



Betty's Bay Ratepayers Association (BBRA)

Newsletter February 2026



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR:

We, as the new BBRA Committee for 2026, want to thank Wayne Jackson as the outgoing Chairman for all his hard work and dedication serving the Betty's Bay community with distinction.. Wayne is leaving "*big shoes*" to fill. We are fortunate that he is still part of the BBRA committee as the Neighbourhood Watch portfolio incumbent, thereby still available to guide the committee with his valuable experience. Thank you, Wayne, for everything, but most of all for still being part of us. We appreciate you!

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.

The following advantages of being a BBRA member need to be noted:

- 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 at the Overstrand Municipality, Community Policing Forum, DFFE, Cape Nature, SAPS, Ward 10 committee, the Stony Point Protected Area Advisory Committee (PAAC)
- Access to the monthly BBRA Newsletter, active Facebook page, Instagram and BBRA website
- 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 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 Main Beach and Silversands
- The renovation of the ablution blocks at 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.

Ward 10 Committee: The following from Cl. Theresa Els regarding projects undertaken by Overstrand Local Municipality in Betty's Bay:

- **Pipe replacement project:** The existing contract will be completed by end March 2026. The contractor is still busy replacing a small section of pipe in Wallers Road in Betty's Bay. R9 005 537.99 was allocated for the pipe replacement project in Betty's Bay in the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Budgets.
- **Water Treatment Works:** A contractor was appointed and is busy on site. The project cost is R64 257 607.26 (excluding VAT). The Water Treatment Works supply water to Rooi-Els, Pringle Bay, and Betty's Bay. The contract period ends 2027, if all goes according to plan.

BBRA Portfolios: Please note the different Portfolios under the BBRA. Any relevant day-to-day issues can be forwarded to the BBRA's email address bettybayratepayers@gmail.com

Amund Beneke
Chairman

News from the various portfolio heads follows:

TOWN PLANNING AND PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

Roads:

- The Grader at Kleinmond is not operational. It is in for repairs but will only be operational again in 3 months – hopefully!.
- A contractor has been appointed to assist with the grading of the roads in Betty's Bay. No time frame has been given for this process to start.
- In the meantime, potholes are filled and rolled as far as possible. However, gravel is limited.
- Most of the first 500 cubic metres has already been used in January/mid-February 2026. Another 500 cubic meters has been ordered and should be delivered soon.

Storm Water:

- The Kleinmond team is busy with storm water drainage systems, with Pearl and Luckhoff Roads the priority.

Amund Beneke

BETTY'S BAY EMERGENCY SUPPORT TEAM (BEST)

BEST took a much needed break from 16 Dec 2025 to 5 January 2026. Despite this, 4 call-outs were attended to during this time giving a total of 8 call-outs for December 2025. Eighty seven call-outs were attended to during the 2025 year.

In January 2026, 6 call-outs were received. There were 2 medical patients who required transport by ambulance to hospital. Of the 4 injuries, one needed transport by ambulance to hospital, one was treated and then sent to the OEC for sutures, 2 required on site treatment only.

A most generous donation of 4 patient monitors complete with their plug-in attachments was received from Dr Cornelius von der Heyden of Cure Day Hospitals in December 2025. Two new rechargeable batteries were needed and purchased and one monitor has been sent away for servicing. Once it is returned, we plan to send our existing monitor in for servicing.



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 of kit:

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

REPORT ON SAFETY IN BETTY'S BAY DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON.

1. The overall trend for the village is exceptionally positive, with traditional crime reaching record lows thanks to a robust, tech-forward security network.

2. Crime is "Almost Zero". The report highlights a significant decrease in physical crime, crediting the peace during the holiday period to the collaborative efforts of local agencies:
"Crime is almost zero... With your help, we had a good three months in Betty's Bay."

3. The Strength of Overstrand Structures: The quiet period is not a stroke of luck but a result of an organized security infrastructure. The move toward advanced technology and inter-agency communication has created a formidable barrier against criminal activity.

Surveillance Dominance: The BBNW has moved away from active, primarily patrolling to camera surveillance with a total of 148 cameras across the village.

3.1. Rapid Response Fleet: There are typically 2 Sandown Bay Security vehicles, 2 F-ADT vehicles, one CULIVE vehicle, and one Neighbourhood Watch vehicle on duty."

3.2. Unified Communication: We have 15 radios that link F-ADT in Pringle Bay, Pringle Bay Street Watch, F-ADT Betty's, Sandown Bay Security Betty's, and various BBNW reps.

4. Community Responsibility: The "Eyes and Ears": Technical infrastructure only works when people use it. The community's commitment to reporting incidents and staying connected through the Watch has been the secret ingredient to this success. By taking ownership of their surroundings, residents have turned the village into a hard target for criminals.

5. Collaborative Oversight. The success of the Dec '25 to mid-Jan '26 period is attributed to the seamless integration of community leadership and official law enforcement.

We thank our Councillor, Theresa Els, SAPS, Law Enforcement, Traffic, DFFE, and the security companies for their oversight and assistance.

6. Current Focus Areas. While physical break-ins have plummeted, the report notes that the community must remain vigilant regarding "soft" crimes and social nuisances:

6.1. Electronic and Service Fraud: Scammers posing as "driveway specialists" or "compost sellers" are the primary threat, often using bullying tactics after taking deposits.

6.2. Poaching challenges: Abalone poaching remains a concern, with a noted need for stronger judicial support to back up the work done by anti-poaching agencies.

