



Betty's Bay Ratepayers Association (BBRA)

Newsletter March 2026



Notes from the Chairman:

BBRA Membership: BBRA members and all future members should take note of the new BBRA Application Form (attached). The new form needs to be signed by all members, even if you are paid-up for 2025/26, as the issue pertaining to the POPI Act is addressed.

Being a Member has the following advantages:

- Inclusion in the Betty's Bay Neighbourhood Watch (BBNW), Betty's Bay Emergency Support Team (BEST) and Betty's Bay Fire and Rescue Volunteers;
- Effective community representation in the Overstrand Municipality, Community Policing Forum, DFFE, Cape Nature, SAPS, Ward 10 committee, the Stony Point Protected Area Advisory Committee (PAAC) etc.;
- Monthly BBRA Newsletter, active Facebook page, Instagram, and BBRA website; and
- Access to relevant community WhatsApp groups for safety and updates.

BBRA focus points for 2026: Without going into detail, and apart from the normal work undertaken by the different portfolios within the BBRA, we will concentrate this year on (i.e.) the following:

- Financial transparency regarding the BBRA Finances.
- Day-to-day operations under the different Portfolios within the BBRA.
- Assisting the Overstrand Local Municipality with the update / amendment of the current Spatial Development Framework (SDF) for Overstrand / Precinct Plan for Betty's Bay.
- The development of Erf 4030 Betty's Bay as a user-friendly area for all the residents of Betty's Bay.
- The renovation of the parking areas at our beaches - Main Beach and Silversands.
- The renovation of the ablution blocks at our beaches - Main Beach and Silversands.
- The renovation of the parking area at the development at Coffee on Clarence to alleviate traffic problems in the broader area.
- Strongly supporting all legal engagements / actions regarding the curbing of speeding on Clarence Drive.

BBRA Portfolios: Please note the different portfolios under the BBRA and that any relevant day-to-day issue can be forwarded to the BBRA's email address bettybayratepayers@gmail.com

3 (THREE!) Minutes more 60km/h through Betty's Bay on R44

Our village is situated within the transitional zone of the UNESCO designated Kogelberg Biosphere. Excessive speeding and ridiculous speed limits - and exceeding them - have been allowed through our village for long enough. It will take less than **three minutes** longer than at current speed limits to pass through Betty's Bay, when driving at 60km/h. **Noise levels** are excessive. Our **precious wildlife is being killed**. More accidents are waiting to happen. **Tourism** is our main business. Our penguins, all our beaches, most of our businesses (and with more to come), multiple residential driveways, our library and our town dump – all are accessed off Clarence Drive. The distance through is 10.4 kms and it will take 10.4 minutes, driving at 60km/h. Or let's say 10 minutes for 10 kms. just **three minutes** more of your time.

Support driving 60km/h through our village on Clarence Drive by signing the petition below.

<https://www.thepetitionsite.com/412/758/921/3-three-minutes-more-60kmh-through-bettys-bay-on-r44-now/?z00m=33518970&redirectID=3548830567>

Our Precious Wildlife (Plea by Wayne Jackson)

We have already lost one life on Porter Drive. We cannot, under any circumstances, allow it to happen again.

A second caracal kitten has just been sighted in the exact area where its sibling was killed recently. This kitten is currently exploring and learning to navigate our world alongside its mother. Very soon, it will begin to extend its range and seek out its own territory. Its survival depends entirely on us.



For the next three months at least, consider the section of Porter Drive indicated in the map below a mandatory go-slow zone. I am pleading with you to recognise the gravity of this situation, but I am also stressing that we hold ourselves and our neighbours accountable.



Please ensure every friend, visitor, and neighbour is informed: speed in this area is no longer an option. We have a collective responsibility to ensure this kitten reaches adulthood.

Some interesting facts about our area:

Did you know Betty's Bay sits on one of the oldest human coastlines on Earth?

Many people think the human history of the Cape goes back a few hundred or perhaps a thousand years.

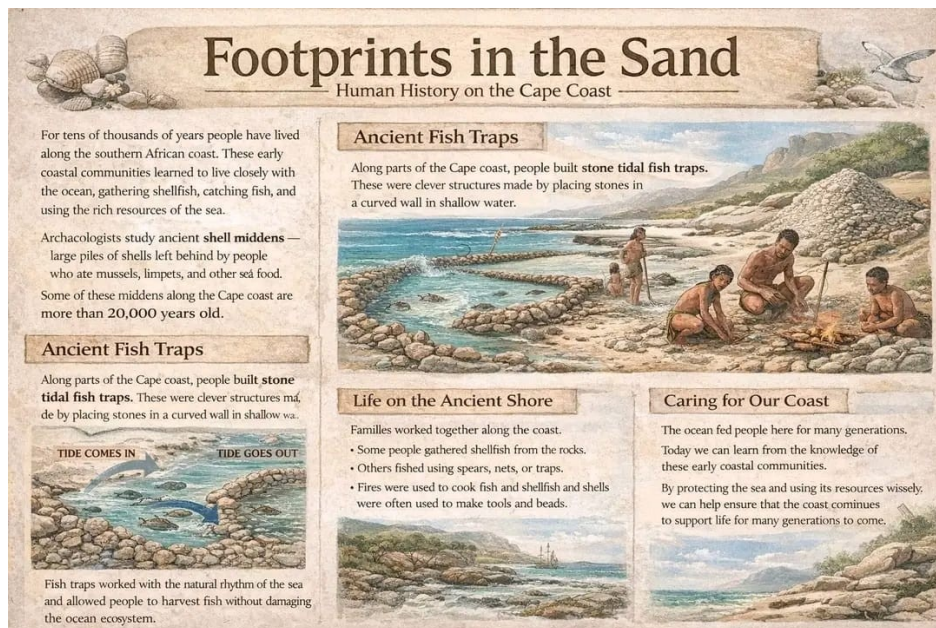
In reality, the story of the people who lived along this coastline stretches back tens of thousands of years.

Southern Africa is widely recognised by scientists and archaeologists as one of the oldest continuous homelands of modern humans on Earth.

The ancestors of the Khoisan peoples lived in this region long before the pyramids of Egypt were built, long before written history began anywhere in the world.

By at least 160,000 years ago, early humans were already living along the southern Cape coast, gathering shellfish, fishing in the tidal zones and making use of the incredibly rich marine environment.

Some of the earliest archaeological evidence of coastal living by modern humans has been found not far from here at places like Blombos Cave and Pinnacle Point.



Along our own Betty's Bay shoreline, quiet traces of this ancient way of life still remain.

If you walk the coast carefully, you may notice shell middens — small mounds of shells that accumulated over many generations.

These middens contain oyster, mussel and limpet shells left behind after countless meals beside ancient fires. Some are hundreds to thousands of years old, forming part of a much older cultural landscape.

Another remarkable feature along our coast are the stone fish traps. Built by arranging rocks into curved walls in the shallow intertidal zone, these traps work with the natural rhythm of the tides. As the tide recedes, fish become temporarily trapped within the stone walls, allowing them to be collected easily.

These structures show an ingenious understanding of the sea — sustainable harvesting methods developed over many generations of coastal living.

Imagine standing on this same shoreline a thousand years ago...

or five thousand,

or perhaps even longer.

Families gathered around fires near the rocks.

Children exploring the same tidal pools.

People harvesting mussels and fish from the same ocean that sustains life here today.

The landscape has changed, but the story of the first coastal people of the Cape still lives quietly in the stones, shells, and tides of Betty's Bay.

Please remember that shell middens and ancient stone structures are protected heritage sites and should be left undisturbed so future generations can learn from them.

 The next time you walk along the Betty's Bay shoreline, remember:

You are not just walking along a beach — you are walking through one of humanity's oldest living landscapes.

(Images created collaboratively by Sonja Wray & AI.)

