

enviroworks

SPECIAL EDITION: BIODIVERSITY

Volume 1/10 June 2010

Biannual environmental newsletter of the City of Cape Town

Published by the City of Cape Town Environmental Resource Management Department in partnership with a range of other City departments.

2010 – INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity: life-sustaining, fragile ... and in *our* hands

**Take your
first step!**

Contact us to
receive your copy
of *Enviroworks*
electronically, rather
than in print.

What YOU can do to help save our natural heritage

Baboons – asset or liability?

Learn...

The least you need to
know about
biodiversity and more

Enjoy...

Discover the False Bay
Ecology Park– get your
pull-out poster inside

Win!

See page 12 for an
exciting competition
for young artists!



CITY OF CAPE TOWN | ISIKHOKO SASEKAPA | STAD KAAPSTAD

THIS CITY WORKS FOR YOU

Contents



Clifford Dorse

Cover photo: The endangered Western leopard toad is found only in Cape Town, living primarily in urban gardens, and nowhere else on the planet. Amphibians, which are facing the greatest risk of extinction globally, are important indicators of healthy ecosystems. (See page 20)

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This newsletter is printed on SAPPI Triple Green paper, an environmentally friendly paper stock made from chlorine-free sugar cane fibre to support sustainable afforestation in South Africa.



The City works in close partnership with a range of organisations and local communities on biodiversity issues:



Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning



City Departments include:

- Bulk Water Department
- City Parks Department
- Planning & Building Development Management Department
- Roads & Stormwater Department
- Spatial Planning & Urban Design Department
- Sport & Recreation Department
- Strategic Development Information & GIS Department
- Tourism Department



Thanks to everyone who gave feedback on the previous issue of *Enviroworks* – we hope you like the new format!

WIN!

Give us your feedback on this issue of *Enviroworks* before 3 September 2010 (see contact details below), and stand a chance to win two tickets to the Two Oceans Aquarium.

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 Website: www.capetown.gov.za/environment

This publication is available online as well. In the interest of the environment, you are encouraged to subscribe to the electronic version of this publication instead. Please send an e-mail to enviroworks@capetown.gov.za to receive a pdf version by e-mail in future.

Biodiversity – what’s in it for you?

As humans, we seem to have ‘tamed’ Mother Nature. Unlike the other creatures that share the planet with us, we drastically change the landscape through our lifestyles. So what if we lose a few plants or animals, right?

Here’s the thing: In nature, everything is interconnected and has a role to play – as humans, we just don’t always see the broader picture, until it is too late. (Read the case studies on page 9 to see just how wrong we have been in the past.) We may soon find that we have effectively destroyed our own means of survival.

Both our terrestrial and marine biodiversity are valuable parts of our heritage, and also play an important role in maintaining a healthy and sustainable urban environment. (Turn the page to see exactly how dependent we are on biodiversity for our survival.) Our biodiversity is a powerful driver of tourism, economic growth and social upliftment.

“So what if we lose a few plants or animals, right?”

Yet, due to humankind’s badly managed interference with nature in the past (and even today), we now have more threatened species than any other metropolitan area in the world. The City is committed to minimise these losses, and save our precious biodiversity, but it needs your help.

What’s that word?

Biodiversity refers to the variety of all life on earth: animals, plants and humans. It is also the variety of ecosystems and habitats in which we all live.

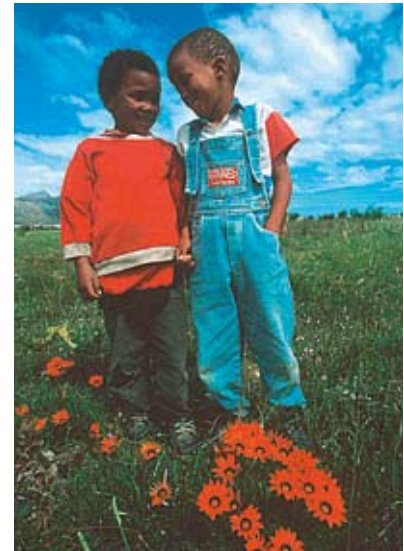
Many of the words or terms used in this newsletter may be new to you. If you are wondering what any of these terms mean, visit www.capetown.gov.za/environment and click on “Env. dictionary”.