6.3. Social and domestic Nuisances:

6.3.1. Speeding on Clarence Drive and municipal roads.

6.3.2. Aggressive begging from non-residents.

6.3.3. Unease regarding undocumented individuals living on building sites.

6.3.4. The insistence of some on having spotlights on during the night.

6.3.5. Littering and dumping building material along our roads.

6.3.6. Problems with domestic pets: barking dogs and cats hunting at night.

6.3.7. Party houses where drunkenness, swearing, and loud music are the order of the day.

6.3.8. Dogs off leads and owners not picking up their dog's poo.

6.3.9. Overgrown verges create unsafe spaces within the village.

7. In summary, the exceptional safety we have enjoyed over this season is a direct result of the synergy between our dedicated residents and our professional partners. I truly believe that we can continue to build on this successful collaboration with SAPS, Law Enforcement, and all agencies involved. By working together within our established community framework, we can thoughtfully address and iron out our remaining social and domestic nuisances, ensuring that Betty's Bay remains a harmonious, secure, and peaceful home for everyone. Thank you for your continued vigilance and commitment to our village.

Wayne Jackson

DRAMA AND THEATRE ARTS



I am a newbie on the BBRA committee, and I have a freshly created portfolio – "Drama and Theatre Arts".

As a strategic BBRA project, the portfolio is a heritage initiative to promote diverse community cultural offerings. And I request your assistance!

We wish to establish a register of the cultural offerings currently available in Betty's Bay. Please contact me on email at bettybayratepayers@gmail.com, or on my cell phone (083 427 3706) – by call, SMS, or WhatsApp - to inform me of any directly or indirectly drama or theatre related offerings. We wish to know about you in order to be of assistance to you and to our community.

Personally, I have recently started a weekly physical theatre class, and I am planning to start a weekly drama (in the broad sense) class soon. Working towards performances would be lovely, but mainly I wish to create a space for individuals to explore creative ways to use one's voice and body, and to express thoughts and ideas; and I plan to include enhancing skills in reading, storytelling (especially to children) and public speaking skills.

Ilona Frege

And now for reports from other community groups doing sterling work in and around our village:



1. EVENTS DURING JANUARY 2026

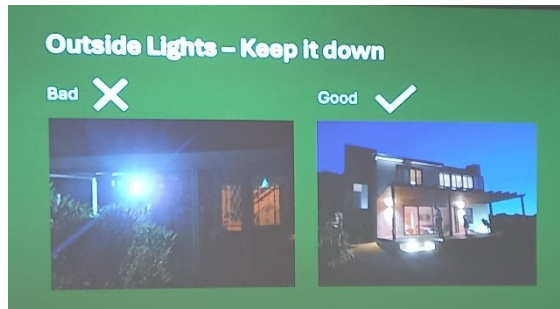
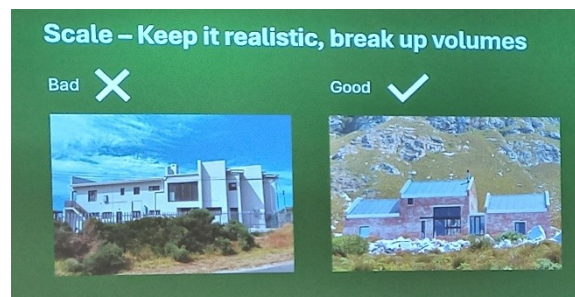
BBC4thSATURDAY: JANUARY 25 - Elements influencing the character of the built environment



Raymond Smith, a Betty's Bay resident for 22 years, a Built Environment Specialist, an Accredited Heritage Practitioner and a Registered Architectural Professional, took us on an interesting and fun video journey of the "The good, the bad and the ugly" of the built environment in Betty's Bay. What a variety of housing designs there are in Betty's Bay!

He then looked at some elements of design, illustrating the concepts with "good" and "not so good" examples of houses in Betty's Bay:

- Boundary walls – permeable for wildlife movement
- Security – keep it invisible
- Waste pipes – keep them out of sight
- Driveway treatment – keep it permeable
- Scale – keep it realistic and break it into volumes
- Proportions and fenestrations – keep it sensible
- Form – keep the geometry simple and refrain from exotic styles
- Exterior rendering and colours – keep blending in
- Landscaping and vegetation – keep it indigenous
- Outside lights – keep them down
- Contextual relationships - keep in touch



As you drive around Betty's Bay there are many houses that have been built in a "biosphere friendly" manner. These houses blend in so well with the environment and take their neighbours and the flora and fauna into consideration. On the other hand, there are many examples of houses that are very "out of context" for the Kogelberg Biosphere. Some of these are a mix of huge and out of scale houses, very bright and excessive outside lights, solid boundary walls, electric fencing, gardens devoid of indigenous vegetation and hardened or impermeable driveways

Thanks, Raymond, for a very enlightening presentation. We look at houses with new eyes!

• PENGUIN RELEASE AT STONY POINT

SANCCOB saves seabirds made use of the great weather conditions on 14 January to release 18 African Penguins and one cormorant at Stony Point.

Some of the birds were adults that SANCCOB had rehabilitated and which were now ready for release. Others were younger birds which had been raised at SANCCOB.

Well done to SANCCOB and **CapeNature** for all their work in supporting the critically endangered African Penguin.



Use this link to watch the first 15 penguins exiting their travel boxes and heading for the sea.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbjndeYhell>

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE A BBC PENGUIN-PAL VOLUNTEER?

It is a great opportunity to help the African Penguins at Stony Point!

In February 2024, we put out a call for residents to join the BBC Penguin-Pals to assist CapeNature and SANCCOB in their work with the critically endangered African Penguins at Stony Point.

An enthusiastic group of volunteers underwent a short “Drivers” training by SANCCOB at Stony Point. Most of them also chose to complete some additional training to be First Responders, at SANCCOB in Table View.

Since then, these enthusiastic BBC Penguin-Pals have been amazing in their passion and willingness to respond to call-outs from Stony Point staff when they have located injured or sick birds.

Once the staff have secured the birds in SANCCOB transport boxes, our volunteer’s drive to Somerset West to the meeting point with a SANCCOB driver, who then transports the birds to the SANCCOB centre.

The BBC Penguin-Pals have completed about 100 trips – transporting adults, juveniles, chicks, eggs or carcasses. Each trip gives the injured or sick birds, or eggs that have required removal, a chance of treatment and survival. This is vital to help the declining numbers of the African Penguin. Every penguin counts!



