noted how its left leg swelled up to huge proportions and then it finally lost its left foot (middle picture taken on 6 July 2006). This freed it of the trailing line and thankfully it is now enjoying less hindrance.

The right hand picture (taken on 7 May 2006) shows an African Black Oystercatcher which we see almost daily at Blue Rocks. While it manages to clamber on the rocks it is clearly at a disadvantage in obtaining food compared to other Oystercatchers which walk and jump around on the rocks at low tide seeking mussels and other titbits. They use their specially flattened (vertical direction) bills to slip between the shells of the mussels to snip through the muscles that clamp the shells together. To cope with its disability the bird shown here has modified its lifestyle to taking anything edible, like redbait, that is washed up on the beach. This it does early each morning before too many people disturb the area or competing creatures dispose of the items. When you go to Blue Rocks look out for the 'stump' marks left by this bird on the wet sand.

We are sure that fishermen do not wish to leave this legacy of their activities. Care when casting their lines in rocky areas and removing discarded lengths of fishing line (plus other rubbish) would help reduce unwanted outcomes.

Is this Global Warming and Climate Change?

The Southern and Eastern Cape recently received really heavy rains, resulting in severe flooding in some areas. It has been predicted by scientists that global warming and climate change will result in extreme weather events, ranging from heat waves, heavy storms and rainfall to snow and drought.

Europe is currently in the throws of a heat wave, the middle and northern parts of South Africa are experiencing snow and sleet, while the Southern and Eastern Cape have been flooded. Presumably, this is what global warming and climate change is all about



A flooded St George's Avenue

Photo: Andre Hamman

Between the 1st and 4th July 159mm of rain fell in the Valley. Although Nature's Valley town was spared major flood damage, apart from Hikers Haven who were flooded by water running from the hill behind Forest Drive, the Groot River became a raging torrent, with the river flowing over the bridge and resulting in a very wide scoured mouth into the sea.

Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area Will NOT Become a Free for All!

The NVTrust has received several queries pertaining to the Tsitsikamma Marine Protected Area being opened up for fishing. It is believed that this rumour emanated from a newspaper article which was printed a few months ago.

It should be noted that although high level discussions are currently taking place about the management strategy for the Marine Protected Area, it will not be open for unlimited fishing. Various management options are being investigated by the Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism and these will be made known to the public once decisions have been finalized.

What are those hairy caterpillars?



Barred eggarlet caterpillars

Photos: Geoff McIlleron

It's that time of year again when the shrubs (*Rhus glauca*) which hug the Nature's Valley roads, seem to come alive with crawling caterpillars which, in a very short period of time, strip the shrubs of their leaves. Many people have asked us what these are and our resident 'boffin' on all things green, Geoff McIlleron, did a bit of research.

The caterpillars are from the moth known as the Barred eggarlet (*Bombymorpha fascia*), a light coloured moth with brown markings on its wings. The caterpillars, despite being so hairy, are a source of food for some of the cuckoos, one of the very few species of birds that can digest these hairy beauties.

Land Matters

Bitou Spatial Development Framework and Urban Edge

The NVTrust submitted a letter of concern to Minister Essop (Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning) regarding Bitou's urban edge which was recently redrawn and accepted by Council. The definition of the initial urban edge was part of a public participation process (which was undertaken by consultants, appointed by Bitou Municipality) to draw up Bitou's Spatial Development Framework, a national process which all Municipalities in the Western Cape have had to undertake. Province has produced guidelines for this process.

The original urban edges, as produced as part of the consultation process for Bitou, were separately and tightly defined around the existing township edges of Plettenberg Bay, Keurbooms, Wittedrift, Kurland Village, Nature's Valley and Covie. The newly defined urban edge encompasses the entire broader Bitou Municipal area.

The Urban Edge Guidelines, produced by Province, recommend that densities of 25 dwelling units per hectare be implemented and that, only once these densities have been achieved, the urban edge be reviewed. Only certain types of development and those with a small footprint are recommended outside the urban edge.

The NVTrust has requested the Provincial Department of Environment and Development Planning's urgent intervention in this matter, before pending massive developments are approved which fall within the newly approved urban edge.

Kurland Estate Development

The NVTrust has submitted comments on the Background Information Document, as well as the Open Day presentation. The development proposes that 1 225 houses, of varying size and density, are built, together with a private school, macadamia nut orchards, a restaurant, commercial village, dams, brick making facilities, community centre, etc. The development area includes Kurland Estate, the existing brickfield property, areas around Kurland Village, and properties to the east, west and south of the village. In brief, we have objected to the development on the following grounds:

- Our major concern is the impact which this development will have on the Salt River, if it is targeted as a water source, through both surface and groundwater abstraction. Water needs for the development have not been quantified and, in documentation to date, there is no clarity on the source of water for the development or the sustainability. Run-off into the Salt River from building materials, fertilizers, chemicals and sewerage is another serious concern which will affect water quality;
- The development falls outside of the originally agreed upon Bitou urban edge and is not in alignment with the Provincial Spatial Development Framework;
- The impact on the current rural nature of The Craggs and 'sense of place';
- Impact of this development and resulting urban sprawl on existing wildlife and ecological corridors which link the neighbouring Tsitsikamma National Park areas to the north to the forest and fynbos areas to the south of the N2;

The processes which the developers have yet to follow will still take some time (possibly two years or more) and we will keep you updated on developments.