Therefore, this issue of Enviroworks is dedicated to our amazing biodiversity and how we can look after it today, so that our children and grandchildren will still be able to enjoy it long after we are gone.



Anette van der Spuy

Young hikers taking a break at Kogelberg



Two friends exploring Harmony Flats Nature Reserve

! **The least you need to know**

In nature, everything is interconnected and plays a role – a loss of species will ultimately have a very negative impact on us as humans.



Children discovering life on the rocky shores

More information

BIODIVERSITY: www.cbd.int; www.panda.org/biodiversity; www.biodiversityhotspots.org; www.iucn.org/iyb/about/biodiversity



Our free life-support system

Biodiversity sustains human life by maintaining the most fundamental resources – air and water. However, the value of healthy biodiversity goes much further than that: We also depend on it for our emotional and social well-being.

Healthy biodiversity provides us with a number of natural goods and services, which can be divided into four main types:



The least you need to know

Nature provides us with everything we need to survive. Replacing these goods and services (even if it were possible) would cost billions and billions every year. Best we take care of this precious system!

Ecosystem goods, such as

- food resources, raw materials, medicines and genetic stocks of plants; and
- pollinators, which play a very important part in agriculture.

Ecosystem services, such as

- the protection of water resources;
- protection against erosion;
- nutrient storage and recycling;
- carbon breakdown and oxygen production;
- contribution to climate stability;
- maintenance of ecosystems; and
- flood attenuation.

Existence benefits, such as

- recreation;
- tourism;
- cultural/spiritual value;
- research;
- education; and
- job creation.

Option benefits, such as

- the potential of finding value in plants through research, for instance an important plant chemical that can be used as medicine or for plant breeding.

That's quite a bit that we get for free! The cost of replacing these goods and services (even if it were possible) would be extremely high, and not nearly as sustainable as a healthy ecosystem fulfilling the same function (see text box on the opposite page). It therefore makes economic and development sense to move towards sustainability.



Wetlands, such as these at Edith Stephens Wetland Park, purify our water.

CLIMATE CHANGE FACT

Climate change and its effect on our lives has become a worldwide concern. Our natural ecosystems, and healthy biodiversity in these systems, also play a very important role in helping to reduce the effects of, and adapting to, climate change.



More information

CLIMATE CHANGE: Previous issue of Enviroworks (www.capetown.gov.za/enviroworks); World Bank's "Convenient solutions to an inconvenient truth: Ecosystem-based approaches to climate change" on www.issuu.com/world.bank.publications/docs/9780821381267

The economic value of biodiversity

– an overlooked golden goose



Because ecosystem services and goods are so basic, they are usually overlooked. A recent study attached the following estimate rand values to what we get from our city's biodiversity:

- Tourism: R965 million to R3 billion per year
- Marine resources (fishing, etc.): R1,12 million per kilometres of coastline per year
- Ecosystem services: R1,2–R6 billion per year (replacement value estimate in 2009)

Also, there are other, less tangible benefits we reap from biodiversity:

- We have free access to beautiful natural environments, where we can relax and socialise. (With worldwide studies showing a link between healthy individuals/communities and natural open spaces, this is a priceless benefit.)
- Another important community benefit of biodiversity is job creation and skills training – our nature reserves alone employ hundreds of people, including those with limited skills and training.

- Cape Town's property prices are generally high by South African standards. People who live here are usually willing to pay a lifestyle premium, i.e. they will pay more for a house close to the mountain, a property with a view, bordering parks or other natural areas. A study linked to the rehabilitation of the Silvermine River, for example, showed a substantial increase in property values in the area after the rehabilitation project was completed.

How much would you be willing to pay to make sure that this will still be available to your children?