During last year, some of our Penguin-Pals relocated from Betty’s Bay, **so we are opening up another opportunity for additional volunteers.**

You could volunteer to be a “Driver” or you can join a new BBC Penguin-Pals initiative to help educate visitors at Stony Point, and keep a watchful eye for unsuitable behaviour that may stress the penguins. Volunteers will have basic training and wear identification vests or T-shirts so the public is aware that they are BBC Penguin-Pals working with CapeNature.

We also have volunteers who help load hacked material and transport it to the colony for nesting material, and who help bundle this material to make it easier for the staff to carry into the colony.

Are you interested in helping?

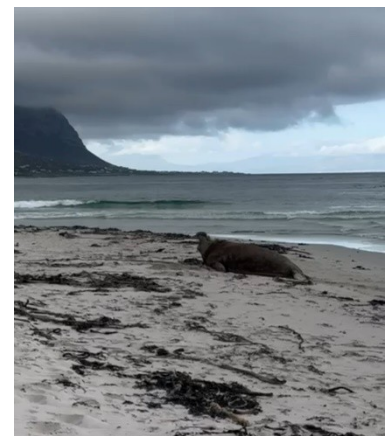
Please email bettybayconservancy@gmail.com or WhatsApp 079 7530166 and tell us how you would like to be involved with the BBC Penguin-Pals.

Carol Clark

2. WHAT HAPPENED TO SOME OF THE WILDLIFE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON?

Dappat visits Betty’s Bay

After Bakkies spent a lengthy stay in Betty’s Bay recently while he underwent his moult, we had a brief visit from another elephant seal called Dappat. He had a tag from a previous visit to Dappat se Gat.



Thanks to Renee and Johan for keeping an eye on Dappat to ensure his safety and that of the people walking past him.

UPDATE ON THE OYSTERCATCHER CHICKS AT MAIN BEACH



30 JANUARY:

Our 2 chicks have survived after a hectic holiday season, which coincides with the breeding season. This puts the Oystercatchers under additional threat as humans and dogs invade their space.

The chicks are now 38 days old and are starting to resemble their parents. Chicks usually fly (fledge) when they reach two-thirds of the adult mass and when they are 40 - 45 days old. They are still vulnerable until they are able to fly.

Chicks are dependent on their parents for food for many months while they learn to forage. It takes up to 6 months after fledging for chicks to leave the parents' territory for nursery areas.

As Oystercatchers are territorial, they will remain and defend their area for the rest of their lives, up to 20 years. This means that we can expect the same pair to breed on Main beach next summer! This pair raised one chick last season on Main beach.

An added bonus was spotting a White-fronted Plover chick in the same area on Main beach.

A huge thank you to the many caring people who have observed the signs and kept their dogs leashed. People helped in many ways and showed an interest in saving our shorebirds. We appreciate your help and concern.

Watch the parent feeding their chick:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oR0aKuWZ7UI>



3 FEBRUARY:

Sadly, the breeding pair have now lost one of their chicks. The chick was 42 days old and close to fledging. There is no evidence available to understand or explain what may have caused the disappearance. It could be drowning due to the recent high tides, (although chicks can swim), natural predation, or even an attack by a dog off leash.

On a more positive note, the remaining chick is now 52 days old and able to fly, which makes it less vulnerable. This chick will remain with its parents for another 2 - 4 months. It relies on the parents for feeding until its beak strengthens enabling it to pry open mussels and limpets independently. The chick will then fly to nursery areas along the coast of Namibia or Angola and remain there for 2 - 3 years until it returns to its birthplace.



Lenore and Duncan Watermeyer, Betty's Bay Oystercatcher Monitors

3. SPEEDING ON THE R44

SLOW DOWN FOR LIFE ON THE R44!

ANOTHER WILDLIFE FATALITY ON CLARENCE DRIVE - A LACTATING PORCUPINE ... some upsetting pictures

This morning I went for my walk just after 5:30am. The air was clean, the sea noisy, and dampness everywhere after the wonderful rain.

When I had set out on my walk, I had noticed something lying on the pavement. I initially thought it was a black bag or something. However, on getting closer, I started seeing the quills. Then I realised what it was.



I stopped to look, feeling miserable, with sadness and a lot muttering. I then continued on my way, seeing that the porcupine was stone dead. On my return, I was not going to stop to look more, as who really wants to have to see that torn up body again, but I wanted to pick up some quills as a reminder, and also to see where she had been hit.

I stopped again at the very distressing sight, that I had seen on the way out, and THAT was when the horror came - the nauseating, frightful, miserable realisation that there was a baby there. It was just big enough to hold in one hand.



And not just a baby but a tiny porcupette frantically nudging at its mother's teats trying to get her to give milk! It was butting its head repeatedly on its mother so that it could get at the milk. The porcupette was damp, shivering and clearly hungry. It persisted and eventually it found a nipple and latched on. Squirming, the little one kept sucking away. I am not sure if it got any milk.

Video of the porcupette trying to drink: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYy8w5epD2s>

The porcupette was not there on the way out, so it must have been hiding in the bushes and in hunger and desperation came out later.

The problem was that the mother, lying mostly on her chest, had been torn apart after being hit by a vehicle. She was dead. Her intestines were strung across the road in a big loop. The ribs on her back were visible, some seemingly missing, because her back skin, muscles and quills had been torn off by the impact. There were quills all over the road. Her little offspring, the porcupette, being so small, was not hit.

From the blood, quills and bits of flesh, it looked like the mother had been hit in the middle of the road! Had the driver tried to swerve to miss and unfortunately turned the same way as she ran? Or maybe, as some "low life" people do, purposefully aimed for her and hit her. Who knows, only that driver. Maybe the driver did not

even see it! However, they will find chunks of porcupine across the car, as there was a lot of flesh and quills missing. Will it make them think about what they did? Maybe, maybe not.

Our righteous indignation kicks in ...

Maybe the driver is a nature lover who was just travelling too fast to avoid the mother porcupine. How many of us drive too fast at times, on Clarence, and other roads, to be able to miss wildlife? How many birds, tortoises, rabbits, mongoose, genets, frogs, lizards etc. have we all hit?

