

KABELJOUS NEWS – October 2018

Trails: All the existing trails have been cleared and from now on will only require regular maintenance. Dirk Teubes has taken the first group on a guided walk and we plan to organize more guided walks, especially over the summer holiday period when we can introduce visitors to the reserve. Indeed, the best way to support the reserve is to visit regularly and walk the trails – the presence of concerned people prevents illegal activity and keeps the trails open.



Trail signs: Dirk has made a series of wooden signs with names for the various trails and loops in the reserve. A donation from Conservation Outcomes (Wentzel Coetzer) will be used for additional signage. No excuse to get lost now!

Clearing aliens: Barry Hickson and his team have continued clearing cactus, a prickly business much appreciated as this pest is difficult to eradicate. He is still looking for help with removal of jointed cactus; protective gear will be required because it is prickly and Wednesdays are preferable. Please contact Barry on 0782563248 if you can help. Clearing of Rooikrans by Dirk and his team is ongoing. Here Barry and Jenny are looking at a pile of cleared jointed cactus.



Spring flowers: the reserve is looking great with a profusion of flowers – these vygies were near the creek. This is a great time to try the trails and enjoy

birding and flowers.

Rain: the lagoon and creek have filled to levels not seen in a long time. We are waiting to see when it overtops the barrier dunes to create a temporary mouth and drain to the sea. Right now some lawns and parking areas are flooded so a drop in level of 30 – 50cm would be ideal. Hopefully there will be no artificial mouth opening as natural is always better!



Flora & Fauna

Hester is continuing collection, photography and compilation of a plant list with help from Caryl Logie and Richard Cowling. The count now stands at 150 species photographed and identified and is continuing. The rains and strong vegetation growth seem to have brought more animals into the reserve, recent activity including bushbuck, duiker, bushpig, aardvark and otter. Among birds the fish eagles are back but the lagoon is still too full and deep for waders. Bird photos would be a nice addition to our website if anyone has suitable pictures.

Website and Facebook Page

Catherine Hayward compiled our pages. She is currently abroad for some months but is continuing with the website, which now includes a bird list and flower photographs. It would be nice to include photos of birds typical of the reserve so if anyone has suitable photos that can be used please contact her directly at: catherinehayward10@gmail.com.

Our Website can be viewed here: <https://6330krag.wordpress.com/>

and Facebook Page here: https://www.facebook.com/KRAG6330/?modal=admin_todo_tour

KRAG Status

A local firm of accountants (Moore Stephens, J-Bay) have initiated the process of registering KRAG as a Non-Profit Organisation (NPO), so we can play a full role in helping to manage and conserve the reserve and its expanded extent in future. This is expected to take some months and Johan Joubert has kindly offered to assist with costs. A first step will be for the committee to rework the constitution to ensure that KRAG meets the criteria for NPO status. We will keep you posted as this takes shape.

Status of the reserve

Wentzel Coetzer from Conservation Outcomes reports as follows: *One of the aims of KRAG is to get the reserve formally declared as a Nature Reserve in order to ensure that it remains well protected into perpetuity. KRAG is therefore continuing to work closely with partners to achieve this goal. A meeting was recently held with key officials within the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) in East London to highlight the importance of getting the reserve formally declared and to discuss possible ways of overcoming the challenges that are currently preventing the reserve from being declared. The importance of expanding the reserve to include the adjoining Papiessfontein land was also discussed. In the coming months, we will continue efforts to establish good relationships and, where possible, partnerships with the relevant conservation departments that would enable KRAG to achieve its long-term goals of protecting and managing the Kabeljous Nature Reserve.*

Sponsorship

The funds from the Supertubes Foundation that helped to get us started are running low. Although some additional support has come in we are still looking for more financial support. If you want to donate or know anyone we can approach please let Grieta, Hennie or Anton know. Grieta's contact is: dirk@fluidcontrols.co.za

Secretary

We are looking for someone on our mailing list to join the committee as secretary. Please contact Anton if you are interested. At this stage it would involve just attending four meetings a year and compiling brief minutes, plus some assistance with the newsletter and a little correspondence.

Next Meeting

The committee will meet in mid November to finalise changes to the constitution in order to meet the requirements for registering KRAG as an NPO. In addition, we envisage a general public meeting in November or December that will include a presentation and slide show by Wentzel, date and details to be announced closer to the time.