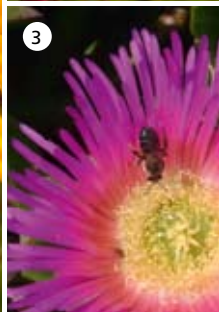
Anton Pauw

WILL THE NEXT WAR BE OVER WATER?

Imagine if our biodiversity no longer provided us with these 'gifts'. Things like clean water, nitrogen for the soil, and medicine for the sick would become far more expensive. Life as we know it will change – and not for the better. It is not too late to turn the tide – but we will ALL have to take responsibility and do our bit to conserve biodiversity.

Cape Town's biodiversity – unique and irreplaceable

Cape Town is known internationally as a biodiversity hot spot without equal. It is set in a 'natural garden' with over 3 000 different plant species. However, the 'garden' is vanishing before our eyes as the city grows at an alarming pace.



What makes our city unique is that it has such a high concentration of plant species that occur only here (also called 'endemic species'). Cape Town is located within the Cape Floral Kingdom (CFK), the smallest yet most diverse of the world's six floral kingdoms (and the only one to be confined to a single country). The CFK contains half of South Africa's total biodiversity in only 4% of the country's surface area.

There are more than 9 000 species in this region, 80% of which are fynbos plants, and most of which are endemic.

"... the most diverse of the world's six floral kingdoms ..."

Around 2 400 are threatened, and another 300 species are critically endangered. We know of 29 plant species that are now officially extinct in this region – which means that not only have we lost something of beauty, but we have also missed

out on an opportunity to use these plants for other potential (as yet undiscovered) purposes.

In the City of Cape Town area, we have 3 250 plant species. (That is 30% of the species that are found in the CFK in less than 3% of the CFK's surface area.) Of these, 319 are threatened, and 13 species are known to be extinct already.

Further unique features of Cape Town are the national park within our city's boundaries (Table Mountain National Park), our world-renowned national botanical garden (Kirstenbosch), and more than 30 nature reserves and natural areas.

Cape Town's nature reserves – precious pieces of living treasure – are linked by roadside verges, commons and indigenous gardens, to form a Biodiversity Network together with the Table Mountain National Park and several provincial and private reserves.

The least you need to know
 Cape Town is regarded internationally as one of the most biodiverse places on earth – we have a rich natural heritage that we should treasure.

1. False tiger moth (*Agaristidae* family) on a yellow daisy
 2. Rose daisy (*Disa racemosa*)
 3. Sour fig (*Carpobrotus acinaciformis*)
 4. Assassin bug on pendoring (*Putterlickia pyracantha*) fruit

5. King protea (*Protea cynaroides*)
 6. Metallic longhorn beetle (*Promeces longipes*) on an Athanasia daisy

Anette van der Spuy

Johan du Preez

Johan du Preez

Tourism drawcard



Table Mountain from the Blaauwberg Conservation Area (BCA)

With its long, beautiful coastline, its rugged mountains, and its breathtaking natural beauty, it's no wonder that Cape Town is voted one of the top international destinations among tourists year after year. However, would tourists still flock to our shores if our natural beauty no longer existed?

Why not be a tourist in your own city? Use the pull-out poster in this issue to explore the False Bay Ecology Park, or download a booklet on all the nature reserves in Cape Town from our website – for free!

CASE STUDY

The long-tongued fly and its unique 'clients'

Anton Pauw



Some of our fynbos flowers are pollinated by a very unusual fly with a very long tongue and an equally long name. The *Moegistorhynchus longirostris* has a tongue of up to 8 cm long, which is five times its

body length. It is attracted to pale-coloured flowers with red markings, such as the long-tubed painted lady, pypkalossie and pienk koringblom. The problem is that this fly is now extinct in many parts of the lowlands

of Cape Town. As a result, the wide range of flowers it pollinates may now also face extinction, as only the long-tongued fly was able to pollinate these flowers with their deep and narrow structure.

