

Newsletter

Editor – Iona Everett

November 2016

Chairman's Chat

*EJ (Robby) Robertson
NCOA Chairman 2016*

Beside the recent municipal elections bringing with it a new batch of town councillors, there was also a decision to suspend the previous municipal manager for some procedural irregularity. Thus we had some new faces at the NCOA's 6-monthly meeting with the municipality held on 15 September 2016. But what this did bring was the presence of the Council's legal advisor, which resulted in some good discussion on some of the concerns regarding Noetzie. One of the main issues being the condition of the Noetzie Road, the safety risks associated with the use thereof, and the prospect of opening access to Noetzie via Rexford & Pezula. We came away with the sense that the Municipality acknowledged there was a strong case for opening the road, but that there would need to be further engagements with the interested and concerned parties before Council makes a decision on this. Not exactly the outcome we would like, but we do seem to be making progress without resorting to legal action.

It is expected that the 2017 NCOA Committee will continue with the 6-monthly engagements, and that resolution will be forthcoming next year.

We look forward to meeting you all at the December AGM.

AGM

The AGM of the Noetzie Conservancy Owners' Association (NCOA) will take place at 10 am on Friday 30th December at the Everett House, Nou en Dan, Noetzie. We would like to see as many of you as possible there.

News from NCOA Treasurer

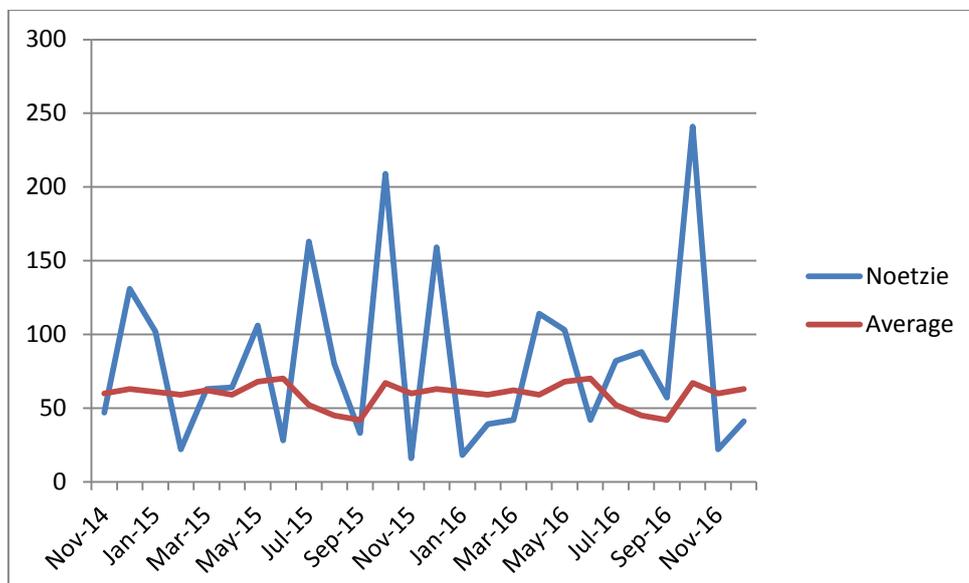
Margi Dane

The Committee would like to thank all who have paid their subs for 2016 and express their hope that members will do it again next year. To those who have not paid, please make an effort to do so next year.

Payment of fees entitles you to vote in the AGM, as well as providing money for the Committee to do its work.

At the last AGM, it was proposed that fees be increased to R550 per owner member for the 2017 financial year. Invoices to this effect will be sent out shortly.

Rainfall Graph



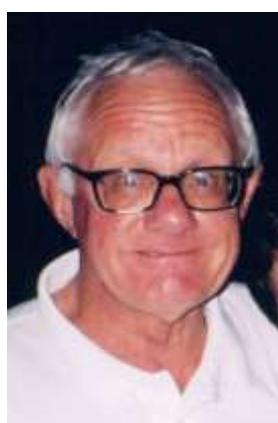
Peeps into the Past

by Chris Everett

This is a very much longer Peep into the Past than usual, but a very important one, for 2016 has been a sad year in Noetzie's history, with the death of three of its great characters – Henry Loubser, Jan van Gend and Donald Fabian, following on from that of Don Lindsay only a little before.

