



Julie Gosling Receives Community Award.

Marylou Newdigate

On 5 July 2007, at a prestigious awards evening in Knysna attended by Garden Route's V.I.P's , including mayors of Knysna and Plettenberg Bay, Julie Gosling's selfless efforts on behalf of the public were recognized.

Julie was nominated and sponsored for the "Merlion" award by the Guardians of the Garden Route who were particularly grateful for Julie's efforts in re-securing public access to Noetzie Beach via the municipal steps, which had been closed by a property owner.



The generous and kind, free publication of various charity organisations' adverts and notices in Julie's newspaper Action Ads was also recognized.

Noetzie was well represented at the black tie event by Neil and Norma Metelerkamp, Wendy Dewberry and Bruce Botha and myself.

Congratulations Julie, and may we all take this opportunity, again, to thank you for everything you do for Knysna and Noetzie Conservancy.

Finance Report

Craig Gettliffe

Thank you to all the members who have paid their membership fees for the year. The NCOA relies financially on the timely payment of these fees and of course on the additional support of all the ordinary members who have joined the NCOA who share a common vision in protecting and maintaining Noetzie and its surrounds. This year we have endeavoured to remind all the members of their levies by sending out invoices to all property owners and ordinary members and have had a relatively good response. As of the 01 October 2007 we have invoiced R 13,045 for the year and together with some donations will manage to just pay for the expenses we incurred during the same period.

It is in this vein that I remind all the members to please ensure that outstanding amounts be settled before the end of the financial year (31 October 2007) otherwise you will not be entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting at the end of the year and the NCOA will consequently also operate at a loss for the period.

A full set of accounts including a list of paid up members will be circulated with the notice of the AGM towards the end of the year.



NCOA 2007 Membership Fees

Membership fees for 2007 are R200.00 per member.
Please pay your contributions into the following bank account

Account Name:	Noetzie Conservancy Owners Association
Bank:	Standard Bank
Account:	00 189 849 3
Branch :	Sandton 019205

Any donations to the NCOA are most welcome

Use Of Fallen Forest Wood For Firewood

Mike Dane

I recall that about 25 years ago studies were carried out in the Kruger National Park on the impact that the collection and burning of indigenous wood from the areas surrounding the camps was having on the ecology of the region. The Oxford Dictionary defines “ecology” as “branch of biology dealing with living organisms’ habits, modes of life, and their relations to their surroundings”. It was found that fallen wood is home to many small creatures, fungi and micro-organisms that decompose the wood. The final result of the studies was that the harvesting of the local wood was stopped and only sustainable sources of firewood were used to supply the braai wood for cooking of the traditional Kruger Park meals.

In forested areas like the Knysna Forests, elephants would have, prior to the interference of man, broken off branches of trees and after eating the succulent portion left the rest to rot on the forest floor. These would have provided the eco-system that allowed all the organisms to grow and decompose the wood and then the invertebrates etc would make use of the by-products for food or refuse. The invertebrates would attract small reptiles and birds and thus feed the whole cycle of nature in the forest.

The removal of the elephants from the majority or all of the forests around Knysna and the use of fallen wood by the people has resulted in reduced biodiversity and will, if allowed to continue, result in the disappearance of some invertebrates, reptiles, mammals and birds from the region. It is possible that we are already seeing a reduction in the bird life and we are certainly seeing a reduction in the mammalian life. There are other mechanisms by which wood falls to the ground such as rotting on the tree then dropping and storm damage, so the loss of the elephants does not mean there will be no fallen wood on the ground.

I have obtained much of the following information from the paper “The effect of habitat alteration by elephants on invertebrate diversity in two small reserves in South Africa” by Navashni Govender in 2005.

Branches that may be found on the ground after an elephant has fed and elephant dung provide an interface between the damp lower levels of the soil and the drier open ground surface. Organisms inhabiting either of the wood or elephant dung may live here all the time or be transient inhabitants. Animals living under and/or those associated with dead wood or the fungi and micro-organisms that decompose the wood are termed ‘saproxylic fauna’. (Saproxylic means rotten wood).

Invertebrates are conservatively estimated to comprise about 95% of all living species and in most natural ecosystems they are the most diverse and abundant organisms. Despite their presence in all habitats, their critical role in ecosystem processes the distribution and biology of invertebrate species remains poorly known. The importance of invertebrates in ecological processes and as a living resource of benefit to humans should not be underestimated. These organisms provide vital ecosystem services, such as pollination, litter decomposition, nutrient cycling, soil aeration and drainage and invertebrates are a source of food for a wide variety of birds and mammals.

Major impediments to invertebrate conservation efforts are the poor public image that these organisms have and a lack of human appreciation for their importance. However, there is increasing awareness of the threats to invertebrates and concern about the detrimental effects that the loss of invertebrate diversity could have on ecosystems.