This must make us pause and think - Me!

What am I doing? How am I harming the nature around me? From wheeled killing machines, to invasive plants, chemicals, unnecessary plant clearing, wasting water and on and on. It is easy to be indignant and point fingers at others, but are we striving to be better ourselves?

The Wildlife Rescue Centre has the porcupette. Support and help them! Help the poor animals who have ended up there because of US!

David, a concerned Betty's bay resident

SLOW DOWN FOR LIFE ON THE R44!

Yesterday, we collected the body of a guinea fowl from the side of the R44. He had been hand-raised at the **Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue and Training Center**, carefully nurtured over weeks until he was strong enough to return to the wild. We released him onto our property only days ago and he quickly earned the nickname "Cheeky" for wandering into our kitchen to steal birdseed. Like all our released birds, he wore a small SAFRING band on his leg for identification. He was killed right outside our gate.

Sadly, this is not an isolated tragedy. He is part of a growing and deeply troubling pattern along this stretch of the R44 between Betty's Bay and Pringle Bay that involves all species.

A Road through a Living Landscape

Since we began operating in 2024, our centre has become acutely aware of the number of wild animals injured or killed along this road. Our data shows a constant increase in the list of species found on the section of the R44 between Rooi Els and Betty's Bay. We see approximately 2 to 3 cases of road kill per week on our section of the R44, including mongoose, porcupines, Grysbok, and many more. The data we have collected points to an unsustainable situation. It is a priority to address this for the sake of the biodiversity of the Kogelberg.

The R44 cuts through the heart of the Kogelberg Biosphere, a national heritage site recognised for its extraordinary biodiversity. This is not an ordinary road. It passes through one of the most ecologically sensitive regions in the country — a place where wildlife must move freely to survive.

According to the Endangered Wildlife Trust, road deaths are not simply the result of reckless driving. They are the consequence of roads fragmenting once-connected habitats. Animals are forced to cross in search of food, mates, or refuge from fires and seasonal changes. Add high speeds and limited visibility at night and survival becomes a gamble.



Left: A spotted Eagle owl: it was the third owl to be killed in the same area in four days

Right: another loss on the R44



Small to medium-sized mammals — genets, Cape clawless otters, honey badgers and antelopes are among the most frequent victims. Reptiles such as tortoises and snakes suffer heavy losses. Birds of prey are struck while hunting near road verges. We may wince as we pass a body on the tar, but too often we drive on.

The Human Risk

This stretch of the R44 carries a 100 km/h speed limit. From Rooi Els through to Betty's Bay, vehicles accelerate through blind bends and narrow sections of road. There have already been human fatalities along this corridor.

Our rescue centre's entrance lies along this very stretch. Although this entrance gate was rarely used, it is now in daily use by staff, veterinarians, volunteers, contractors and members of the public who respond to wildlife emergencies. The entrance is not clearly visible. Vehicles turning in or out must navigate fast-moving traffic on a partially blind rise, and we have already experienced near misses.

The uncomfortable question is this: how many human lives — or animal lives — must be lost before speed management is reconsidered on this section of road?

Michelle Watson, Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue and Training Center

CONCERN ABOUT THE STATE OF BABOON MANAGEMENT

On 31 January, a well-organised and peaceful protest took place in Betty's Bay regarding the current state of the baboon management.

The Betty's Bay Baboon Action Group (BBBAG) agrees with well-disciplined, intelligent 'monitoring' using the 'shepherd not shoot' method as nobody wants baboons in houses. Also vuvuzelas to warn of baboon whereabouts and flagging on the busy R44.

What is critical to understand is that eliminating aggression leads to:

- Calmer baboons,
- Less hungry, thirsty/desperate baboons if they expend less energy from not being chased.
- A more cohesive troop, allowing for the proper functioning of the vuvuzela system.
- No trespassing on private property by monitors, causing less outrage from residents.
- A return to the situation where community division was diminishing.

PROTEST AGAINST THE MISMANAGEMENT OF BABOONS



Please join us

**31st January 2026
10am to midday**

PARKING IN BROADWITH RD

NEXT TO HAROLD PORTER

Betty's Bay

Enquiries 060 656 7341



Betty's Bay Baboon Action Group

UNSIGHTLY RUBBISH BINS ON THE SCENIC CLARENCE DRIVE, R44



The Rooi Els Conservancy (REC) has taken up the issue of the messy and broken bins on Clarence Drive.

Over the past months, the bins were not been emptied regularly and the overflowing waste is blown into the vegetation and the sea. The bins also attract the baboons, which puts them in danger on the R44.

Recently, the REC Chairperson, Ralph Pina, was interviewed on Lunch with Pippa Hudson on CapeTalk to highlight this problem. His suggestion was to remove the bins and make this a bin-free zone so that the public takes their waste with them to dispose of it in a suitable manner.

The City of Cape Town implemented a bin-free policy on the peninsula at tourism hotspots. Their rationale is that the bins are removed to prevent baboons from foraging, reduce illegal dumping, minimise waste-attracting wildlife, and protect scenic, environmentally sensitive landscapes.

The BBC thanks REC for their initiative in this and supports them.

4. BBC SIGNS, T-SHIRTS AND YOUTUBE

BBC SIGNS

For members who might not be aware, we have members' "Biosphere Living" signs that you can purchase to place at your house. If you have a plot that you do not intend to build on, we have a plot sign that you can purchase: "Plot purchased for the preservation of biodiversity".



OUR BBC T-SHIRTS

BBC "Every day do one small act for biodiversity" T-Shirts

We have a few small and medium BBC T-shirts left. If you would like to buy one at R260, please let me know via WhatsApp on 079 7530166 or email bettysbayconservancy@gmail.com.

BBC YOUTUBE CHANNEL

The BBC has created a YouTube account via its Gmail account.