All three made their contributions to public life and the Noetzie Community and I am privileged to have called all three my friends.

Henry Loubser - 9 January 1936 to 16 February 2016



Hendrik (Henry) George Loubser was born in Koppies in the Orange Free State in 1936 as an 8th generation descendant of Nicolaas Laubscher, a Swiss farmer and wagon-maker who landed in the Cape of Good Hope in 1676 as a mercenary soldier for the Dutch East India Company. In his early pre-school days Henry was nick-named Poella (a derivative of an African word - probably pula, meaning "rain or very wet"), which goes back to his birth in Koppies in the Free State, when, it being a very rainy day on his arrival in this world, the gardener gave him that name.

Henry matriculated from Dundee High School (where he still holds the 100 yards sprint record for Under 14) and then attended Pietermaritzburg University, where he first met Don Lindsay.

Having earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Plant Pathology he started work at a Rembrandt Tobacco plant and also worked for a while at Louis Luyt's Triomf Fertilisers. His business career culminated in the listing of his own company, Agro-Serve, as a part of Farmag Ltd on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Eventually Petra convinced Henry to sell the last of his business interests and settle in Pezula Private Estate.

Henry's first experiences of Noetzie were in the late 50's and early 60's when he spent holidays in Plettenberg Bay and Keurbooms River with Don Lindsay and came to Noetzie for a party with Ian Henderson in 1959. He bought his stand in 1974 and the wooden cottage was built in 1976. A few years later he built a separate back bedroom.

Henry also made his contribution to Noetzie's affairs as he was one of the early Provisional Local Councillors elected at the December 1991 General Meeting of the then Knoetzie Property Owners' Association. The Knoetzie Local Council was formally gazetted on 4 December 1992 and the first Councillors were Kathy Sass, Chris Everett, Henry Loubser, Neil Metelerkamp and George Parkes. He was also a great supporter and generous benefactor of the Noetzie Home Services and its staff.

Henry has been married three times and is a great Noetzie original. His first wife was an American, Judy and then he married Madeleine from Sweden, the mother of Sasha. Finally he and Petra were married and



were happily together for many years. His daughter Sasha is married to Nick, with one grandson, Oscar and he leaves two step-children Ian and Christine, who is married to Kevin.

Henry adopted the maxim of living life to the full and made the world his oyster. He was lovable, noisy and always fun, with an inexhaustible fund of more or less improbable stories. He passed away peacefully and very unexpectedly on the 16th February 2016 just a few weeks after his 80th Birthday party.

Jan van Gend – 29 November 1937 to 5 July 2016

Jan has had an interesting career, but really made his mark as both a lawyer and a politician.

He was born in 1937 in Cape Town, but attended primary school in Vryburg and was a boarder at Rondebosch Boys High. He started a first year Agriculture degree at Stellenbosch and then went dairy farming near Karatara, Southern Cape, followed by a stint of pig and dairy farming in England, from where he worked his way back to South Africa, tending cattle on a ship.



In 1960 he returned to Stellenbosch to study law, completing his BA in 1962 and his LL.B in 1964, as well as playing first team hockey; and the following year he was admitted to the Bar as an Advocate.

In 1966 he married Cecily and they have two sons Carel, a Physicist (and currently a member of the NCOA Committee), and Simon, a well known musician.

Jan worked in Windhoek and East London as an attorney and was active in Round Table and the Progressive Party, still finding time for sailing and hockey, and earning Provincial colours for Border in hockey as well as serving a stint on the East London City Council, before moving to Cape Town in 1979 and starting his own law practice.