Amund Beneke

Reports from the various portfolio heads follow:

TOWN PLANNING AND PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

Spatial Development Framework for Overstrand Local Municipality (OLM):

- Apparently the OLM and the Service Provider/Consultant are still sorting out the Status Quo Report.
- Once sorted, the said report will be made available to the public for comment / input.

Roads:

- The Contractor appointed to deal with the roads infrastructure in Betty's Bay have commenced with the scraping / rolling of the dirt roads on Seaview Drive in Sunny Seas.
- After completing the work in Betty's Bay, the team will move on to Pringle Bay.
- Potholes: the Municipality must be made aware of potholes. These will be addressed within the capacity of the Municipality/ given working conditions (weather).

Storm Water:

- The Kleinmond Team is busy with storm water drainage systems.
- The storm water drainage system in Sunny Seas has almost been completed.
- The remainder of Betty's Bay will be done.
- It is essential that the Municipality be made aware of storm water problems. These will be addressed within the capacity of the Municipality / given working conditions (weather).

Standing note: Residents must log issues on Collab themselves to get a reference number. When a situation arises over a weekend and is urgent, the Control Room must be notified - 028 313 8111

Amund Beneke

Betty's Bay Emergency Support Team (BEST)

In February 2026, five callouts were received: two motor vehicle accidents (MVAs), one medical case, one fall and one response to stranded fishermen at Aasbank. One MVA required ER24 intervention and transport to hospital, the other had minor injuries. The medical case was assessed and referred to a doctor. The fall victim was taken to Overstrand Emergency Care (OEC24) in Kleinmond, the stranded fishermen were assisted by the NSRI Station 42 in Kleinmond.

Whilst most appreciative of the donation of four patient monitors they have regrettably been found to be unreliable so cannot be used. We have been using a second-hand monitor from the Pringle Bay Medics since June 2023. This is no longer supported and cannot be serviced. A quotation for a highly recommended patient monitor has been received and submitted to the BBRA Exco for their consideration.

An important reminder to all, please have your medical aid information, a list of your current medication and medical history at hand as this greatly assists with patient assessments and handover to the ambulance services. We urge people to prominently display both the Erf number and street number on their property so that they can easily be found, particularly at night.

Any donation to BEST will be most welcome as we have ongoing expenses and need to replace some of our older items, this includes our patient monitor - ABSA, Betty's Bay Ratepayers account 4066616439, Branch 632005, with BEST as the reference to ensure that your donation is used solely for our purpose. Many thanks to all those who have contributed. Without your support we would not be able to provide this service.

The Emergency Number for BEST is 066 165 6061. Please save this number on your phone or have it readily available.

Rob Boyd

Reports follow from the various organisations in Betty's Bay doing great work in our community:



Hangklip Community Care Centre

HCCC provides welfare services to the Hangklip community, i.e. residents of Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay and Rooi Els. During the short calendar month of February our kitchen distributed 50 food parcels and prepared 504 scrumptious meals.

Our semiweekly Pilates classes, weekly Bridge afternoons and monthly Friendship Circle meetings continued during February as usual.

Following on from our HAIL (Home Assisted Independent Living) home carers' courses in October 2022, March 2023 and May 2025, we have set up carers' support groups in each of Sunny Seas, Jock's Bay, Central Betty's Bay, and Silversands.

If anyone would like to know more about our activities and the work that we do, please contact our chairman, Colin Cook, at myrna.colin@gmail.com.

If anyone would like to volunteer to assist with any of our activities, or if anyone needs assistance from HCCC, please contact Marion Green at manager@hccc.co.za.

David Fritz



BBC4thSATURDAY: 28 FEBRUARY

OYSTERCATCHERS

What a beautiful documentary! It gives up a glimpse into these remarkable birds and what they endure during a breeding season.

Van As and Jacques Jordaan, Oupa en Kleinkind, treated us to a screening of their incredible documentary on the Black oystercatchers, or Tobies, in Betty's Bay.

Filmed on the beaches of Betty's Bay during 2025, they traced various breeding pairs through the tragedies and triumphs of their efforts to lay eggs, hatch chicks and raise them to fledglings.

Their passion and dedication for these Tobies shines through the movie as they share in the highs and lows of the breeding pairs. Their brilliant footage captures the dedication and hard work of parents trying to keep their eggs and chicks safe, feed them, and protect them from the heat and the storms, predators and people. Part of the breeding season coincides with the peak holiday season in Betty's Bay – increasing the disturbance at their nest sites from people and dogs. It give us a better understanding of the implications of each disturbance on the survival of the eggs and chicks.





Their superb photography, the heart felt and humorous scenes and narration, and their love and knowledge of the Tobies in Betty's Bay has produced an incredible legacy on the "Tobies". I hope that once people have seen it, they will have more respect and concern for the Oystercatchers they see on the beaches. And act more carefully to give them the space and peace they require during the breeding season.

Thank you Van As and Jacques for all your hours of work! This is a remarkable documentary. May your movie increase the awareness of the Tobies in Betty's Bay and promote future successful breeding seasons.

THE TREASURES AND LEGACY OF BETTY'S BAY AND THE BIOSPHERE

PASSING ON THE BATON OF BETTY'S BAY TO THE NEXT GENERATION

During my time of editing articles from contributors and proofreading for the book, one of the many things that stood out for me in the stories from the earlier days of Betty's Bay was the freedom, fun and delight the kids had playing between the mountains and sea.

Here are a few quotes:

- **Carl Vogts:** Apart from receiving a good education, we also roamed the mountains and the sea, harvesting alikreukal, perlemoen and catching kilpvissies like the Gerald Durrell's of Betty's Bay. Pg. 464
- **Annelise Willems:** There was an unspoken magic in these childhood summers. The rush of a gust in the sails, the laughter ringing out across the waters, the quiet determination of young sailors bent on doing better, faster, smarter. And though time has carried us forward, those moments remain etched in the spray and wind of Betty's Bay, where the dabchicks once danced across the water and young dreamers chased the wind. Pg. 478
- **Brian and Lorna Edwards:** Childhood holidays at Betty's were days of blissful, safe fun. We sometimes crept out of the house at 6am to go swimming with friends, thinking our parents did not hear us on the creaky stairs. The quiet roads of Betty's Bay were a safe place for young children to learn to drive. Lorna was 11 years old when she learned to drive UGY the old Morris Minor on the gravel road through the empty Sunny Seas. Pg. 244
- **Ian and Carrol Farlam:** Our children aptly dubbed our Betty's Bay home "the holiday paradise" And truly it has been just that – a place of peace, play and deep connection to the land we love. Pg. 461



Betty's Bay was and is a special place for adults too:

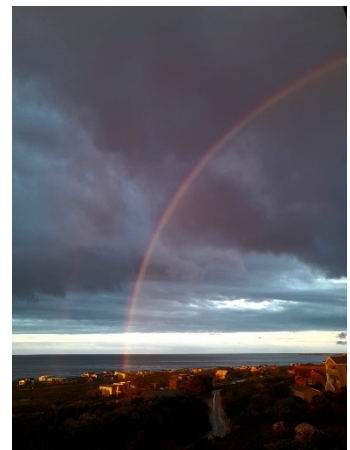
- **Ian and Carrol Farham:** Back then, the area was teeming with wildlife. Grysbok roamed freely and we were fortunate to have a few of them visit our plot. It felt like a privilege to share space with the tortoise, mongoose, baboons and the occasional porcupine. The natural rhythms of the place – its quiet dignity and untamed beauty were part of everyday life. Pg. 461
- **Friedel Meisenholl:** Silver Sands is now part of our DNA. We say thank you for every day we have together, live in nature and can be content with life. Pg. 522
- **Lazyways visitors book:** Bitten by the bug of Betty's Bay. We know this disease has come to stay. Pg. 241
- **Cecelia Gardener:** Betty's Bay remains, as it always has been, a place of peace, joy and shared memories – a sanctuary where the simple pleasures of life are treasured and where the spirit is forever renewed. We must continue to do all that we can to preserve this unspoiled loveliness of this most beautiful place and conserve our marvelous heritage for the future generation to enjoy. P240/1



Another aspect that stood out for me was that those who went before us have passed a valuable baton onto us.