Our first few videos are loaded and the links are in the above articles. If you have some lovely video clips relating to the biodiversity and beauty in Betty's Bay, please WhatsApp Johan on 073 5439065. He will arrange to get them from you and add them to our YouTube channel.

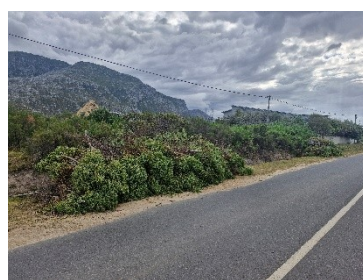
Carol Clark

Carol, thank you for your valued contribution to our BBRA newsletter. Your articles add so much interest to it!
- Ed

HACKING - The Battle for Betty's Bay: Report on Hack No 743 on 7 February 2026

Thirty-nine volunteers attended on an overcast and cool day to remove aliens from the verges along Porter Drive. I was informed by Dave Mourant that this was a record attendance. This hack coincidentally marked the 63rd anniversary of the Battle for Betty's Bay which started in February 1963. It is thanks to willing volunteers such as these that this proud tradition has continued and stood the test of time. It is also remarkable that only 14 of these monthly hacks have been missed over all these years.

Ronell and Rinze Wouda, Tanya Gorlee and Mark Edmonds were welcomed as first-time Betty's Bay hackers, as were Ash van Zuydam, Gerda Theron, Andre Deschodt and his twelve year old son, Ben of Kogelberg CREW (Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers) who were invited by seasoned hackers and fellow CREW members, Gemma and Jeremy Cronin. Their presence was to participate in the global day declared by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) calling for action to protect threatened plants. We sincerely hope that all the newbies thoroughly enjoyed their hack and will be back for many more.



The hack started at Delport Road on the western side of Betty's Bay and moved eastwards. Vehicles were shared and teams kept leap frogging as we progressed down Porter Drive, cutting, poisoning and dragging branches from the verges which in many places are fifteen metres wide.



The mid morning break was taken at 10am at the St Francis Chapel. This was thoughtfully arranged by Tim Attwell and proved to be the perfect venue. Many thanks to Tim.

Thank you as always to Dave Mourant who each month provides all that is needed for a good cup of tea or coffee, more so in this case as he had to drop everything off at the chapel at 8am as he unfortunately had to miss the hack and trek off to Stellenbosch. A huge, huge thank you to Anne and Dave for sponsoring and making four loaves of delicious egg mayo and tomato & onion sarmies, double the normal amount but eaten in half the time by the masses.

After refreshments, the hackers returned to where they had left off. By the end of the hack, 2km had been covered, up to Crassula Avenue, and 27 heaps of branches made, primarily of rooikranz but also blackwood, myrtle and *Acacia elata*.

The aftermath was enjoyed by all in the chapel courtyard. This was another very productive hack with amazing volunteers who find where they fit in best and simply get stuck in and get the job done.

Our thanks as always to our hacking neighbours from Kleinmond, Rooi Els and Pringle Bay who put in a special effort to attend – Christine Coupar, Mike Christelis, Anne Woods, Chris Geldenhys, Chris Cadman, Ken Meiring and Brian McMillan.

Ad hoc Hack, Tuesday, 20 January 2026, 07:45 – 09:20 - Viv von der Heyden, Dave Mourant, Paul Whitelaw and Rob Boyd.

5550 Pearl Drive, Sunny Seas - private property. Popping, lopping and chainsaw work to remove New Zealand Christmas trees, banksia, bottle brush and rooikranz. Our thanks to Walther for his generous donation.

Ad hoc Hack, Tuesday, 20 January 2026, 09:30 – 10:30 – Viv, Dave, Paul and Rob

3384 Pearl Drive, Sunny Seas. Public open space. Chainsaw work and poison. Large Showy Honey Myrtle and Port Jackson on the verge, large bottle brushes and large Acacia longifolia in the open space. Many thanks to Mary and Paul Whitelaw for the aftermath with a sea view at their home.



Showy Honey Myrtle (Melaleuca nesophila)

Image on right credited to iNaturalist

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

Rob Boyd

Convener Betty's Bay Hack Group

Showy Honey Myrtle, an import from Australia, is considered an alien plant showing signs of becoming invasive in the Western Cape. The plants that we removed from 3384 Pearl Drive had spread from the garden across the road. Unfortunately, like the Bottlebrush, Banksia, Australian Tea Bush and other invasive species, the plants are still being sold by nurseries. For the sake of our own showy, beautiful world-renowned fynbos, please remove these from your gardens and verges! For images of the most common aliens in the Western Cape see

<https://invasives.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Western-Cape-IAPs.pdf>

Editor

SUPPORTERS OF THE KOGELBERG BRANCH OF THE BOTANICAL SOCIETY

Many exciting things continue to happen at the branch but one of the most exciting developments in the past few weeks for me is the fact that the Sugarbird Foundation (a Non-Profit NGO whose main objective is to eradicate alien vegetation) has agreed to a Pilot Project starting in the catchment area of the Buffels River above Pringle Bay. They have been working mainly on Table Mountain until now. The final "I's and T's" have not been dotted and crossed yet but we are very hopefully that this pilot project will kick off at the beginning of March. A permanent team with their own transport will be employed. If this pilot project works, it could lead to bigger things. To Chris Geldenhuys, Mike Burns, Mike Christelis, Rob Boyd, Brian von Wilgen and all the others who have worked tirelessly to put this together, a big, big congratulations from all of us in the branch. This is an incredibly exciting development.

The Branch really hit the ground running in January, and almost all the sections of the branch got stuck into their activities at full pace or have exciting activities planned for February. See notes later in this newsletter.

HAROLD PORTER NATIONAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

Before I mention some of the negatives, I will concentrate on some of the positives. We are blessed to have a dedicated and motivated core of individuals employed by SANBI and despite the lack of support from Head Office, they try their very best with limited support and supplies to maintain the garden in a pristine and beautiful condition, because of their passion for the fynbos in the biosphere. To these employees, our big, big thanks. Parts of the garden were stunning this past January and the Disas were outstanding.

