

Newsletter August 2016  
Dear Friends of Kloofendal,

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Spring



Ledebouria flowers coming out between the new grasses in the firebreak which have been grazed, probably by scrub hare or mountain reedbuck. Our next Wild Flower Walk with Jan van Wyk will be on 9-11 am on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September. Bookings with me, please?

Volunteering

Volunteers to man Kloofendal Ecological Centre for a couple of hours over weekends so that the centre can be open as an information & environmental education centre over weekends at no charge. Anyone or any family group, please if you would like to help, we are having a meeting of volunteers on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2pm at the Kloofendal Ecological Centre for training of volunteers - to learn what all is needed to be a volunteer manning the centre. After that I will draw up a volunteer roster asking volunteering time, either three hours on a Saturday or Sunday morning (09h00 - 12h00) or afternoon (12h00 - 15h00) every couple of months.

We are still looking for FGASA qualified guides who are available to guide during the week, to join our "hands-on" environmental education team with guiding of school children? Anyone interested, please contact me?

## Reserve Maintenance

### (i) Ablution block in amphitheatre

Thank you JCPZ management for the clean amphitheatre ablution block, toilet paper at each toilet, broken toilet seats have been replaced with new ones, super! I do find it a bit odd that there is a poster advertising the JCPZ Campout right in the middle of the mirror in the ladies ablution block. The Campout is already well advertised at each gate in the amphitheatre area.

### (ii) Replacement of stolen gate and repair of fencing on Kloofendal & Wilgespruit Christian Fellowship border - August 2016



Before



After



Before



After

## Alien invasive plant control

JCPZ at work cutting down declared alien and invasive trees: Blackwoods, Black wattle, Gum trees, Pine trees, Bugweed and Pepper tree wattle, also good work done on the Agave (Sisal) plants



Big *Acacia elata* (Peppertree wattle) - before it was cut down



*Acacia elata* - cut down



*Agave Americana* - many being dug out - big job!



Black wattle (*Acacia mearnsii*) - cut down. Poisoning the stumps is important as these invasive alien plants are very good at resprouting as one can see.



Australian Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxyton*) flowering - note the parallel veins on the leaves, an easy distinguishing feature of Blackwood



Blue dye is used to clearly show that the stumps have been sprayed with herbicide

FroK still has the once a month, (second Saturday of the month, 08h30 - 11h00) alien and invasive plant hack, led by FroK committee member Jörgen Hammarström, who,

together with his faithful team, has been working on the invasive plants for many years with very noticeable success, but there is still much to be done. It is really good that JCPZ with the EPWP workers is now actively working on the six species of invasive trees. They have also been removing Bankrupt bush (*Seriphium plumosum*, formerly known as *Stoebe vulgaris*) which is an indigenous invasive shrub.



## Invasive plant booklet

I have compiled an illustrated booklet of the common invasive problem plants in Kloofendal of which 47 are declared alien and invasive plants. The booklet also includes non-declared invasive plants which may well become declared in the years to come. Presently the booklet is in an A4 format. I am considering putting it in the same pocket size format as the "Imaged list of Wild Flowers in Kloofendal Nature Reserve" booklet by Dr Jan van Wyk, launched in April this year.

I will be presenting a course on identification of problem invasive plants in Kloofendal on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October (08h00 - 12h00), when the many invasive herbs and shrubs should have come out, depending on rain.

## Sightings

**Insects:** Hundreds of Harvester termites harvesting grass in day time

	
<p>Harvester termites cutting thatching grass fallen from the roof of the Ecological centre, into smaller pieces with their biting mouth parts</p>	<p>The termite above (top right of picture) was reversing into its nest with this "huge" bit of thatching grass</p>

These pictures were taken just outside the Ecological Centre

**Mammals:** Just walking in the reserve late afternoon this week, we saw 1 duiker, then 2 mountain reedbuck and further on another 8 mountain reedbuck, how lovely to see them! They really seem not to be too stressed to see people walking around.

There are many dassies in the rocky areas of the reserve and scrub hare are also common.

## Past events

STAR GAZING - Event for the whole family - Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July, 16h30 - 21h30

There was a guided Planet Walk in the amphitheatre area of the Kloofendal Nature Reserve. Moon, planets, stars and constellations were viewed through 14 telescopes put out and manned by the West Rand Astronomy Club (WRAC). It was a very successful event attended by approximately 190 people




A TWO DAY INVASIVE SPECIES TRAINING COURSE, endorsed by the South African Greening Industries Council, was run in the Kloofendal Ecological Centre on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016. Module 1 Train to become an invasive species consultant, on the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act (NEMBA) legislation and Invasive Species Regulations. Module 2: Introduction to herbicides and control methods.

Both modules were well attended.

For information on further courses and information on invasive alien plants and animals, consult [www.invasives.org.za](http://www.invasives.org.za) or call 011-723-9000

## NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK

JCPZ invited FroK to do active exhibit at the National Science week, Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> August at the JCPZ Environmental Education Centre in Emmarentia Botanical Gardens for learners grade 4-7 and Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August at Leratong West for community members. I think that it was well received, learners and adults enjoyed the active displays and learned from them.

Leratong West - National Science Week		
		
Karin (me)- importance of plants & animals	Austin Daly - our solar system as depicted by Rotary's planet walk at Kloofendal	Jonathan Leeming - respect all living creatures - they all serve a function, and are less dangerous than people in their cars in South Africa

## Future events

Please see the September and October list on our website? As the weather is warming up, so our plants and animals are waking up. Scorpion walks, frog evenings, wild flower

walks, trees in spring walks are all on the forthcoming events list. Hope to may be see some of you there? Enjoy the beauty of spring!

### Bad behaviour in amphitheatre area & reserve

Breaking of bylaws (electronic music, alcohol abuse, vandalism) please report to JMPD (Johannesburg Metro Police Department) tel 011-758-9650?

Kind regards, Karin Spottiswoode

On behalf of the Friends of Kloofendal (FroK),

Tel 011-674-2980, cell 079-693-5608

[www.kloofendalfriends.org.za](http://www.kloofendalfriends.org.za)

<https://www.facebook.com/FROK-Friends-of-the-Kloofendal-Nature-Reserve-105871149445331>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1667502980177443> (public group)