Politics was close to his heart and he became the Progressive Party Member of the Provincial Council for Constantia for seven years, but when PW Botha became State President, a parliamentary by-election was held in the George-Knysna constituency, which included Noetzie. Jan stood as the Progressive Party candidate and it was Barbara Metelerkamp who proposed him as the Party's candidate. Needless to say, his foray into "Groot Krokodil" territory at that time was unsuccessful, but Jan's next attempt at Parliamentary office was more successful as his constituency, Groote Schuur in Cape Town, was the only unopposed seat in the country in the 1982 election and Jan sat in Parliament for the next three and a half years, but in 1989 he returned to law practice full-time.



His sporting achievements included a 1993 Masters Hockey tournament in Perth, golf at Rondebosch for 30 years and many marathons, including 9 Two Oceans and 19 Peninsula Marathons.

Jan's introduction to Noetzie was when he, as a lawyer, attended to the transfer of the yellow cottage on the beach from the North family to Peggy Moyle and Ronnie Carpenter-Frank. During the years that followed, the van Gend family occupied North's cottage every December, and later rented the Kelly-Patterson house on the river. Jan was subsequently offered a river stand and a consortium was put together as the Noetzie Trust, with Jan owning three shares, his brother-in-law Nick Taylor owning

two shares and JP van Niekerk, Neil Turner, Annette Spykerman and Jan's cousin Nicky Illing (that share later sold to Alan Blem), each owning a one ninth share.

The family connections of the shareholders are that Jan van Gend was previous married to Cecily Taylor, Nick Taylor's sister and JP van Niekerk is married to Annette who is Jan van Gend's sister. Annette Spykerman's mother married JP van Niekerk's father late in life and she is married to Peter, while Neil and Rita Turner have been friends of Jan and Cecily since 1966.

Jan was one of the lawyers who gave of his time freely and generously to the Black Sash's Cape Town Advice Office to defend pass law offenders. Everyone who worked in the Black Sash Advice Office warmed to Jan because he was such an understanding person who was as rigorously committed to opposing the Pass Laws as the Sash. When Molly Blackburn and Di Oliver (then Bishop) were charged with contravening the Pass Laws by entering Lingelihle in Cradock without the required permit, Jan defended them in the Cradock Court. He did not achieve an acquittal for the two offenders, but they were grateful that they were given only a warning and were not fined.

He met Ellen Corrigan in 1991 and they were married in 2005. He died at the age of 78 after a considerable battle with cancer.

My memories of Jan include many happy hours on the beach or chatting over a not inconsiderable number of glasses of wine on the upper deck of the Noetzie house. He was a warm, caring person and a delightful companion.



Donald Fabian - 26 August 1932 to 9 October 2016

Donald Taggart Fabian was a man of many parts: scholar, actuary, fencing champion, army officer, yachtsman, birdwatcher, conservationist, husband and father. He was born in London in 1932 and lived in Mitcham until their house was bombed, and thereafter in Reading and Beckenham.

He attended St Paul's School and after a stint of National Service, during which he was commissioned into the Royal Engineers, ending up as a Captain in the Army Reserve, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge with an open Major Scholarship where he read mathematics and physics, gaining an MA degree in pure and applied mathematics.

He fenced at St Paul's School, represented England in the under-21 world championship in Paris in 1953 and continued fencing at Cambridge, gaining a half-blue three years running and captaining the team in 1954.

He later qualified as an actuary and came to South Africa in 1957, obtaining the Fellowship in 1962, but finding time to continue with his fencing and was the South African foil and épée champion in 1964.

He worked for various Life Assurance companies and served on the Council of the Actuarial Association of SA for several years and was President in 1988. For many years he was a partner in a firm of Consulting Actuaries in Johannesburg and retired in 1993. He and his wife of many years Anita moved to Cape Town around 1998.



Donald was a great authority on birds and was on the Committee of the Witwatersrand Bird Club from 1971 to 1976 and chairman of the South African Ornithological Society from 1976 to 1980.