We can be very grateful for those passionate people who had a vision and left legacies that have protected areas of this special village and area.

- Harold Porter and the Porter family for these beautiful **Harold Porter Gardens** that they bequeathed to the South African National Botanical Institute (SANBI).
- The men who contributed to having the **Betty's Bay Marine Protected Area (MPA)** recognized.
- The people who worked to get all the documents and research together to apply to UNESCO to have the **Kogelberg Biosphere** declared in 1998
- Allen Heydorn and the group of people who worked hard and helped to buy the strategic pieces of land to create the **Brody Link**.
- The initiators of the Hack (Battle of Betty's Bay) and the Betty's Bay Wildflower Society – the forerunners to the **Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society**
- The residents of Betty's Bay that applied to register Betty's Bay as a conservancy, the **Betty's Bay Conservancy**
- This one is not due to humans, but the African Penguins who arrived to start nesting in 1982 and created a land-based **penguin colony at Stony Point**. So many people in Betty's Bay and neighbouring villages benefit economically from the visitors to Stony Point.



We now have this baton. What are we going to do with it?

- To help protect and enlarge the MPA
- To embrace what it means to live in the Kogelberg Biosphere – “biosphere living”
- To live lightly as individuals and families on our erven and as a community in our village
- What legacy will we leave behind, for future generations and the flora and fauna who call this home? Sadly, we seem very good at destroying the habitat, shelter and food sources.
- How will we support the critically endangered African Penguin?

Currently, there are various organizations involved in protecting this “conservation” baton:

- The Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society
- The Betty’s Bay Conservancy (BBC) and the Penguin-Pals
- Betty’s Bay Oystercatcher Monitors
- Betty’s Bay Baboon Action Group (BBBAG)
- The new Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue and Training Centre (one year old) under the auspices of Kogelberg Biosphere
- The recent seal watchers who kept watch over Bakkies, the visiting elephant seal who was moulting

These organisations are comprised of ordinary people and they need more “ordinary people” to assist them. I encourage you to join and give your support and get involved.

May 2026 be a year where we embrace Biosphere Living on our ervs and in our village as we:

- Deal with our light pollution
- Handle our waste wisely
- Restore habitat from paved/grassed areas on our erven
- Create ponds for habitat
- Create wildlife corridors
- Preserve vital wetlands
- Preserve marine and terrestrial wildlife
- Drive slowly, reduce speeding on R44 in the village
- Live lightly within nature
- Build lightly and not denude our ervs of indigenous vegetation
- Remove alien invasive vegetation
- Educate our visitors, tenants and guests to do the same
- Inspire the youth
- Secure nature areas as nature reserves for the next generation



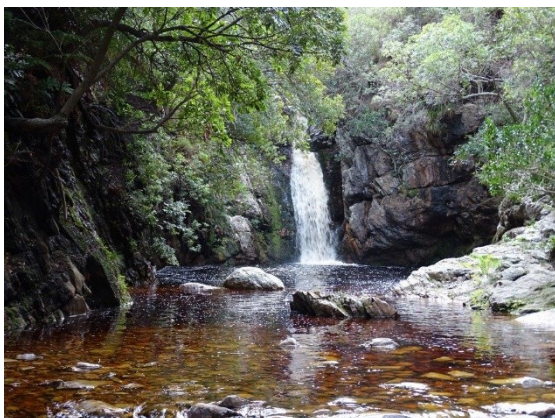
Running with the baton

I hope this book inspires each of you to help preserve this amazing place and its natural heritage, situated between mountain and sea

Carol Clark, Presentation at the launch of the Betty’s Bay book on 20 December

Photo credits: Ella Fourie (photos 5 and 7) and Niel van der Watt (photos 2,3,4 and 6)

A PERSONAL REFLECTION ON THE KOGELBERG



Few places on earth possess the rare ability to shape not only ecosystems, but also the very contours of a human life. For me, the Kogelberg Biosphere is such a place.

Having had the privilege of serving for many years as Chairperson of the UNESCO-designated Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve, I came to understand that this landscape is far more than a conservation success story. It is a living testament to what becomes possible when vision, stewardship, and community converge in service of something greater than they are individually.

Yet beyond the professional honour lies a deeply personal connection.

It was here, amidst the ancient mountains and the timeless rhythm of falling water, that I asked my wife to marry me, standing above the quiet power of the Disakloof waterfall. In that moment, surrounded by a wilderness that has endured for millennia, I was reminded that the most meaningful human commitments often find their natural home in places of profound beauty.

Over the years, the Kogelberg has also been the backdrop to treasured memories with my children. We explored its valleys, breathed its salt-tinged air where mountain meets ocean, and learned together that nature is not something separate from us, but something we belong to.

As a botanist and environmentalist, I have walked many remarkable landscapes across our country and beyond. Yet the Kogelberg remains singular. Often referred to as the “heart of the Cape Floral Kingdom,” it is one of the richest reservoirs of plant biodiversity anywhere on the planet, but statistics alone cannot capture its essence.



To witness the first emergence of fynbos after fire...

To see mist drifting slowly through sandstone ridges...

To hear the quiet industry of pollinators at work...

These are reminders that resilience is written into the very fabric of this place.



What makes the Kogelberg truly extraordinary, however, is not only its ecological value, but also the legacy of the people who chose to protect it. Visionaries who understood, long before it became fashionable, that conservation is ultimately an act of faith in the future.

We are not owners of this landscape.

We are its temporary guardians. Each generation receives the baton, not as a trophy, but as a responsibility.

Today, as pressures on natural systems intensify across the globe, biospheres like the Kogelberg stand as quiet proof that coexistence is achievable.

Here, conservation and community are not opposing forces but partners in a shared narrative.

My hope is that those who live in and visit this remarkable region will continue to walk gently, build thoughtfully, and act with the humility that such a rare environment deserves.

Because places like the Kogelberg do more than sustain biodiversity. They sustain the human spirit.

And if we listen carefully, the mountains still ask only one thing of us: that we leave this inheritance richer than we found it.

For me, the Kogelberg will always be more than a biosphere reserve. It is a place of promise, of memory, and of enduring belonging.

Johan West

Former Chairperson UNESCO Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve

Written on 20 December, after the launch of the Betty's Bay book.



THE UNDERWATER WORLD OF BETTY'S BAY

The first time I snorkeled at Betty's Bay, I went looking for *kreef* and *alikleukel*, while my father-in-law was spearfishing. While I was immersed in the kelp, the sunrays filtered through the *bamboes*, dappled the rocks at the bottom, and it resembled a forest floor. I instantly understood why it is called a *kelp forest*. Taking hold of a piece of kelp and climbing down to the *bottom*, I gently scoped around. A curious Klipvis swam up and stared right at me, unafraid, until I waved *hello* and he jolted away. I like to think he was welcoming me into his world. Crayfish and alikleukel quickly escaped my attention, and it was the small things that would continue to invite me back into these waters.

I grew up in Guadalajara, Mexico, a city four hours away from the coast. There, on the few occasions I visited the ocean, I would see sandy bottoms stretching endlessly underwater. I would be lucky to spot anything interesting without effort. The waters at Betty's Bay were entirely the opposite. Everywhere I looked was beaming with life. I saw a myriad of fish, algae, crustaceans, anemones, corals, and sponges composing magnificent views.

That curious Klipvis from my first dive also made *me* very curious. As a marine biologist who loves to identify all the animals I see, I needed to know more about Klipvis. I was surprised to find that there are 48 species of them endemic to South Africa! I became fascinated with Klipvis. Little did I know they were commonly caught by kids, and were a source of annoyance for anglers. I have now seen and photographed 11 species of Klipvis.

An exciting find was the Betty's Bay Klipvis (*Clinus exasperatus*, below). Only discovered in 2012 by a Stellenbosch University professor, it was named *exasperatus* after the many exasperated attempts to find additional specimens.