More information

CAPE TOWN'S BIODIVERSITY: www.capetown.gov.za/environment;
www.capetown.gov.za/en/environmentalresourcemanagement/publications
 DIFFERENT SPECIES MAKING UP OUR BIODIVERSITY: www.biodiversityexplorer.org



Our well-being under threat

If our biodiversity goes, so may we. That is why it makes sense to understand the various threats to biodiversity, so that we can all work towards preventing or managing them.

No. 1 threat

Habitat loss due to urbanisation and agriculture

Rapid development destroys and breaks up ('fragments') remaining natural spaces, and therefore also the biodiversity these areas support. The Biodiversity Network aims to help us plan future developments in a more environmentally sensitive way.

No. 2 threat

Invasive species

Species such as Port Jackson, rooikrans, hakea, eucalyptus, kikuyu, etc. outcompete our indigenous species, and change the ecosystem. Other invasive species include the Argentine ant, mallard duck, Indian house crow, introduced fish such as carp and barbel, and feral and domestic cats.

Inappropriate fires

For fynbos to grow it needs to burn. However, balance is important – if it burns too frequently, or not at all, we may lose the entire rich fynbos community.

Overexploitation

Stock farmers overuse grazing areas, which causes alien grasses to take over. Our marine resources are harvested (and often poached) to such an extent that many species cannot recover.

"...balance is important..."

Water pollution and changes to flows

Water pollution and changes to water flows: Pollution harms our indigenous vegetation, while less sensitive alien species do not even feel it. Also, by changing water flows, such as through drainage and the canalisation of streams, we completely alter our wetlands.

Crime

Unlike our indigenous fynbos, which is low-growing, unmanaged alien vegetation creates bushy areas. These 'green' areas are regarded as a liability (rather than an asset) in many communities, as they provide criminals with a place to hide.

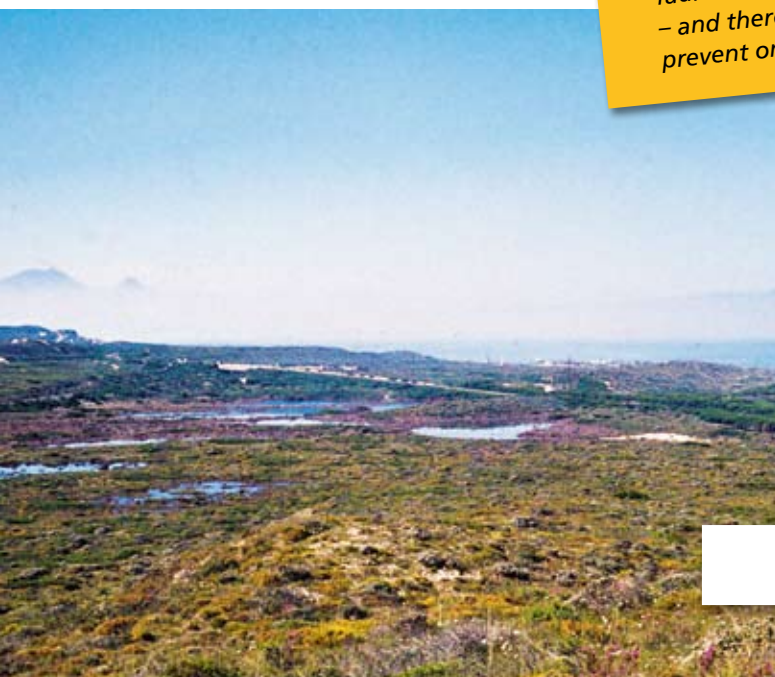
The dumping of rubble and toxic waste, as well as poaching and arson, also have a direct effect on biodiversity.

The City's strategy on biodiversity management, including the use of the Biodiversity Network, aims to address many of these threats. (Read more about the Biodiversity Network on page 14.) However, we can all play our part – see page 16 for more information.



The least you need to know

There are many threats to biodiversity, and subsequently also to our own well-being. However, all of these threats exist through the fault of humans – either directly or indirectly – and therefore they are our responsibility to prevent or manage.



As these photos of Mitchells Plain show, urbanisation has changed our landscape dramatically since the 1970s.