Between 1992 and 1996 Donald and Anita had a 36 ft strip-planked cutter “Ariel” built in Knysna and then sailed it to the Caribbean, where they returned to cruise for several years. Ariel was named after the Royal Navy sloop HMS Ariel of 1779, a new 314 ton ship of the Zebra Class 1779, 98 ft long, 27 ft 2 in beam and drawing 13 ft 4 in. She carried 16 guns and 12 swivels and her first captain was Commander Lewis Fabian RN, Donald's great-great-great-grandfather. Subsequently Donald and Anita sailed Ariel to England and several more years’ cruising followed before she was sold.

Donald has three children - Jonathan, an anaesthetist in Durban, Vicki, a neuro-pathologist in Perth, Western Australia and Ivan in the UK. There are also five grandchildren - Andrew and Alice in Durban; Alizanne, who is the Australian roller-skating champion; and Nathaniel and Zoë in England as well as one great-granddaughter.

Donald served as Chairman of the Noetzie Conservancy Owners Association and the Noetzie Home Services Association and was a keen Clubman; a Rand Club committee member for 11 years and in Cape Town a member of Owl Club and the Cape Town Club.

Donald was my best friend. It was a friendship that started some time after Donald and Anita bought their house in 1976 at Noetzie. Our friendship developed through our joint efforts on the NCOA Committee and flowered in the fynbos of Table Mountain during our weekly hikes. Despite our diversity - the precise mathematical actuary and the practical mechanical engineer, we shared many ideas, ideals and preferences – not always agreeing, but always respecting each other and I learnt a huge amount from his principled and honest approach. It did not earn him universal approval and he was not always tactful, but everyone always knew where they stood with Donald and it was one of his characteristics that I appreciated enormously. We shared so much – we were interested, dare I say pedantic? about words and grammar and spelling and punctuation and writing with a fountain pen. We loved poetry, history, science, and of course botany and birdlife, where he was so much more knowledgeable than I, and he shared his knowledge so generously. We loved crosswords and reading, but above all we loved, perhaps equally, Noetzie and Table Mountain – their challenges, their wildness, their beauty, the incredible feeling that one was in a pristine wilderness despite knowing that the bustling City lay just over the next horizon or our comfortable houses lay waiting just down the Noetzie River or along the rocks.



I will miss my friend Donald enormously, for his warmth and intellect and company and because at heart he was both a very gentle man and a true gentleman.

In Henry, Jan and Donald, Noetzie has lost three major figures and Iona and I again express our condolences to their widows, Petra, Ellen and Anita and to all their families.

P.S. A few copies of the April 2016 Third Edition of my book *“Noetzie – An Illustrated History”* are available at the original price of R600.

Website News

Carel van Gend

Members are reminded of the official Noetzie website, at <http://www.noetzie.co.za>. The site contains information about Noetzie and its history. Publicly available information is available for download in the Documents section, and a Members Only section contains information for members of the NCOA.

Also on the website is a gallery of current and historical pictures of Noetzie, its landscapes, flora and fauna. If members of the Noetzie community have any photos they'd like to share, please send them to me at carelvg@gmail.com, and I'll add them to the gallery.

Conservancy Report

Wendy Dewberry
NCOA Environment representative



Olive House Snake

We have seen a good number of snakes this season. Perhaps this is due to the sudden flurry of exciting developments at Noetzie which is discussed by Julie in her article on Building and Development. All the pictures are on the Noetzie Facebook page.



← *Red -lipped Herald*

Resident Puff Adder→



The proposed Knysna Integrated Strategic Development Framework ISDF has been absorbed into the KNYSNA IDP due to ongoing difficulties. Noetzie has been placed within the urban edge, despite numerous attempts to keep Noetzie out of the urban edge and this has significant development framework changes. SANParks and the NCOA have commented and liaised with the municipality but judging from municipal official attitudes it would seem that someone with sway has big development plans for this area.