Through increasing population pressures, human activities have steadily modified wilderness areas into landscapes of settlement, agricultural lands and industrial sites that preclude the co-existence of humans with many creatures. Invertebrates are no exception. Some species of invertebrates have home ranges that are so small that they could be eradicated by a single event such as building a house or the granting of a timber concession. Scientists anticipate the extinction of a high proportion of the world's plant and animal species within a few decades. It has been said that the highest number of species lost will be invertebrates, 'the little things which undoubtedly run the world', but which rarely gain acknowledgement.

The conservation of biological diversity seeks to maintain the life-support system provided by nature that is essential for maximizing the existence of the human species, meeting the needs of future generations and contributing to the stability of many economic and ecological systems.

Biodiversity is highly valuable at all levels for producing products and commodities to meet basic human needs and for providing amenities and services to promote human health and well being. Components of biodiversity can be given direct and/or indirect economic value.

Studies have indicated that biodiversity increases resistance of communities to diseases. The rapid recovery of ecosystems from stresses such as drought or human induced degradation is more evident in a biologically diverse or heterogeneous system than one that is considered to be more homogenous in diversity.

Recreation and ecotourism are the most rapidly growing industries in many countries, involving 200 million people per year and earning billions of dollars per year worldwide. Locations with high biodiversity such as protected nature reserves and parks are able to generate extensive economic wealth from the resource. Hence, the loss or depletion of such a resource is not detrimental to the ecosystem but to the economic stability of the country as a whole.

So we need to preserve the ecosystems in which the “bugs” live so that the benefits to the other levels of biodiversity are preserved. This will result in a sustainable environment around us. We need to convey this knowledge to all who utilise the fallen wood resource for firewood or other things.

So please stop using forest wood for firewood and encourage other to do the same!!

Also please remember that these lessons from the forest biome also apply to the other biomes and of particular interest is the fynbos on the headland. This also needs to be protected, so leave the dead wood and leaves for the saproxylic fauna!

Proposed changes to the NCOA Constitution

The NCOA as an entity currently has no legal identity. After consultation, the NCOA's legal advisors have recommended changes to the NCOA constitution.

A draft of the proposed amended constitution will be posted on www.noetzie.co.za for members to review and comment. Any changes to the constitution will be proposed at the upcoming NCOA AGM in December for debate and possible approval NCOA members.

Trading from Montrose Castle

The NCOA has approached the Knysna Municipality and indicated our disapproval of the current trading from Montrose Castle. The Knysna Municipality has since instructed the owners of Montrose Castle to cease their trading activities as they are in breach of the planning approval granted for Montrose Castle to operate as a guesthouse and only to provide accommodation and breakfast for overnight guests.

The owners however have continued to operate the restaurant on the property and also to provide Umbrellas, meals and drinks on the beach primarily to patrons who are bussed in from the Pezula Hotel.

Noetzie Infill Update

Recent contact with the Pezula Town Planner, Pieter Badenhorst, has determined that there has been no further progress with the revisions to the "Unedited Draft Scoping Report" after all the objections were received. It appears that there is a big re-think on what is proposed for the Noetzie Infill. The committee will keep you updated.

The Coastal Management Bill

The Cabinet has approved the Integrated Coastal Management Bill for tabling in parliament. Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk said that the bill would be used to restore public access to beaches and coastal areas, which had been blocked by private developments.

The bill is expected to be gazetted shortly.

Can anyone work this one out 😊

Innocence Zest Ovary
Cozy Native Onscreen
Cynic Ozone Veterans
See Crazy Convention
Overnice Scanty Zone
Every Coziest Cannon
Nicety Snooze Cavern
Ritzy Canoes Convene
RitzyOceans Convene
Ancestry Novice Zone
Cozv Sneer Nonactive

Those Monkeys

The troop of Monkeys at Noetzie unfortunately remain a problem. We repeat a copy of the notice regarding the do's and don'ts regarding monkeys overleaf.



CapeNature

Tel: 044 802 5300



Tel: 044 302 6300



NOETZIE CONSERVANCY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Tel: 082 413 0703

Vervet Monkeys

Do's and Don'ts

This is a combined conservation effort between residents in Noetzie area of Knysna, the Knysna Municipality and CapeNature, to solve the issue of nuisance monkeys in the area. Please co-operate and comply with the guidelines below.

Vervet monkeys are wild animals which can become a nuisance, and even dangerous, if they become tame. This happens when humans feed them. The result is that they cause problems, and the people want the problem removed. *A TAME MONKEY IS A DEAD MONKEY.*

PLEASE DO:

- Chase monkeys away from houses and yards – they belong in the wild.
- Keep all food items (*including pet's food*) out of sight and reach of monkeys.
- Dispose of all waste properly.
- Be tolerant of wildlife you chose to live in a natural area.

PLEASE DONT:

- Do not encourage monkeys to enter living areas.
- Do not ever feed monkeys.
- Do not leave doors and windows wide open if monkeys have become problematic.
- Do not plant fruit trees which are likely to attract monkeys.