Hanging in the water, keeping my body as still as I could, I spotted a fish merely 5 cm in length. Some species are masters of disguise, like this little Bluespot Klipvis (below). Since he relies on his colours and patterns to blend in with the algae, a diver can easily miss him. Other species like the Super and Autumn Klipvis, will swim right past you as you snorkel.



The diversity of marine life and beautiful seascapes of Betty's Bay thoroughly amazes me. Whether I dive at Dawidskraal, Jock's Bay, De Wets Bay, Bakboord, or explore the tide pools at Easter Beach and along Dolphin Drive, I know I will be in the presence of a truly unique environment. I find it unbelievable how these spots, though close by, can be so different. At De Wets Bay, I saw hundreds of ctenophores (comb jellies) floating in the water. At Jock's Bay, I saw odd behaviors from Klipvis. I quickly recognized these as mating

rituals. As a biologist, I was very excited about this rare event, since most fish fertilize their eggs externally as they float away. It turns out to be less rare than I thought! Klipvis mate constantly, and females can have multiple broods from different fathers at the same time.

I have only explored a small section of this coastline - unassuming from above, but an entirely different world under the surface. Fully exploring this small portion of coast will take a lifetime, which I look forward to very much. As I get out of the water at the end of every dive, I am welcomed back to the dry reality on the rocks. I leave the underwater world knowing it will be there in all its beauty, for the next dive.

Diederik Boonman

OUR PLANTS AND WILDLIFE UNDER THREAT

During an iNaturalist vegetation assessment that CREW conducted for a new owner on a recently purchased plot, we uncovered several old animal traps hidden beneath thick undergrowth. The discovery is a cause for concern as our wildlife in the Kogelberg Biosphere is facing more and more threats.

The traps seem to be very old, but they can still pose a safety hazard and remind us of the fact that people still trap animals today. This discovery highlights the importance of regular plot inspections, especially on land that has been unmanaged for long periods.

Another aspect that is important to notice on vacant land is the appearance of alien invasive plants. If invasive plants are discovered early enough, it is easier to remove them as they can often be easily pulled out when they are still small. The invasive plants often spread from adjacent plots. Have a look around the gardens in your area and if you see that your neighbours have invasive plants in their garden, please try to negotiate with them to get the plants removed.

There is currently a huge problem with invasive Bottlebrush in the field between Pringle Bay and Rooiels. It is of the *Melaleuca* family from Australia. These plants were grown in the area for a nursery and have started spreading in the last few years. They are now a big problem and very difficult to remove.



If you want those red spikey flowers in your garden, plant a *Greyia sutherlandii*, shown here on the left. It is an indigenous tree and not invasive. It is from the northern and eastern provinces from South Africa but makes a lovely garden tree. Birds, bees and the insects love it. It will even do well in a pot.

This is why it is important to follow the guidelines found in 'Your place in the Kogelberg' by Tim Attwell. It is available from the Harold Porter Gardens bookshop. There is also information in the articles shared by the Kogelberg Garden Circle about laying out your new garden or managing your old garden.

We have to take our responsibility seriously and consider what we plant. If you need help and advice, please ask.

*Adele Scheepers, CREW
Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers*

CULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Culture... mention the word and one thinks either of yoghurt or traditional dress (or for some of us, whipping out the charcoal for a braai). However, much of one's culture is rooted and embedded in what you value. The visible expressions of a culture such as clothes, architecture etc. are secondary. This brings us to culture and the environment - and us.

'Us' being primarily westernised people living in the villages at the foot of the Kogelberg Mountains, in the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. We are typically goal orientated, materialistic and well educated and might be

of British, Dutch, German or other historical lineage. Realistically, outside of language and some behaviours we do not have a visible culture.



We live here or regularly visit, because we enjoy it here. Why do we like this area and how much do we VALUE it? If it was taken away from us tomorrow, e.g. we moved away or a tsunami swept away the villages, how much would the loss of the plants, animals, views, mountains and streams affect us? Would we mourn the loss?

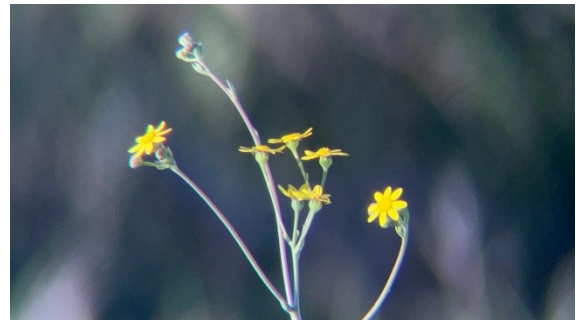
We need to look into the values that we currently hold. We can change them to those we WANT to value. And change our thinking, actions and decisions, both daily and long-term, to come in line with our values.

The first steps are getting to know and understand the environment more. Spend time in it: observe, learn, show and be in awe and wonder about what is here. Here is an experience I had while I was thinking about the concept of value and culture:



After a long day in the office, I sat on the garden bench, leaning on my knees and just staring with the "1000 yard stare" that comes naturally after a long Monday. After a while, I noticed something moving in the sand. There was a tiny, about 5mm or so, clump of grass moving around erratically. Not due to the wind as it was too erratic. Not an ant, as all I could see were grass bits. I looked longer, harder. I then noticed the ants scurrying around. Getting down on your hands and knees to watch some ants "anting along" can be interesting.

This led me to look at some TINY flowers. Complete flowers, but only around 3-4mm in length. Amazing! Then I saw a wasp dancing along inspecting every nook, cranny and hole in the sand.



Sitting back, my view got a bit larger. I noticed some of the fynbos plants, some claw marks in the sand, an antlion trap. Looking up, there were the starlings mobbing and bombing one of the ravens. That was so worth watching! These agile birds harrying and tormenting the lumbering raven. I sat back on the bench. Wow! So much to see and it was right there all around me.



I live here because I WANT to see all that. I value it. But, is it part of my identity, my culture, the things that shape and define what I do and how I think? Yes, a bit, but. I need to place more importance on this treasure - and protect my treasure!

As villagers, do we value and treasure what we have here? Because only when we truly do, will we adapt our behaviour. Can I really say I value the wildlife if I do not get angry, heartbroken, and miserable when

I stumble across the torn up body of a road-killed porcupine. Or not be horrified and traumatised by the sight of the porcupette butting its dead mother trying desperately to get milk.

If we value all that Betty's Bay is, we should learn, experience, enjoy, teach, and share. To want to pick up the piece of litter we see. To want to protect the environment even though it may cost us money, time, and effort.

So that visitors look at us and say "Their CULTURE is to love, protect, enjoy and experience this wonderful place of the Kogelberg"

David, Betty's Bay resident



WILDLIFE AND ROAD DEATHS

Many drivers may wince as they speed past the carcass of an antelope, porcupine or owl on the side of a busy road, but few pause to consider why roadkill is such a growing problem on our roads— or realise just how much it's on the rise across South Africa.

Most roadkill involves small to medium-sized vertebrates. Serval, foxes, Cape clawless otters, honey badgers, African wild dogs, and various antelope species are among the most frequently killed. Reptiles like pythons, puff adders, and tortoises also suffer high mortality rates. Even birds of prey, including several owl species, are affected because they hunt near roads.

Part of the data collected by the Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue and Training Center looks at the number of road fatalities on a particular stretch of road. The R44 - Clarence Drive - is a provincial road with a 100km speed limit between Rooi Els and Betty's Bay. This road runs through the heart of a pristine biosphere and divides protected areas of the reserve. Since the center begun operating in 2024, the frequency of roadkill along this stretch of road has raised concerns, not only for the rehabilitated patients who are being released there, but also about the impact all of these deaths have on the biodiversity of the Kogelberg Biosphere.