The 35th Garden Route Conservancy Forum meeting was held at the George Botanical Gardens on 29 October 2016. The individual conservancies report a common threat to natural areas - and that is development. As we enter a development phase at Noetzie it will be important that plans and programmes are mitigated and aligned with the rest of Noetzie. The guest speaker was Mandy Freeman of the Tenikwa Wildlife Awareness and Rehabilitation Centre in the Craggs, just other side of Plettenberg Bay. She spoke on dealing with injured wildlife. Mandy explained how the first 3 days of receiving an injured wild animal is critical and referred to as the "golden hours". The three stages of treatment were described. Species-specific requirements were also highlighted. Rehabilitation processes are costly, labour intensive and time consuming. The ultimate target is to release the wild animal back into appropriate habitat. For successful integration into the wild it is important that the animal retains its identity, retains its fear of humans, re-establishes itself in the ecosystem, must be able to socialize/interact with its own species and contribute to the gene pool.

The Outdoor classroom paths are being kept clear, but the fynbos is moribund and desperately needs a burn. The fear is that if there is no controlled burn, the fynbos will eventually burn without control which is when disaster can happen and property can be destroyed from runaway fires. South Cape FPA 's Dirk Smit has done a site visit and has offered his services.

Dogs over season: There are 2 Blue flag status beaches in Knysna – Brenton-on-sea and Buffalo Bay. From the 1st December to 15 January dogs will only be permitted on these beaches before 9 am and

after 5.30 pm on those beaches, on a lead. All other beaches permit dogs within the confines of by-laws – just common sense stuff like pick up your dog's poo, don't let them bother other beach goers and keep them under control.

The Noetzie Facebook page is proving to be an excellent way to keep members informed in the spirit of beautiful Noetzie with media updates. Currently there are 105 members. If anyone connected to Noetzie - family, friends and regular visitors - would like to be on this secret group, please email Wendy whistle@agnet.co.za to be added. Existing members please upload your December sightings and share with the community.

Building and Development

By Julie Gosling

Old Pezula Castle



At long last the plans for the restoration of Pezula Castle drawn by Quinton 'Doc' Lawson have been passed by Knysna municipality. Built in 1932 by Herbert Henderson, the condition of this old dame has been deteriorating since Ian Henderson sold the property to the previous owners in 2000. The new owner, Dominic, and his father, Tim Gwyn-Jones, have worked closely with Doc to make sure that she is restored to her former glory. It would be great news if we see restoration commencing early in 2017.

Some residents had shown concerns regarding the planning, particularly with respect to brown water waste management from the dwelling. With these concerns in mind the NCOA submitted the following comment to the architects and Knysna municipality:

Our main concern relates to the management of waste water and the risk of sewage spillage and leakage. As you are aware Noetzie does not have a water-borne sewerage system, and there have been a number of leakage incidents reported particularly during the peak holiday season. This has an impact on both the beach & river environments.

It is our reading of your plans that all waste water - black and grey – will be lead to single sump storage, and then automatically pumped to a conservancy tank to be located in the Pezula Castle private parking area. Use will then be made of the municipality's sewage extraction service (Honeysucker) to periodically clear the tank.

No problem there, but could you please ensure that the sump & conservancy tank are generously sized, and that preferably there are two pumps in the sump, with one for back-up in case the other

fails. The conservancy tank capacity should not hold less than say 5,400 litres. Further, it would be desirable if the conservancy tank could be made suitable to accept a future rising main from the Montrose Castle. In recent years there have been leakages from the latter's septic tank / soak away which is concerning.

The NCOA will not support the use of the Old Wagon Road unless this is geometrically & structurally upgraded for the purpose of accommodating the waste from Pezula, the public lavatories, and other properties in the vicinity.

Access for construction vehicles should similarly only use the northern Pezula private access road.

We wish the Gwyn-Jones all the best going forward.

Portion 80 on the Headland

Excavations have begun on the foundations of a new home for Eve Thompson and Richard Robinson. The builder, Manbou, has cordoned off the area with shade cloth, stockpiled the topsoil and carted away the excavated clay and soil.

Portion 73 on Headland

Aubrey and Liz Wynne- Jones have added a swimming pool to their home. Situated in the south eastern corner of the property the pool is built into a wooden deck and has the most spectacular views of the beach, ocean, fynbos and rocks.