Kurland Village Development

The construction of 480 houses as the extension to Kurland Village is progressing and the NVTrust continues to meet regularly with the Environmental Liaison Committee.

- Our concern about the lack of attendance at the meetings by relevant authority bodies, community representatives and other stakeholders remains. In addition to this, we have expressed concern about the lack of follow-up on issues raised.
- In May it was pointed out that rubble was being dumped in an inappropriate area on the site. Following several reports of this to the relevant bodies, the rubble was subsequently removed in July.
- Litter on site has been another problem which has been raised. With the development site being on the edge of the gorge to the Salt River, litter could easily find its way into the Salt River system.
- It has been agreed by the developers and Project Managers that a holistic Environmental Management Plan (EMP) will be produced to cater for the entire development. Up until the present time, the two EMP's which have been produced have focussed only on a specific phase of the development.

We still await a response from the Minister to our letter of concern about the process which has been adopted for this development, (i.e. an Environmental Management Plan being drawn up and Liaison Committee established) as opposed to an Environmental Impact Assessment having been undertaken.

Covie – A Model Village in the Making

In May we attended a public information sharing meeting about Covie and it was with intrigue that many of us attended the open day. Although no details are available as yet, the general reaction to the broad proposal was one of delight, hope and good wishes for the people of Covie.

What came out of the presentation by the consultants, Social Process Initiative (SPI) is briefly outlined as follows:

- The proposals are still provisional – further detailed studies are required
- The future process includes heritage impact studies and EIA studies which will be public
- They intend to maintain the wooden homes – avoid concrete match boxes
- There will be further public presentations
- Water requirements and provision of other services have still to be finalized
- Each current allotment will be split up to accept 4 (or 5) houses
- The total (maximum) number of houses will be 120 at Covie
- The additional land allocation has not been finalized but is likely to be an area (currently operated as plantation) to the east of Covie and west of the N2 in the Toll gate.
- Employment opportunities that are to be created include ‘light industry’. The nature of these industries has not been circumscribed as yet but are expected to include such activities as basket weaving.
- The proposed land available for development was determined by considering exclusion areas - environmentally sensitive (forest and some fynbos) and steep slopes
- The Covie land claim is backed by exceptionally strong financial and material support from government
- Environmental sensitivities were a very important constraint on the development proposals.
- Other activities and employment opportunities to be looked at include sustainable fynbos harvesting, subsistence farming and development of the village as a ‘living museum’.

Our overall impression has been strongly favourable with both the process that has been followed and its outcome.



Covie landscape
Photo: Julie Carlisle

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

THANK YOU!

"THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS FOR THE TRUST TO BE SUPPORTED BY A REGULAR, ANNUAL COMMITMENT FROM THE MAJORITY OF PEOPLE WHO LOVE NATURE'S VALLEY"

We are extremely grateful for the excellent response to our funding appeal at the end of last year.

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN !

Join the campaign, make an individual contribution or even better widen our support base and contact your family, friends and neighbours and form a syndicate.

When you have decided if what category to choose, Platinum, Gold or Silver, please send an email or the donation form below, to Julie Carlisle indicating your commitment.

THE PLATINUM COLLECTION :

Underpins the philosophy that sustainable conservation measures require dedicated, long-term commitment.

5 **Platinum Brenton Blue** categories:

R15 000 to be donated each year for three years by 5 individual funders or 5 syndicates;

10 **Platinum Otter** categories:

R10 000 to be donated each year for three years by 10 individual funders or 10 syndicates;

15 **Platinum Whale** categories:

R5 000 to be donated each year for three years by 15 individual funders or 15 syndicates

THE GOLDEN COLLECTION

Represents innovation, delivery, results and dedication.

10 **Golden Brenton Blue** categories

R15 000 to be donated by 10 individual funders or 10 syndicates;

15 **Golden Otter** categories:

R10 000 to be donated by 15 individuals or syndicates;

20 **Golden Whale** Categories:

R5 000 to be donated by 20 individuals or syndicates

THE SILVER COLLECTION

Symbolises the power of broad based community support and the importance of strength in numbers.