CASE STUDIES

How biodiversity loss can snowball and affect our livelihood in unforeseen ways



A dramatic example from abroad

When whaling was still permitted, a community of fishermen lobbied for all the whales in their fishing waters to be killed, as the fishermen and the whales competed for fish. No-one could foresee how this plan would backfire:

1. Because the whale population was dramatically reduced, the killer whales in the region (who would usually hunt younger whales) started hunting the seals.
2. The seals also became fewer, and the killer whales began to target otters.
3. As the otters became fewer and fewer, their prey, such as sea urchins, grew vigorously.
4. The urchins destroyed the kelp forests, which, until then, acted as fish nurseries.
5. The fish larvae were exposed and vulnerable to a variety of sea life.
6. Due to the lower numbers of fish the fishermen lost their jobs, as their source of income was destroyed.

From *National Geographic Wild*, in a documentary called "A Life Among Whales" by Dr Roger Payne

Closer to home ...

In 1998, Wildevoëlvlei in the Noordhoek catchment area for the first time 'rebelled' against human abuse, and, despite rehabilitation efforts, has never again been quite the same:

1. Pollution from various sources seeped into the vlei.
2. This killed the natural pondweed in a portion of the vlei.
3. This in turn led to the bloom of blue-green algae, which subsequently became toxic.
4. At the outflow of the system, the mussels (that filter-feed) absorbed the algal toxins from the water.
5. The mussels became toxic.
6. People (and animals who eat mussels) could no longer harvest these mussels, even though for many people these mussels were an important source of food.

In 2007, the same scenario happened at Rietvlei, where more than 60 tons of fish died. The environment can take only so much abuse ...



The least you need to know

Biodiversity is like a species house of cards, with the human species also in there somewhere. By removing species at the bottom of this house of cards (whether directly or indirectly), we too will come crashing down.