Portion 51 River Frontage

Eion and Jan Brown have replaced their very old and undersized septic tank with a modern larger tank. Eion supervised the construction.

Portion 91 on the Beachfront

Keith Stewart is having the castle garden landscaped. A large truckload of plants was recently delivered. The Conrad Hotel management has been told by Keith that they may no longer use the castle as a drop off point for their guest or a turning bay for the shuttles.

Portion 85 Beachfront

The new owners of Lindsay Castle have had the entire photovoltaic array and battery storage system replaced and upgraded. Also a 10 kVA silent diesel generator has been installed.

Echinoderms

Iona Everett



←Pansy shell

Sea Urchin→



Sea Star↓



While I was in England visiting my family, my granddaughter asked if she could go rock-pooling with me when they came to Noetzie. It is a favourite activity of mine and I spend many happy hours poking around in the rock pools. I came back to South Africa and almost immediately had an NCOA Committee meeting at which it was mentioned that live Pansy shells or Sand Dollars were seen on the beach all along the lagoon. My dilemma as to what to write about in this edition was solved.

Echinodiscus bisperforatus or Pansy shells

The term pansy shell (sea cookie or snapper biscuit in New Zealand, or sand dollar in America) refers to species of extremely flattened, burrowing sea urchins belonging to the order Clypeasteroidea, which live in shallow sheltered bays and estuaries.

They are covered in velvet-textured “spines” and fine “hairs”. The mouth of the sand dollar is located on the bottom of its body at the centre of the petal-like pattern. They feed on crustacean larvae and algae. The name pansy shell comes from the five-petal flower pattern they have on the top of their skeleton beautifully illustrated in the picture below. Even though they are called shells, the pansy is in fact the skeleton of a sea urchin.



Pansy shells can be found along the south coast of South Africa, up to Mozambique. They are flat sea urchins and they feed on microorganisms in the sand. During a study of the pansy shell population in Plettenberg Bay in 1991 (Bentley A.C and Cockcroft A.C.), two colonies were studied, one along Robberg Beach and one on Lookout beach. It was found that pansy shells occur in waters 4-10 m in depth and lie buried in approximately 50 mm of sand (none were found on the sand surface). The study also showed that they seem to live in patchy colonies with some areas having a high density of pansy shells, while others had none.



←Pansy shell shape found on Noetzie beach – Picture by Wendy Dewberry, who says “There were hundreds of them all next to the river along the length”.

Like most echinoderms, pansy shells are broadcast spawners, meaning that the females and males release their eggs and sperm into the water simultaneously. The pansy larvae will spend months in the water column growing in size and searching for a suitable habitat to settle on and metamorphose into their adult form. Pansy shells prefer fine, well sorted sediment that is mostly found in log-spiral bays of the southern and eastern coasts of South Africa.

Pansy shells were classified as an endangered species in 1973 in South Africa and protected by the Sea Fisheries Act of 1973: No. 82. In 2004 their conservation classification was downgraded from ‘endangered’ to ‘protected species’ under the Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act 10 of 2004). To qualify for protected species status in South Africa the species needs to be indigenous, of high conservation value or national importance and requires national protection. To collect washed-up shells for souvenirs does not necessarily effect their survival because at this stage they are already dead. However, the collection of live specimens for the purpose of drying and selling can have severe consequences for the survival of the species and it is illegal to do so without a permit.

Echinoidea or Sea Urchins

When on a shell collecting expedition at Noetzie, finding the distinctive green pincushion shell is still an excitement.



The sea urchin is found across the ocean floors worldwide. They frequently inhabit rock pools but can live in open water up to 30 m in depth. World wide there are some 200 different species of sea urchin, and they come in all shapes and sizes. The red sea urchin (not found in our waters) is the longest living creature on earth, with some living for more than 200 years.

Sea urchins have a round shaped body and long spines that come off it. The spines of the sea urchin are used for protection, to move about, and to trap food particles that are floating around in the water. Sea urchins have five paired rows of tiny tube feet which are found amongst the spines. The feet of the sea urchin have suckers which help it to move about, capture food, and to hold onto the ocean floor.