Under-reporting is also a concern. Most roadkills go unrecorded, as scavengers often remove carcasses before they are logged, and many small animals are missed. Very few drivers will report an injured animal that might have disappeared into the bush to die.

The EWT has been monitoring some of South Africa's roads since 2011, and has found that since 2012, more than 8,500 wildlife roadkill incidents have been recorded along just a few major toll routes. In 2024 alone, over 1,500 new incidents were reported on monitored highways, marking an increase over previous years.

It's not only about reckless driving. According to Thabo Hlatshwayo, an ecological researcher and senior field officer for the Endangered Wildlife Trust's (EWT) Wildlife and Transport Project, the issue is rooted in roads cutting through once-connected wild spaces, shrinking habitats, and a changing climate - all of which force animals to move more often, putting them in harm's way.

One part of the problem lies in how roads are designed. There's a lack of consideration for what wildlife needs. Roads cut through habitats, leaving animals with few safe options to move between areas, especially when they need to escape threats like fire or to find food during seasonal changes.

Driver behaviour is another factor. There is quite a lack of awareness of our surroundings and careless speeding. At night, nocturnal animals are at risk as visibility is low.

RoadWatch is an App developed by the Endangered Wildlife Trust and launched in 2013. The [RoadWatch](#) app allows members of the public to log wildlife roadkill sightings across South Africa. With nearly 30,000 records submitted to date, the data helps identify roadkill hotspots, inform conservation efforts, and guide road safety improvements.

The RoadWatch app is available as a free download on both [Google Play](#) and the [Apple App Store](#).

The Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue and Training Center has put together a R44 Task Team, to try to deal with the issue of the speed limit at a municipal level. Part of the role of a rehabilitation center is to tackle some of the bigger issues facing conservation efforts in South Africa and to work with government to mitigate wildlife fatalities.

Michelle Watson CWR

Date of incident	Species common name	Scientific name	Circumstances of incident	Cause of death
Feb 23 – Feb 26	No records kept before Feb 23		Many bodies found on R44	HBC = Hit by car
Feb-23	Cape Clawless Otter	<i>Aonyx capensis</i>	Found with broken pelvis and back legs in Bettys	Suspected driven over by car, euthanised
May-23	Large Spotted Genet (juv)	<i>Genetta tigrina</i>	Killed overnight on R44	Died on impact
Jun-23	Boomslang	<i>Dispholidus t. typus</i>	Driven over on R44 near Bettys Bay	Euthanised due to injuries
Aug-23	Grysbok (F adult)	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Hit by car at intersection of Hangklip and R44	Pregnant female died of injuries
Dec-23	Grysbok (adult)	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Hit by municipal truck on R44, close to center	Back legs and pelvis broken. Euthanized
Jan-24	Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiacus</i>	Hit by car on the R44 near Kleinmond	Died of internal injuries
Feb-24	Orange Breasted Sunbird	<i>Nectarinia violacea</i>	Hit by car intersection Porter and R44	Died of internal injuries
Apr-24	Grysbok (adult)	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Hit by car at night on R44 at Pringle entrance	Euthanised due to injuries
May-24	Grysbok (juvenile)	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Hit by car on R44 - intersection of Porter and R44	Died of internal injuries
May-24	Large Spotted Genet	<i>Genetta tigrina</i>	Driven over on the R44	DOA
Jul-24	Grysbok (juvenile)	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Hit by car in Bettys Bay, mother electrocuted in Betty's Bay	Both bodies are here in freezer for further research
Aug-24	Large Spotted Genet Adult	<i>Genetta tigrina</i>	Hit by car at Pringle/R44 intersection	DOA - body in freezer for further study
Sep-24	Cape Grey Mongoose	<i>Galerella pulverulentus</i>	Lactating female, killed on R44 near Porter Road	Died of internal injuries, body in freezer
Sep-24	Cape Grey Mongoose Juv	<i>Galerella pulverulentus</i>	Baby of mother above, hit by car on R44 at Center	DOA - body in freezer for further study
Oct 24	Porcupine	<i>Hystrix crissata</i>	Hit by car near Rooi Els	Died from injuries
Dec- 24	Rock Hyrax	<i>Procavia capensis</i>	Hit by a car on the R44	DOA - body in freezer for further study
Dec -24	Large Spotted Genet	<i>Genetta tigrine</i>	Driven over on R 44	Body disposed of.
Feb- 25	Grysbok (adult)	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Hit by truck on corner of Porter Road on R44	DOA, body disposed of.
Mar- 25	Spotted Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>	Found paralysed alongside R44 near Kleinmond	Euthanised as no signs of improvement
May- 25	Porcupine	<i>Hystrix crissata</i>	Found dead on R44 outside Kleinmond	Body used for teaching
July - 25	Grey Headed Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	Hit by car on R44 outside the center	Died after two days.
July -25	Goshawk	<i>Accipiter tachiro</i>	Hit by car in Kleinmond, not flying	Had to be euthanized
Aug -25	Spotted Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>	Found in R 44 with concussion	Died after 3 days.

Aug -25	Grysbok	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Found dead alongside R44	DOA
Sep- 25	Rock Kestrel	<i>Falco rupicolus</i>	Alongside R43, paralysed	Had to be euthanised
Sep - 25	Porcupine	<i>Hystrix africaeaustralis</i>	Hit by car on R44	DOA
Sep 25	Mongoose	<i>Galerella pulverulenta</i>	Hit by car in Pringle Bay	Died in care.
Oct -25	Spotted Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>	Hit by car in Kleinmond	Died in care
Oct -25	Cape Angulate Tortoise	<i>Chersina angulata</i>	Squashed by car on R44	Had to be euthanised.
Nov-25	Duiker	<i>Sylvicapra grimmia</i>	Hit by car on R43, paralysed	Had to be euthanised
Nov-25	Spotted Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>	Found dead on the road near center	DOA
Dec-25	Cape Angulate Tortoise	<i>Chersina angulata</i>	Driven over by car near Pringle Bay	DOA
Dec- 25	Large Spotted Genet	<i>Geneta tigris</i>	Squashed on road in Betty's Bay	DOA
Jan -26	Cape Angulate Tortoise	<i>Chersina angulata</i>	Driven over near Kleinmond	Died in care
Jan -26	Porcupine	<i>Hystrix africaeaustralis</i>	Hit by car near center,	DOA
Jan-26	Grysbok	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Found by MOP alongside R44	DOA
Jan -26	Spotted Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>	Found dead on road outside the center	DOA
Jan - 26	Spotted Eagle Owl	<i>Bubo africanus</i>	Found dead on R44 near Center	DOA
Jan -26	Grysbok	<i>Raphicerus melanotis</i>	Hit by car on R44	DOA
Jan -26	Cape Francolin	<i>Pternistis capensis</i>	Hit by car in Bettys Bay	Died in care
Feb – 26	Porcupine	<i>Hystrix africaeaustralis</i>	Found dead in Kleinmond, presumed hit by car (patient 400)	DOA
Feb -26	Klipspringer	<i>Oreotragus oreotragus</i>	Killed on R44 just after Rooi Els	DOA
Feb - 26	Guineafowl	<i>Numida melegerius</i>	Killed right outside our gate, one of our releasees	DOA
Feb -26	Hewitt Rock Rabbit	<i>Pronolagus saundersia</i>	Killed right outside our gate	DOA
Mar -26	Caracal	Caracal caracal	Killed on Porter Road, in Betty's Bay	Body removed by garbage truck
Mar-26	Caracal	Caracal caracal	Killed on the R43 near Onrus	Body removed by OM Environmental
Mar- 26	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Hit by car in Kleinmond	Found dead on road
Mar -26	Dikkop	<i>Burhinus capensis</i>	Killed on Porter Drive	Found dead on road
Mar- 26	Large Spotted Genet	<i>Genetta tigris</i>	Hit on R44, Clarence drive	DOA

Please note:

- These are ONLY the cases that we were directly involved in, either by finding the bodies ourselves or collecting the bodies or having the bodies at the center. There have been many, many more cases

where bodies have been reported and then either disposed of or left by the road by the observer. Those we have not kept a record of.