The irrigation system is in a much better condition than it was a month ago and the borehole, despite the relatively high iron content in the water, is functioning well. It would be great if we could get the irrigation

automated so that we could irrigate at least 18 hours a day and over the weekends. Hopefully with the rain that we have received and the dedicated staff switching the irrigation on over the weekends, we will see the improvement in the gardens. The Friends of the Harold Porter Gardens, led by Viv von der Heyden and Jenny Pattinson, continue to do sterling work in maintaining the flower beds.

On the negative side, the Harold Porter Botanical Gardens (SANBI) will not be having an Easter Plant Sale for the first time in almost 50 years because they have no plants to sell. The reason given by the Curator of the gardens, Berenice Carolus, is that, with the propagation hut damaged and declared unsafe to enter, they haven't been able to propagate plants. They have also had a lack of supplies from SANBI when it comes to bags, compost, potting material, rooting hormone etc.

Our branch has decided to carry on with its plant sales and we will be sourcing a greater variety of plants to make up somewhat for no plants being provided by Harold Porter Gardens. Also on the negative side, we have been told by SANBI that there will be no free entry for the plant sales this year. To counteract this we as a branch have decided to refund the entry fee if one purchases R500 or more worth of plants on the day of the plant sale.

So, diarise plant sales Friday 3rd and Saturday 4th April 2026.

WEATHER

Betty's Bay recorded in excess of 160mm of rain in Week 8 of 2026 which was very welcome after a very dry spring and summer to date, a tremendous boost for the fynbos in the Kogelberg Biosphere. This is the wettest February in the past twelve years and equals the wet March of 2023.

Since I have been keeping rainfall records (2015 – 11 Years), 2025 was the fourth driest year since 2014. Only 2015, 2017 & 2022 recorded lower rainfall figures.

(Editor's note: Peter wrote his report on the 17 February. On Thursday 19 February we recorded a further 23mm of rain in Jock's Bay.)

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	166*	34
Mar	28	132	23	62	119	13	187	41	173	34	43		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	219*	1058
	*To Date												

HAROLD PORTER BOOK AND CRAFT SHOP

The shop continues to perform well and we are very happy with the January results. There was a 31% increase in turnover over the previous year for January.

We receive numerous compliments re the product range that we have in the shop and the quality of our products. Janet, Paddy and I are always looking for new products to stock and we remove some that are not good sellers or that do not meet our very high-quality standards.

February has been very quiet to date and we are hoping that the last two weeks will be a great improvement on the first two weeks. There are two book launches organized for March. We would like you to diarise them!.

Saturday 7 March 2026 at 10h30 for 11h00 – The authors of the book *Exploring the Cape Winelands*, Doris Jansen and Kay Leresche, will talk to us about their book, which has been a very good seller in our bookshop. We do believe it is a great book for anyone living in the Cape Winelands.

Saturday 21 March 2026 at 10h30 for 11h00 – Tim Lundy will launch his updated and revised version of his dad's book *Lundy's Best Walks in the Cape Peninsula (Revised by Tim Lundy)*. This has also been a bestseller in the bookshop.

LAUNCH OF THE BETTY'S BAY BOOK – BETWEEN MOUNTAIN AND SEA

This book has been an unbelievable success and to Skip Krige and his co-workers on this project a hearty congratulations and thank you. As I write, we are down to the last three copies of the book. It has already become a collector's item. Well done to Skip and team on a very successful project. I know Skip has also made a great personal financial contribution to this book and for that, Skip, we say a big thank you.

FRIENDS OF THE HAROLD PORTER GARDENS

Viv and Jenny and their merry band of gardeners do a great job of gardening in the gardens. Their work is not without challenges, but they remain positive.

We are considering how we can plant up the bare areas that we weed as the Harold Porter Gardens have no plants to plant into these areas and there are huge limitations on what plants we are allowed to bring into the gardens. This is work in progress which hopefully will be resolved in the near future.

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

The first gardening session in March will be on Thursday 5 March and then again on Tuesday 10 March. The sessions alternate each week between Tuesdays and Thursdays, starting in the warm months at 08h00.

If you would like to volunteer, all you need to do is pitch up at the Harold Porter Gardens at 08h00 on the gardening days. We have the tools and protective clothing for you; we just desperately need your hands to help.

KOGELBERG GARDEN CIRCLE

Our avid gardeners members met at Jackie Davies' house in Kleinmond in February. Jackie bought her Kleinmond home in 1996 and with Kleinmond's kinder climate and gentle winds, this once overgrown garden is now a melange of fynbos and other plants that would not cope in the tougher growing conditions in Betty's Bay, Pringle and Rooi Els. The garden became a plant nursery in 1997 but since evolved into Jackie's "happy place" and is an eclectic ever changing work in progress. Gerda Theron gave an informative "show and tell" on exotic plants, evasive aliens and weeds - not just the big trees but the smaller bushes and grasses too.

The Kogelberg Garden Circle meetings end with coffee, tea and biscuits. Donations towards keeping these gatherings going are most welcome.

Convenor: Galia Manicom 082 963 3804

HACKS

Betty's Bay Hack takes place on the first Saturday of each month at 08h30. (See Rob's notes above in the newsletter. Ed) The next hack takes place on **Saturday 7 March 2026**.

Convener: Rob Boyd 082 567 8858

Hangklip Hardcore Hackers (HHH) hack between Rooi Els and Betty's Bay every Wednesday morning. In January there were 7 hack opportunities with 197 man days.

Chris reported on the successful sale of Christmas trees, hacked by the HHH, at Lemon and Lime. A total of R12 930 was raised by this project.

The approach for 2026 was revised in order to have a clear direction for the year ahead. Briefly summarized the strategy will be as follows:

To continue with Pine Hacks to suppress the pine infestation.

To find solutions for all the spots of extensive alien infestation. If we don't do that, it will bog us down to such an extent that we won't be able to make any progress in our fight against alien vegetation.