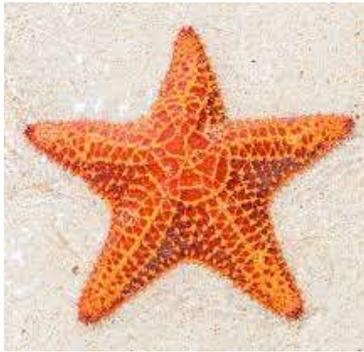


Sea urchins are omnivorous animals and therefore eat both plant and animal matter. The sea urchin mainly feeds on algae on the coral and rocks, along with decomposing matter such as dead fish, mussels, sponges and barnacles.

Sea urchins are preyed upon by many predators that inhabit their marine environment, but also those animals that don't. The main predators of the sea urchin are crabs, large fish, sea-otters, eels, birds and humans.

But standing on a live sea urchin is not a joke as they release venom through both their spines and pedicellaria if you unintentionally step on one. If you do step on one then get out of the water as soon as you can. If a barb is stuck in your foot, get the spine out as quickly as possible. The best way to do it is with a pair of tweezers; not something you always have with you. Carefully grasp the end of the spine and remove it slowly, pulling it straight out so that it doesn't break off and leave pieces embedded in the skin.

Asteroideae or Sea Star.



There are many beautiful if well camouflaged Sea stars in the rock pools around Noetzie, some with legs, others almost just a simple pentagon.



The largest of the pentagonal ones that I've seen was about the size of a five rand coin but most of them are about the size

of a two rand coin. Starfish cannot swim, and they do not use gills to breathe.

Marine scientists have undertaken the difficult task of replacing the beloved starfish's common name with sea star because in fact the starfish is not a fish. It's an echinoderm, closely related to sea urchins and pansy shells.

There are some 2,000 species of sea star living in all the world's oceans, from tropical habitats to the cold seafloor. There are no fresh water Sea stars. The five-arm varieties are the most common, hence their name, but species with 10, 20, and even 40 arms exist.

They have bony, calcified skin, which protects them from most predators, and many wear striking colours that camouflage them or scare off potential attackers. Beyond their distinctive shape, sea stars are famous for their ability to regenerate limbs, and in some cases, entire bodies. It can take up to a year to do this. They accomplish this by housing most or all of their vital organs in their arms. Some require the central body to be intact to regenerate, but a few species can grow an entirely new sea star from just a portion of a severed limb.

Starfish have tube feet operated by a hydraulic system. Watching them turn back over is fascinating. The mouth is at the centre of the oral or lower surface. They are opportunistic feeders and are mostly predators on benthic invertebrates. Several species have specialized feeding behaviours including eversion of their stomachs. Using tiny, suction-cupped tube feet, they pry open clams or oysters, and their sack-like cardiac stomach emerges from their mouth and oozes inside the shell. The stomach then envelops the prey to digest it, and finally withdraws back into the body.



Instead of blood, sea stars have a water vascular system, in which the sea star pumps sea water through its sieve plate, or madreporite, into its tube feet to extend them. Muscles within the tube feet retract them. The starfish have microscopic eyes at the end of each arm; this enables the starfish to view movement and differentiate between light and dark. They don't, however, see much detail. They have complex life cycles and can reproduce both sexually and asexually.

The fossil record for starfish is ancient, dating back to the Ordovician Era around 450 million years ago.

Finally

We hope the information contained in this Newsletter and the others sent out during the year is of interest and value to all homeowners, particularly those who only visit for short periods of the year. We would like to thank all those who support the NCOA and its activities.

Particular thanks are due to the committed homeowners who volunteer their time and efforts to assist in various ways, all helping to make Noetzie a special place and a destination worth looking forward to when holidays come around.

The Committee of the NCOA would like to thank their families whose support is enormous and without whom the NCOA would be unable to function to the benefit of all owners.