- There have been many cases where the accident was reported but the injured animal managed to escape capture. Those we do not have a record of. We also excluded all baboon fatalities.
- This is only a small fraction of the actual cases of road casualties – Most are not reported to us, or the driver does not see what he hit, or records were not kept.
- This list is only of the animals found on the R44 between Pringle Bay and Betty's Bay or close to that area. Bodies found further afield in the Overstrand have not been included.



Michelle Watson

Support driving 60km/h through our village on Clarence Drive by signing the petition below.

<https://www.thepetitionsite.com/412/758/921/3-three-minutes-more-60kmh-through-bettys-bay-on-r44-now/?z00m=33518970&redirectID=3548830567>

HACKING - The Battle for Betty's Bay: Report on Hack No 744 on 7 March 2026

Thirty-one volunteers congregated on an overcast and cool day at the St Francis of Assisi Anglican Chapel to remove liens along the verges of Porter Drive. This was a continuation of the February hack, starting at the White Road intersection and ending up on the bend on the approach to Hermas Road.

Megs Tweedie was welcomed back after a three month grandparenting break in New Zealand. Andreas Claassens was welcomed to his first Betty's Bay hack after recently becoming a Hangklip Hardcore Hacker. First-time hackers, Jessica and Anton Mauve were welcomed at the mid-morning break after having first participated in the Park Run. We hope you both thoroughly enjoyed your hacking experience and look forward to your return in the spring.

Hackers car-pooled at the chapel and then worked their way along Porter Drive, cutting, poisoning and dragging branches from the verges which are fifteen metres wide and badly infested with rooikrans trees .



The mid morning break was taken at 10am in the Chapel courtyard. A big thank you to Tim Attwell for once again arranging the venue and for travelling to and from the Harold Porter book launch and the hack to keep both parties happy.

Thanks, as always, to Dave Mourant for providing all that is needed each month for a good cup of tea or coffee as well as the "blue" herbicide. Our thanks to Mary Whitelaw and Lee Boyd for sponsoring and making three loaves of delicious egg mayo and the cheese & cucumber sarmies. No crumbs remained!



After refreshments, the hackers returned to where they had left off. By the end of the hack, only 700m had been covered, giving a very good indication of how infested the verges are. The Dirty Dozen refused to stop when the whistle blew but eventually decided to stop twenty minutes later.



The aftermath at the chapel was enjoyed by all. This was another very productive hack as can be seen by the size and number of piles.

Thanks, as always to our hacking neighbours, who put in a special effort to attend from Kleinmond, Rooi Els and Pringle Bay – Christine Coupar, Megs Tweedie, Mike Christelis, Andreas Claassens, Chris Geldenhuys, Ken Meiring, Brian McMillan, Magda and Tommy Mills.

As ever, on behalf of the Betty's Bay Fynbos, thank you all for your efforts.

Rob Boyd

Convener Betty's Bay Hack Group

SUPPORTERS OF THE KOGELBERG BRANCH OF THE BOTANICAL SOCIETY

Temperatures this past week (Week 11) have peaked at 35°C in Betty's Bay which is exceptionally hot for a coastal town anywhere in South Africa. I am reminded of how tough and resilient fynbos is because the plants have coped in this heat better than humans and their pets.

We held a Special AGM on Saturday 21 March and there were two items on the agenda namely:

- Resolution 1: To approve the dissolution of the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa as per the Constitution of the Branch.
- Resolution 2: To approve the adoption of the Constitution of the Hangklip Botanical Society Non-Profit Company (NPC).
- The supporting documentation for these two Resolutions was distributed to all Kogelberg Members of the Botanical Society of South Africa as well as all the Supporters of the Kogelberg Branch.

Our desire is to remain affiliated to the National Botanical Society of South Africa but as a totally independent Society. This has been communicated to National Council, and we are in the process of working out what the affiliation to National will look like. See notes under National Botanical Society of South Africa.

As per the previous newsletter, the Sugarbird Foundation's pilot team is up and running and started work on Monday 9 March in the Buffels River above Pringle Bay. This is unbelievably good news and as per the previous newsletter, a big thank you to the team that put this together.

HAROLD PORTER NATIONAL BOTANICAL GARDENS (HPG)

We have tremendous support from the staff and we thank them for doing outstanding work in truly difficult circumstances.

We try very hard to find out the magic formula of Chris Geldenhuys, Rob Boyd and Mike Christelis for getting over 40 volunteers to the monthly and weekly hacks and we as Friends of Harold Porter National Botanical

Gardens struggle to get 5 to do much easier work, weeding in the gardens. We urge anyone who would like to help us do what we can to conserve the wonderful fynbos that we have in Harold Porter National Gardens, to join the Friends of the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens. We are asking for two +/-3hr sessions a month, or as often as you could make it. The Friends work in HPG on alternate Tuesdays and Thursdays.

On a positive note, Chris and Rob have agreed to help us remove dead trees in the Gardens and to clear a large area of overgrowth, particularly Keurbooms, on the western side of the gardens. This is very positive and we thank Wonga Komanisi, the Estate Manager, for his help in this regard.

We will be holding our annual Easter Plant Sales at HPG. Orders for over 1600 plants of great variety have been placed.

There will be no free entry for the plant sales this year but to counteract this, we as a branch have decided to refund the entry fee to anyone that purchases more than R500 worth of plants on the day of the plant sales.

SO PLEASE DIARISE EASTER PLANT SALES: FRIDAY 3 APRIL AND SATURDAY 4 APRIL .

NATIONAL BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

The National Botanical Society of South Africa will be having a Special General Meeting towards the end of April for approval to register as a Non-Profit Company (NPC) with members and affiliated members. The Memorandum of Incorporation of the NPC has been approved in principle by the members of the National Botanical Society.

The National Botanical Society of South Africa will become a Non-Profit Company with all the benefits that a company structure gives one and should give funders of the Botanical Society greater security that their funds are being well managed and well looked after.

I believe we are 99% of the way to approving this new structure.

WEATHER

Just when we thought that we were easing into Autumn, Week 11 has been a shocker when it comes to heat, with temperatures in excess of 35°C being recorded on Wednesday 11 March in Betty's Bay. Added to this there was a major power outage to a large portion of Betty's Bay, so no air conditioning or fans to help one in this heatwave!

Whether one believes in global warming or not, one thing for sure is that the world is getting warmer. 2024 is officially the hottest year on record exceeding 2023 to become the warmest in World Metrological Organization (WMO) data sets. Global temperatures in 2024 were approximately 1.55°C above preindustrial levels driven by exceptional land and sea surface temperatures. The last eleven years (2015 to 2025) are the warmest on record. In 2025 alone, 388 weather stations with at least 40 years of data broke the all-time heat records.

February's rainfall was unseasonally high at 191mm and March to date is 40mm. (Written on 11 March)

Betty's Bay Rainfall 2015 to 2025 Harold Porter National Garden

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Jan	42	74	77	47	45	93	17	7	54	24	33	53	47
Feb	28	23	18	54	27	38	30	19	85	31	24	191	34
Mar	28	132	23	62	119	13	187	41	173	34	43	40*	78
Apr	14	71	26	88	34	51	12	32	68	137	27		51
May	56	35	6	90	71	67	263	90	263	31	153		102
Jun	134	167	119	157	104	161	213	212	277	133	202		171
Jul	246	144	110	84	195	168	211	91	126	391	195		178
Aug	134	110	148	188	67	196	193	119	89	219	111		143
Sep	29	104	51	113	140	100	33	44	232	71	61		92
Oct	71	33	72	28	12	84	124	14	65	30	28		53
Nov	45	12	140	59	61	127	69	25	38	38	7		61
Dec	18	32	10	21	61	39	125	89	34	26	29		46
Annual Total	845	937	800	991	936	1137	1477	783	1504	1165	913	284*	1058

***To Date**

HAROLD PORTER BOOK AND CRAFT SHOP

The shop continues to perform well, and while February results were not great at least they were a few percentage points higher than the previous year.