20 **Silver Brenton Blue** categories

R3000 to be donated by 20 individual funders or 20 syndicates;

25 **Silver Otter** categories:

R1000 to be donated by 25 individuals or syndicates;

30 **Silver Whale** Categories:

R500 to be donated by 30 individuals or syndicates

THANK YOU: 2001/2002/2003/2004/2005 / 2006 SPONSORS

Mr Albertyn, Anderson family, Antrobus Family, Aveng, Barker family, Barnes family, CEPF, CM Bath, GE Bath, Mr Bekker, Biesenbach family, John Blaine and family, Tonie and Tersia Bouwer, Braatvedt family, Mrs Brand, Cape Mohair International, Paolo Cavaleri, GW Cottage, Coetzer family, Coulson family, De Muelenaere family, H. de Clercq, JP & BA Daffue, LW Dekker, Wynn and Tacy Dedwith, Michelle Dugmore, Jan and Leni du Plessis & family, M du Toit, Ellison family, Engelbrecht family, Ina Faber & Francette le Roux, Face Adrenalin, Findlay family, Prof & Mrs Firth, Frankies, Gibson family, P Gilbert, Ginn family, Girdwood family, Mr & Mrs Goeller, HA Graham, Di Grant & family, Grobicki family, Greg Grobler, Alf Gunderson, A J Hamman, P Hammes, Harmse family, Mr and Mrs Harris, RJ Harris, Harry Shires Will Trust, Dalene Heynes, Gordon Hayward, Guy Hayward, M. Hepburn, G Heyns, H. Hover, Ian Hunter, Inkwazi Trust, H Isherwood, IUCN Micro Tourism Fund (Netherlands), Jensen family, Peter Jackson, Johan Johannson, Judy Johnston, k Kamp, Bob Keeble, B. Kerswill, Francois and Rachele Kirsten, Klein family, Mr & Mrs Koekemoor, Kotze family, Kriegler Family, Kroon family, Krone Family, Mr W. Kruger, Mr & Mrs A. Kruger, C. Kruyshaar, Kurland Estates, Langton family, Lategan family, David & Shirley Levy, Liversidge family, Lyell Family Trust, Johan Malan family, Beefy & Tish Mance, Marchand family, Martin Family, D. Mason-Jones, Di Mackenzie & family, Geoff and Jill McIlleron, Mermaid's Slipper Restaurant, Mitchells Brewery, Mr Mohr, Montgomery family, Mossienes, Mouton family, Mudge family, Myburgh family, Nature's Valley Ratepayer's Association, Nichol family, Patrick and Marina Niven, Jenni Noble, Clive and Colleen Noble, Ochse family, Ocean Blue Adventures, P Oliver, Dr CP Oosthuizen, D Ocroft, Janet O'Sullivan, Roy Parkhurst family, Gordon and Chrystal Paterson, Perlman family, The Peter Vichos Trust, A. Pienaar, A Powrie, G Pretorius, P. Pretorius, Mr Prinsloo, Quarmbly family, Rae family, Rattray family, Read family, Marty Reddering, Mo Richards, Jane Rosenthal, Dr Smith and family, Staples family, Storms River Adventures, PE Streicher, Sturgess family, Taylor family, Thalassa Trust, JB Theron, Le Roex and Timson family, Tony & Lisette Lewis Foundation, Valentine Family, HJ van der Hoven, Kobus van der Walt, J van Dyk, van Heyningen family, M L van Niekerk, Ds van Niekerk, R. van Wyk, Mr Barry Venter, Visser family, van De Pijpekam family, PH van der Merwe, Van Hasselt family, Andrew and Leonie van Hasselt, Greta van Hasselt, van Heyningen family, Van Melle Kamp family, MS van Tonder, Mr van Wyk; P R van Zyl, R H Venter, J B Venter, SF Viljoen, von Holten family, Frans & Marie Wagener, Watt family, Bob Whall & Embroidery Master, Whyte family, Wiswe family, Mr & Mrs Withers, Woode family, MS Woolf, Whitesides family, WWF-SA and the Green Trust

Our Funders: Without the support from the following organisations for our various projects, the Nature's Valley Trust would not have been able to achieve what it has to date. Our grateful thanks to the funding agencies and organisations who have made our projects possible.



The Tony and Lisette Lewis Foundation South Africa



Our Partners:



Please either e-mail or fax this form to Julie at nvalley@worldonline.co.za or 044 531 6820 and indicate which category of donation you have chosen below:

Bank details: Nature's Valley Trust, Standard Bank: Branch: Jan Smuts Branch code: 420 512 for cheques or 004 205 for electronic banking; Account: 001913859

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Our thanks for your ongoing support.
Please feel free to contact us with any comments,
suggestions or queries.