The other option we are looking at is to empower the landowners of the plots we have cleared to be self-sufficient in terms of the maintenance of the cleared plot, preventing the re-sprouting of the eradicated aliens. All these actions are to assist us to fulfill our overall goal, which is to stop or prevent the influx of aliens into the precious Biosphere/Reserve.

Convener: Chris Geldenhuys 082 900 8299

Pringle Bay Hack:

Chris Geldenhuys reports on the Pringle Bay Hack No. 218 held on 31 January 2026: "This hack had a very healthy attendance of 37 hackers who prepared to address the Rooikrans invasion on the Green Belt at the William Road Parking area.

The Green Belt was last checked for aliens more than 8 years ago and it is surprising to see to what extent the aliens had returned to this area. It is a precious piece of land, and it is our duty to keep it in a pristine condition." Chris goes on to say: "I want to express my sincere appreciation to all the hackers, who are always available to commit to the day's work once a month. While I know it is not always so much fun and easy, we all know it is necessary. Besides, the fact is that we owe it to nature. The mere existence of the aliens in our area is due to human intervention. But it is also good for us in terms of fresh air and a good workout. Thank you for everyone's commitment!"

The next Pringle Bay hack will be on Saturday 28 March. The meeting point will always be in front of the Hangklip Bottle Store in Central Avenue, Pringle Bay at 08h30.

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, meeting at the Rooi Els Village Shop at 08h30.

Mike Christelis goes on to report as follows:

The first official hack of 2026 was held at Rooi Els on Saturday 14 February and was well attended with 20 participants.

The hack split into three groups initially. One went onto the slopes of Klein Rooi Els where the target was some Rooikrans trees spread among the slopes between the estuary and houses. When done this group moved onto Clarence Drive to tackle the big trees on the slopes at the first parking viewpoint just past the river up on the mountainside.

Ralph Pina took it upon himself (with some help) to tackle some very difficult-to-get-to trees right down on the estuary banks, on the beach side of the estuary. A third group worked on the slopes between the R44 and the beach. Access was not easy to any of the sites, so amazing work was done by all. It's clear that we need to go back to complete the site next month and also to work more on the mountainside along the valley.

Mike goes on to report that the Ad Hock Hack was convened by a small team of 6 to tackle the individual aliens that were on plots between Anemone Rd and the beach. Thanks a lot to the volunteers. These are the jobs too small for an entire hack group to attend to but still essential to get done.

Next hack will be Saturday 14 March 2026.

Convenor: Mike Christelis Cell: 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.

While Adele Scheepers will continue participating in Crew work, she has handed over the mantle of representing Crew on the Kogelberg Branch BotSoc Committee to Gerda Theron.

Adele, we know that you are not going away, thank goodness, but a big, big thank you from all of us for the sterling work that you have done in this regard. Welcome to Gerda! We are really honoured and privileged to have you serve on the committee with us - your knowledge of the fynbos is legendary.

MONTHLY TALKS

Instead of a talk in February we held a special screening presented by Ruben Els of the film "Oceans", narrated by David Attenborough - a compelling film on our still largely unexplored oceans, a world of astonishing beauty and fragile balance. The film revealed how human behaviour has damaged marine life, through pollution and over exploitation.

Yet it is not a message of despair. Small, conscience changes in our daily lives can help protect the seas and allow ecosystems recovery.

It was an eye-opening and inspiring presentation.

KOGELBERG BRANCH MONTHLY WALK

The monthly walk on Saturday 21 February was a botanical ramble on the mountainside above the Catholic Church, especially to see the summer flowering of *Nivenia stokoei*. The *Nivenias* are looking great at present.



Image credit: Janet Pienaar - from the Kogel BotSoc webpage

CONCLUSION

Change in the status quo is never easy and it has its risks and its challenges. The main aim of the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa is to know, grow, protect and enjoy the indigenous flora of the Kogelberg Biosphere.

The volunteers in the Hangklip Region have done an amazing job in trying to fulfill this aim and objective. We believe we can even go even further than this and incorporate even more people as volunteers to protect the flora of the Kogelberg Biosphere.

Enjoy the fynbos as autumn approaches, always a wonderful time in the fynbos.

Peter Dall

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**Snippets for an amateur
fynbos gardener from**

KOGELBERG GARDEN CIRCLE



**Botanical Society
of South Africa**

Congratulations! Or is that Commiserations? You've recently moved to a new house, probably with 1 of 3 types of gardens – a fairly established one (lucky you!); or a lawn all around the house (sterile!); or (the worst!) a new-build with dead bricks and piles of rubble, all covered with hundreds of blobs of cement.

Where to begin? The worst, first!

If the rubble is 'only skin-deep', it's fairly simple to remove it. But not the rocks! They make wonderful features and form natural protection around new plants. If the rubble is meters deep, then be prepared for it to be a long-term project. Building raised beds will give plant roots deeper soil to establish themselves, but will mean importing topsoil, which can be rather expensive. But please, please, use a reputable supplier. This will save you years of weeding (and swearing!).

If you're substituting fynbos for invasive plants or thirsty lawns, suggest you clear smallish, workable sections at a time, limiting areas of exposed soil, which can be blown over to the next-door neighbour.

What to plant?

Succession planting is a fancy way of saying firstly, plant indigenous ground-covers everywhere. They will stabilise the soil, stop wind erosion and protect young, slower-growing plants, giving you time to plan the garden. Ground-covers can then gradually be thinned out, while your fynbos shrubs, bulbs, restios, grasses, and yes, even some non-fynbos plants, establish themselves. Examples of fast-growing groundcovers include the many varieties of vygies, gazanias, spur flowers (*Plectranthus*) and 'everlastings' (*Helichrysum*).

Many of us make the mistake of buying lots of plants and just plonking them all over the garden, because we're desperate to cover the empty spaces. But there is a method to the madness of fynbos gardening! You really do need to know if your plot is very rocky, in a wetland or a dune (more about this in our next article). But in the meantime, you can chat to your surrounding gardeners, and also contact the Kogelberg Garden Circle. We have many years of hard-earned experience that we can share and, hopefully, you can avoid making (too) many costly mistakes. PS - The best source of plants are other gardeners, friends, friends of friends, and then rescuing fynbos from plots about to be developed.