Every week we add new lines into the shop and remove some, so come and have a browse as there are some beautiful items in the shop at present plus a very wide range of environmental books.

Book launches: On Saturday 21 March Tim Lundy launched his updated and revised version of his dad's book, "*Lundy's Best Walks in the Cape Peninsula*". This has been a bestseller in the bookshop.

Saturday 11th April 2026 at 10h30 for 11am:

Eugene Moll will present *Sappi Tree Spotting Cape – Coast to Kalahari*. As a previous chairperson of the Botanical Society, it will be interesting to hear him tell us not only about the book that he co-authored, but also to hear some other perspectives from him.

Saturday 9 May 2026 at 10h30 for 11am:

Author Ian Glenn will tell us about his book, *The First Safari*. This book tells us how for a quarter of a century a South African researcher searched for Levillant's Travel Notebooks and tried to solve the puzzles and mysteries of Levillant's life and times. Levillant was our greatest naturalist. This book is not only intended for would-be researchers but also for people interested in the bush and birding.

FRIENDS OF THE HAROLD PORTER GARDENS

Viv and Jenny and their merry band of gardeners continue to do great work in Harold Porter Gardens despite the exceptionally hot weather at present. Their work is not without challenges, but they remain positive.

We appeal to anyone who has a great love for the Harold Porter National Gardens in the Kogelberg Biosphere to assist Viv and Jenny with the gardening activities.

The next gardening sessions are on:

Thursday 2 April at 8.30am with Viv von der Heyden and her team.

Tuesday 7 April at 8.30am with Jenny Pattinson and her team

If you would like to volunteer, all you need to do is pitch up at the Harold Porter Gardens at the designated times. We have the tools and protective clothing, we just desperately need your hands to help.

KOGELBERG GARDEN CIRCLE

In March the Garden Circle members enjoyed a visit to Luce and Leon Sieker's garden in Jock's Bay. The Siekers first acquired their property forty years ago, as a holiday home. The garden consisted of a soggy water-logged lawn, a few towering New Zealand Christmas trees and, now and then a modest flower bed, trying its best in the wind.

For decades, they lived with this status quo. Then in 2021, change began when Luce asked a simple question - what about designing a garden that incorporated the abundance of water, instead of "fighting" it? In a series of serendipitous events, the transformation began.

Five years in the making, the garden now follows the natural water contours, interspersed with ponds that catch the light and plants that feels both intentional and natural.

And it all started with simple question – what if the water is our friend?

Magriet Brink added to the knowledge of all with her talk titled "*The Friends and Foes in our Garden*."

Convenor: Galia Manicom Cell: 082 963 3804

HACKS

Betty's Bay Hack No. 74. See Rob's report above. The next Betty's Bay hack will be on **Saturday 4 April**.

Convener: Rob Boyd 082 567 8858

Hangklip Hardcore Hackers (No. 73):

Chris Geldenhuys reported on the Hardcore Hackers February activities as follows:

"There were 6 hack opportunities in February with 197 man days. (Interesting to note the same amount of man days in January but one less hack opportunity in February. Well done team!). Chris goes on to report "With the approach this year of addressing the pine infestation before it becomes uncontrollable, there is tension in keeping up the pace! Weather patterns do not help in this regard. While it was one of the wettest Februaries in a long time, I have tried to shuffle the hack days around the scheduled rain patterns, but this becomes very complicated. Then it was decided that in future we would stick to the scheduled hack days and

if it is raining on the morning of the hack, we would postpone the hack for an hour and if it was still raining then the hack would be cancelled. The great news is the Sugar Bird Hangklip Work Team is up and running and they started work on Monday 9 March at the location of the OM Water Purification plant. This is really exciting news and will help us greatly in our control of alien vegetation.

We have not proceeded to Phase 2 of the Pine Hack yet. Currently we have obtained permission from Rene to eradicate the pines on his smallholding. Once we have cleared that plot, we have closed the perimeter between the small holdings and the core of the Biosphere. Then we should be ready to cross the R44 and proceed with Phase 2 of the Pine Hack Project.

So, we have gained momentum in February to fulfill our overall goal, which is to prevent the influx of aliens into the precious Biosphere/Reserve. **Convener: Chris Geldenhuys 082 900 8299.**

Pringle Bay Hack:

Chris Geldenhuys reported on the Pringle Bay Hack No. 219 held on 28 February 2026.

41 hackers reported for duty and were prepared to address the Rooikrans and Myrtle invasion on the verges of Peak and Buffels Roads.

"The hack might not have been as enjoyable as a one-place hack, but this is also necessary. Aliens are steadily creeping in over vast areas and if this is not addressed soon, they will take over the whole village. We are just happy that we can do something about it. One of these days we will once again take on the Rooikrans challenge in the Hangklip Valley.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to all hackers who are always available to commit in the day's work once a month. I know it is not always so much fun and easy, but we all know it is necessary. Besides the fact that we owe it to nature, the mere existence of the aliens in our area is due to human intervention. It is also good for us in terms of the fresh air and a good workout! Thank you for everyone's commitment! The next Pringle Bay Hack will be on **Saturday 25 April. Convener: Chris Geldenhuys: 082 900 8299**

Rooi Els Hack:

The Rooi Els Hack takes place on the **second Saturday of every month**, led by Mike Christelis. I will be reporting on the success of the Rooiels March Hack in the April Newsletter.

Next hack will be on **Saturday 11 April. Convenor: Mike Christelis 082 467 2795**

CREW

The Kogelberg Crew Team continues to do wonderful work in searching for endangered or near endangered species, recording the numbers and locations, which all helps with conservation of the fynbos in the Kogelberg Biosphere.

One of the sad facts of life is that Crew cannot report on where they have found endangered species or even species of concerned status as within days of them reporting where they found these plants then they are stolen. A truly sad state of affairs.

To Gerda Theron and her team, thank you very much. Keep up the good work.

MONTHLY TALKS

Step online into the Kleinmond Biosphere and experience the remarkable wealth of our fynbos diversity in its natural environment. At the March monthly talk Vic Brink presented a newly launched website dedicated to the Kleinmond Biosphere which invites nature lovers to discover the extraordinary diversity of the fynbos in our region. Whether you are a botanist, a weekend walker or simply someone who appreciates the beauty of nature, the site offers valuable insights and inspiration.

KOGELBERG BRANCH MONTHLY WALK

On Saturday 21 March Tim Atwell led a group of enthusiasts along the Silversands and Doornbaai beaches to the coastal path in Sea Farm to see the blooming of the *Brunsvigia orientalis* and *Haemanthus coccinea*, a most enjoyable outing.

CONCLUSION

The financial year end of Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa is 31 March. We look back with great satisfaction on what has been achieved this past year. We have truly remarkable volunteers in the Hangklip Region that give freely of their time and expertise to promote the cause of conserving the fynbos in the Kogelberg Biosphere. To all of you, a big, big thank you. We truly appreciate your involvement and your leadership.

When we started the bookshop 4.5 years ago, I don't think any of us realised what a tiger we were releasing and while we do seem to have the tiger by its tail now and it seems to be in a very good place, it has become a multi-million business with all the challenges that this brings. However, the bookshop has also been able to fund over R200 000 of conservation projects this past year, and it has truly enabled us to help conserve the fynbos wherever we can. To Paddy Dall, Janet Meyer and all the other wonderful volunteers that work in the bookshop, a big thank you.

Peter Dall
082 784 4326

TRIBUTE TO PETER BERRISFORD



For over fifty years the Berrisford home in Bass Road, Betty's Bay has been a focal point of community life and conservation. At the heart of the home, Peter and Merrilee Berrisford have hosted countless committee meetings, social gatherings and transformative initiatives that have played a significant part in shaping the character of Betty's Bay.