Nature's Valley Trust
PO Box 230, The Crags, 6602
Tel / Fax: 044 531 6820 / E-mail: nvalley@worldonline.co.za

National Association of Conservancies of South Africa (NACSA) Conference 8 and 9 June 2006

Focus: The Impact of Climate Change: What can you do NOW?

The purpose of the conference

The National Conservancies of South Africa (NACSA) set up a two-day conference at Kirstenbosch to allow for networking opportunities between various conservancy representatives and to focus on educating conservancies about the critical importance of **climate change**. According to NACSA:

“We believe that land-owners and conservationists will find it extremely difficult to continue ‘doing what they do’ without understanding that the playing fields have changed and will continue to change as the effects of climate change become more entrenched. In order to survive and continue to prosper will require a quantum shift in behaviour and thinking...”

*From “Climate Change: Facts,
Threats, and Solution”*

Several talks – all pertaining to climate change – were delivered at the conference and related to climate change by well-known scientists including: Guy Midgley, Jan Flok, and Professor Richard Cowling. Below you will find excerpts and highlights from their talks.

Just what is climate change?

Climate change has been around as long as the earth has been spinning. The global mean temperature has fluctuated for many hundreds of thousands of years between below 10°C to 14-15°C. The human-induced climate change will cause this level to be exceeded sometime in the next 50 years.

The Earth to which most of our natural species and existing farming practices has evolved will become warm enough to be outside the evolutionary experience of many species and unable to sustain current farming practices.

The implications for the Urban Conservancy

Valli Moosa, President of the I.U.C.N. said in a message to the Cape Stewardship participants:

“The Western Cape Stewardship Association and its membership is a civil society initiative that wishes to ensure conservation worthy land in private ownership takes its rightful place as an important part of our economy, livelihoods, and quality of life

*I urge all responsible landowners who wish to make a meaningful contribution, to join up, support and participate in the activities of this association. **With a collaborative network of responsible private conservation initiatives, our voices cannot be ignored.**”*

What can you do now?

- **Bird-watchers, aspiring botanists, and anyone who's got an eye on a specific element of the environment: GET INVOLVED!** Send your natural observations to Dr. Guy Midgley from South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) who is gathering information for SANBI's website.

Please contact Bethany for more information at bethanynt@worldonline.co.za

Short Term Scenarios and Action Steps YOU Can take to Mitigate Impacts of Climate Change

SOIL

SYMPTOMS DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

- Soil loss due to wind and water erosion
- Decrease in soil quality as organic content, soil life and minerals are lost.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Maintain as much soil cover as possible (cover plants, mulch)
- Introduce and maintain diversity of plant life and habitats that will maintain diversity of all other life.
- Increase soil life and organic matter
- Replace chemical fertilizers with compost, cover and sacrificial crops, humus, worms, microbial life, natural mined materials.

WATER RELATED ISSUES

SYMPTOMS DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

- Erratic rainfall patterns leading to extreme droughts and rainfall events e.g. storms and floods.
- Reduction of quantity and quality of groundwater and the recharge rate.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Store surplus water (rain tanks on all buildings)
- Recycle (grey water from houses)

PRACTISE EFFICIENT WATER USEAGE

- Manage use of water for gardening according to plant demand (water during the early morning and late evening to avoid water loss)
- Deep mulch and irrigate less

LOOK AFTER CATCHMENT AREAS AND RIVERS

- Maintain biodiversity and soil cover
- Erosion control and restoration
- Wetland and riparian zone restoration and conservation
- Control invasive alien plant and organisms

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT IMPACTS

SYMPTOMS DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

- Loss of biodiversity leads to an unstable environment.
- Stressed wildlife increasingly moving into urban areas.

LOOK AFTER YOUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Manage land as ecological corridors: Plan wildlife corridors (i.e. servitudes, etc.) within Nature’s Valley that will allow animals stressed by the effects of climate change to have safe passage.
- Implement measures which will minimize the conflict between humans and wildlife (e.g. baboon-proofing bins, etc.)

Further information on Climate Change:

- PDF documents relating to climate change (that you can download) will be available from the conference. *We are currently waiting for them to arrive and will send them as e-mail attachments when they do*
- Go to the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) website (www.sanbi.org) and see related links to climate change information
- “Good Agricultural Practices” – Department of Agriculture
- www.ihdp.org International Human Dimensions Programme
- CapeNature’s Fact Sheet: A landowner’s guide to Managing Biodiversity in an agricultural landscape (available at the Nature’s Valley office)



NATURE’S VALLEY URBAN CONSERVANCY MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____

Erf: _____

Postal Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Cell: _____

E-mail address: _____

Property Inclusion:	Yes		No	
Please send me a copy of the Constitution	Yes		No	

Signature: _____

Return to: PO Box 230, The Craggs, 6602 / Fax: 044 531 6668 / E-mail: nvalley@worldonline.co.za