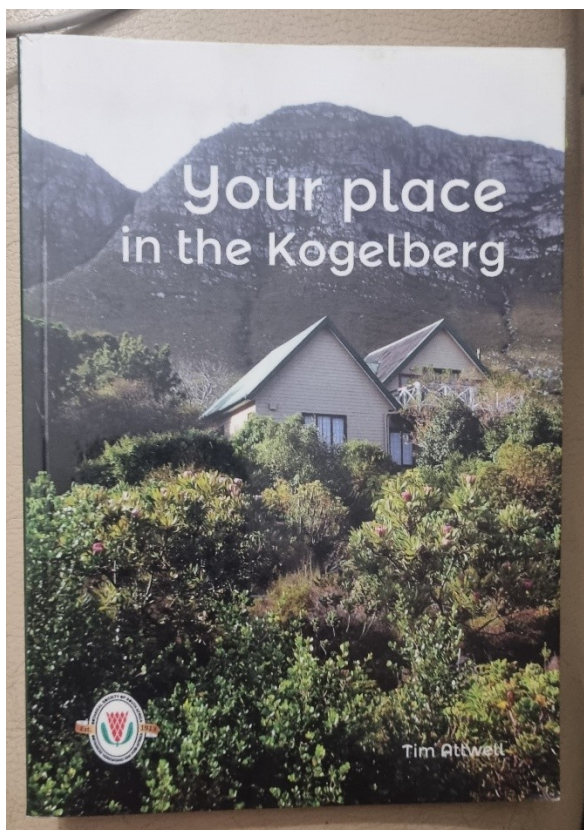
Good indigenous nurseries will also be able to give you advice, but please clearly explain your plot conditions. Some fynbos stockists include Fernkloof Nursery in Hermanus, Harold Porter Gardens in Betty's Bay, Cherish Plants and Cape Flats Fynbos Nursery in Cape Town.

For more information, contact Galia 082 963 3804, or you can visit <https://kogelbergbiosphere.org.za/gardening-in-the-kogelberg-working-with-the-elements/>



PICTURE 1

Remember that we are living within a declared UNESCO biosphere. The municipal guidelines say homeowners should keep at least 40% of their property as local fynbos. Think of it as having a mini-Harold Porter Gardens right on your doorstep.



PICTURE OF BOOK

A very useful resource is Tim Atwell's book *Your Place in the Kogelberg*, which is a very good introduction for beginner fynbos gardeners. (Available at the Harold Porter Book and Craft Shop)

Thank you to Galia for the use of her articles that appeared in the Hangklip Herald last year.



HANGKLIP COMMUNITY CARE CENTRE

HCCC provides welfare services to the Hangklip community, i.e. residents of Betty's Bay, Pringle Bay and Rooi Els. After closing for the holidays in early December, food preparation and other services resumed on 12 January this year.

During the short month of January our kitchen distributed 51 food parcels and prepared 392 scrumptious meals.

Our semi-weekly 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



KAWS

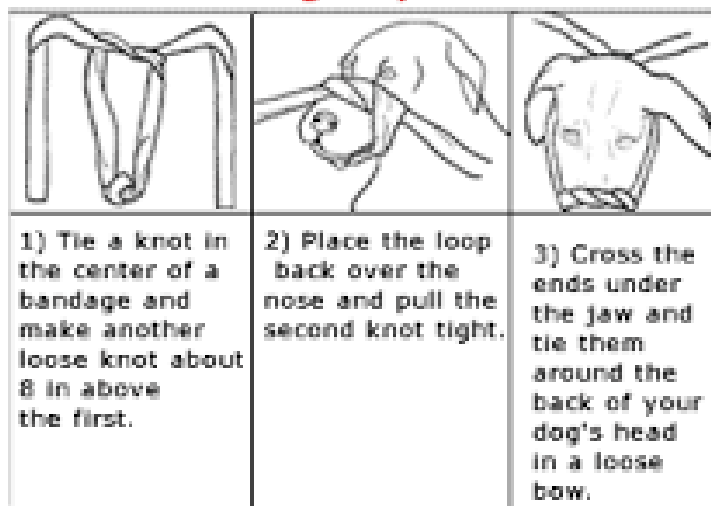
Medical kits for dogs

We have received several pet owners calling with an emergency situation with their dog. Many pet owners do not have a basic medical kit for their pets. Here are a few basic items to have in a kit.

Your canine first aid kit should be comprehensive but practical. You can purchase a pre-made kit or assemble your own with these essentials:

- **Wound Care:** Antiseptic wipes (non-stinging), sterile saline solution, gauze pads and self-adhesive bandages (vet wrap).
- **Tools:** Blunt-nosed scissors, tweezers for splinter or tick removal, and a digital thermometer.
- **Medications (Vet Approved):** Any specific medications your vet has recommended, along with a styptic powder to stop bleeding from a nail injury.
- **Information:** A card with the phone numbers for your regular vet and the nearest 24-hour emergency animal hospital.
- **Other Items:** A blanket or towel to use as a stretcher, a muzzle (an injured dog may bite because of the pain he is in), and a lead. A bandage can also be used to muzzle your dog. Active charcoal is an important item to have in the event of ingestion of toxins or poison. Please make sure you are well informed as to how to use it.

Emergency Muzzle



muzzle a dog with chest injuries

muzzle a dog with a short nose

leave a muzzled dog alone

Karin de Beer

And that is all for this month! If you have enjoyed our newsletter, please forward it to your friends or newcomers to our village and encourage them to become members of the BBRA.

If you would like to share news of an organisation or group that does good work in our community and which we have not highlighted in our newsletters please email me! I would also love to receive articles of general interest to our residents and local homeowners.

Warm regards
Vivienne von der Heyden
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