After a successful career in chemical engineering, in retirement Peter Berrisford applied his active and inquisitive mind to understanding and advocating for both the natural environment and the social well-being of Betty's Bay.

Once Peter had decided on a cause in either environmental or community matters he was tireless in promoting it until the matter was settled. Former Ward Councillor for Betty's Bay, Lisel Krige, put it well when she said that 'Peter has been one of Betty's Bay's best known warriors, fearless and unrelenting in his pursuit of fair and better outcomes in many matters.'

Peter's long service as treasurer of the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of SA remains richly appreciated. In addition, Peter's advocacy for a fair and better national Botanical Society of South Africa was rewarded when the Council of the Botanical Society of South Africa awarded him

Honorary Life Membership of the Botanical Society of South Africa, a distinction not awarded to many.

Peter's greatest pride and joy was his family. Peter and Merrilee's family of four children, their spouses and grandchildren, although not permanently resident, remain enthusiastic property owners of and frequent visitors to Betty's Bay.

Betty's Bay will forever be richer for Peter's life among us.

Tim Attwell

Thank you, Tim, for your beautiful tribute. Our sincere condolences with Merrilee and her family. May your many happy memories of Peter soften the pain of your loss.

The following article is written by Peter Norton, resident of Jock's Bay, who suffered a stroke in 2008 which affected the right side of his body and his speech. Undaunted, Peter, a man of great courage, determination and tenacity and a great zest for life, now regularly runs the Betty's Bay Park Run, is a regular Hardcore Hacker and has just completed his 13th Argus/Cape Town Cycle Tour.

2026 CAPE TOWN CYCLE TOUR

This was my 13th Cape Town Cycle Tour since my stroke.

I was excited, a little bit nervous, but I was determined to go for it. As the event approached, I had lots of encouragement from family and friends. Jenny, my sister, and Charles, her husband, were staying at *Bietou* (B2) in Cliff Road, and were very encouraging. I wanted to ride the Tour in my seventies - I am 72. I started training twice a week in July last year, riding for about one hour at a time, then extending it to two hours and eventually to three hours, once a week. This helped me to get saddle-ready and strengthened my legs. I always ride with a heart monitor to keep an eye on my heart rate.



In the weeks before the race I spoke to two different groups of people about my ride - the Hard Core Hackers that I hack with every Wednesday, and the congregation at St. Francis Chapel in Betty's Bay. I had determined that my ride would be a fundraiser for the chapel. There were a few people in the congregation whose husbands had also had strokes, so they could identify with me and my difficulty in speaking. I explained that after my stroke in 2008, I had no problem with balance and riding a bicycle. However, because the right side of my body was affected, my right foot had to be strapped on to the pedal otherwise it would slip off. I didn't have much feeling in my right arm, and my hand continually slipped off the handle-bar, but I still persevered. I had always been very active and this was something I knew I could do.

I started the race on Sunday 8 March at 7.48 am and all went well until just past Simon's Town, when my right eye became very sore and I found it difficult to see. I stopped at an emergency roadside clinic (MEDIC) and a nurse washed out my eye. I carried on cycling, but had to repeat this later and had a doctor look at my eye. This got me thinking that, although I was determined to finish this race, my eyesight was more important than riding in another Cycle Tour. This was going to be my last one. Although it took

me 7hr10min, I felt proud that I had finished.

When I think back over the past 13 Cycle Tours, the following stages stand out in my mind:

- Muizenberg – riding along the road with the sea on my left-hand side.
- Glencairn – seeing Tony (my son with Cerebral Palsy) at Dixies, waving and making a big noise to get my attention.
- Simon's Town – lots of people encouraging the cyclists.
- Boulders – didn't see the penguins this time – last time there were many.
- Just past Boulders - saw at least 200 cormorants.
- Smitswinkel Bay – having been cycling into a 20-km headwind, then turning a corner and suddenly cycling with the wind!
- Scarborough – “screaming” along down the hill, and seeing the sea, and having a feeling of contentment.
- Chapman's Peak Drive – seeing the sprays far below. Exhausted at the end of this section.
- Hout Bay – after the climb up Chapman's Peak, it was great to be going very fast downhill to the town. I notice the leopard statue keeping watch!
- Suikerbossie – going up this hill was a little bit of a strain.
- Camps Bay – watching the signs showing how many kilometres there were to go; got to one kilometre and I got to the finish line!

Outlines of my talks to the two different groups about riding in the 2026 Cape Town Cycle Tour.

Hangklip Hardcore Hardcore Group

(Presented to 40 people)

- 1) I had a 'stroke' 17 year ago, after I ran into a car.
- 2) Which affected my speech and the right side of my body.
- 3) Early on, I wanted to do 2 things:
 - a) SCUBA, (You don't talk underwater!)

b) Cycling.

4) However, I was determined to ride in the Cape Town Cycle Tour, But for the first 3 Tours my right-hand and foot were strapped to the bike.

5) I am 72 year old, will be riding 109 km on 8 March, the 13th time since my stroke.

Leader of the Hack, Chris Geldenhuys, responded:

"Peter Norton, your enthusiasm is mind-blowing! Your brief has touched us all deeply, and be assured that you'll be in our minds when you take on the Cape Town Cycle Tour on the 8th!"

St Francis Anglican Chapel

(Presented to 60 people)

The fundraising team asked if they could get people to sponsor my ride to help raise funds for paving for the Chapel. My talk touched many hearts, especially those who had family members with strokes. My participation in the cycle tour was well-advertised and raised R 8666! I had a lot of encouragement before and on the day, with many messages of congratulations afterwards.

Rachel, my wife, remembers waiting at the finish line for one of the many races:

"I knew it would be a while before Peter finished, but I kept a look-out for the yellow and red top he was wearing. Of course, there were many other people riding with the same top on! I had to keep concentrating. Suddenly I heard, 'Hello!' shouted by a cyclist on the far side – it was Peter! What joy I felt when I saw him, especially after the difficult ride. My heart was filled with love, and I felt so proud of him and his determination to finish the race. Just amazing!"

Peter Norton

And indeed, we who know you are very proud of your achievements too, Peter! Well done! With your positive attitude and your amazing spirit, you are an example to us all.

And finally,

A curious visitor to Shelly Beach

I dared myself to swim in the icy waters of Shelley Beach on Tuesday 24 March and was happily surprised to find a very small dried Shortspined porcupinefish (*Diodon liturosus*) which someone had obviously picked up and placed on a rock safe from the rising tide. It was upside down and looked like a spiny ping pong ball but on turning it over it looked more like a small rodent stretched out over ... what? ... a spiny ping pong ball....?



As a defence mechanism the Shortspined porcupinefish inflate their bodies by swallowing large amounts of water in order to look larger and to help erect their spines. Their flesh contains tetrodotoxin, a deadly poison, produced by bacteria which live within them.

They inhabit tropical and subtropical waters on coral and rocky reefs, as well as shallow lagoons. They hide during the day and feed at night using their beaks to feed on, amongst other prey,



crustaceans and molluscs. They grow up to half a metre in length. Our specimen was obviously very young as it could fit into the palm on one's hand, if one cared to touch it.

To whomever first placed the fish on the rock, thank you for leaving it there so that others could also examine this unusual visitor from the ocean. According to the distribution map in *Two Oceans – A guide to the marine life of southern Africa*, by GM Branch et al, they are not usually found as far south as Betty's Bay. Perhaps it was the upwelling that brought in the icy waters – as well as the shoals of sardines along our coastline - that trapped it here?

Reference:

<https://www.aquarium.co.za/animals/shortspine-porcupinefish>



And now, all that remains is to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Easter and Passover weekend and enjoyment of the autumnal weather. If you have visitors, or guests in your holiday lets, please remind them that

dogs need to be kept on leads in public spaces and that outside lights should not disturb the neighbours. And, most importantly, **to drive responsibly and at lower speeds on our roads!**

Warm regards
Vivienne von der Heyden
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