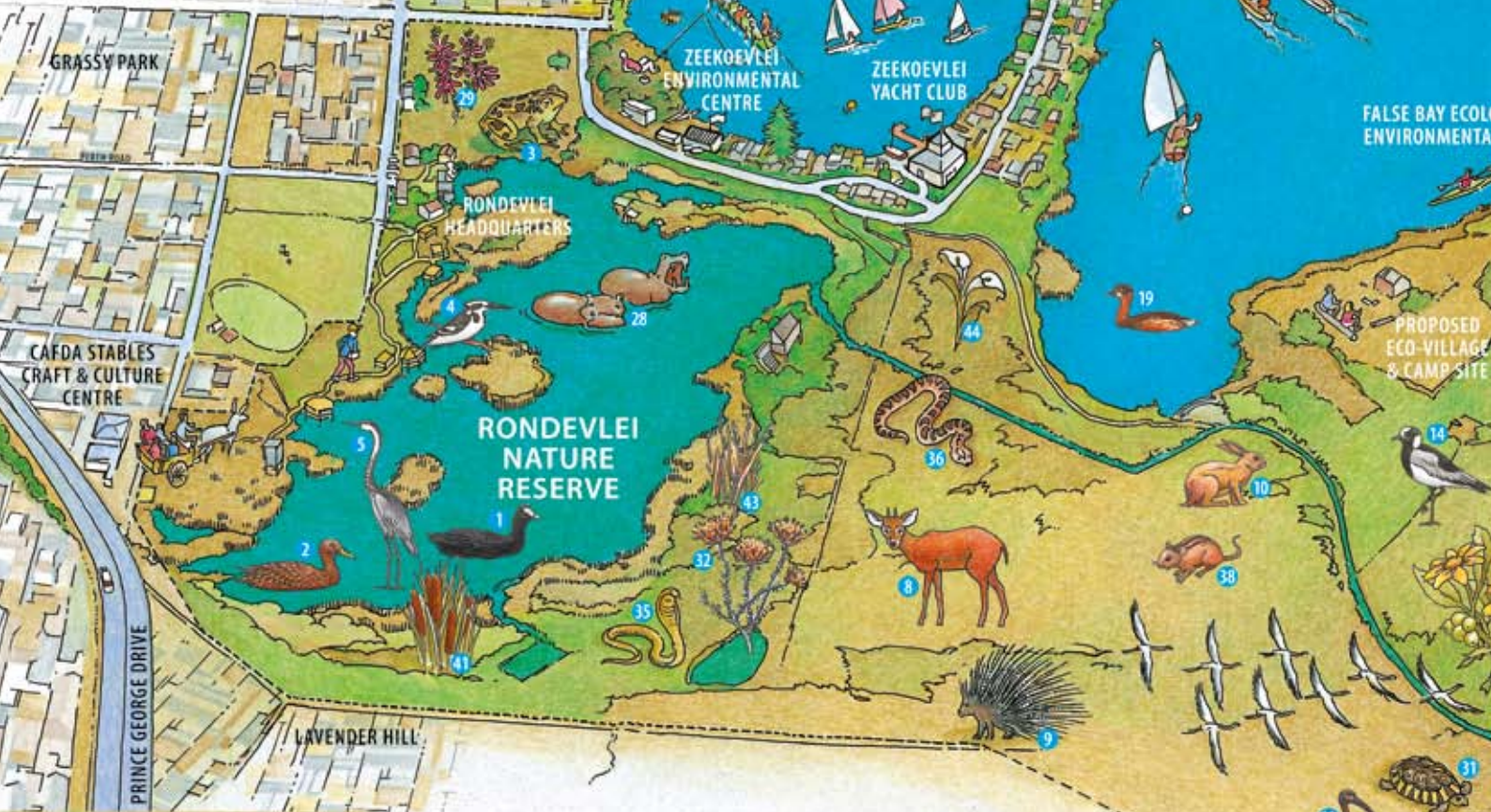
More information

THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY:
www.capetown.gov.za/naturereserves and click on Nature Reserves booklet link. See page 73.



KEY TO SPECIES

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Red-knobbed Coot | 25 African Black Oystercatcher |
| 2 Yellow-billed Duck | 26 Black-necked Grebe |
| 3 Western Leopard Toad | 27 Cape Rain Daisy |
| 4 Pied Kingfisher | 28 Hippopotamus |
| 5 Grey Heron | 29 Cape Flats Erica |
| 6 Hartlaub's Gull | 30 Cape Clawless Otter |
| 7 Great White Pelican | 31 Angulate Tortoise |
| 8 Cape Grysbok | 32 White Bristle Bush, Blombos |
| 9 Porcupine | 33 Water Mongoose |
| 10 Cape Hare | 34 African Spoonbill |
| 11 African Sacred Ibis | 35 Cape Cobra |
| 12 Little Egret | 36 Puff Adder |
| 13 Carp | 37 Barber's Ranger Butterfly |
| 14 Blacksmith Plover | 38 Striped Mouse |
| 15 <i>Ferraria crispa</i> | 39 African Fish Eagle |
| 16 Steenbok | 40 African Darter |
| 17 Small Spotted Genet | 41 Bullrush |
| 18 Greater Flamingo | 42 Bushstick-berry, Bietou |
| 19 Little Grebe | 43 Thatching Reed, Restio |
| 20 Curlew Sandpiper | 44 Arum Lily |
| 21 Little Stint | |
| 22 Black Swift | |
| 23 Sandwich Tern | |
| 24 Caspian Tern | |



False Bay Ecology Park



False Bay Ecology Park is an important multi-functional area, providing numerous environmental, social and economic benefits and opportunities for the citizens of Cape Town, especially those from surrounding disadvantaged areas. It is the result of collaboration between various City Departments and other partners. The Park is comprised of different component areas, as shown on this map. The 6 key areas include Zeekoevlei Nature Reserve, Rondevlei Nature Reserve, the Cape Flats Waste Water Treatment Works, the Coastal Park Landfill, a section of adjacent coastline and the CAFDA Stables Craft and Culture Centre. Whilst these might not usually be considered part of a conservation area, they reflect the ecological cycle present in our city: extraction, production, consumption and decomposition.

Vision

To become one of the leading conservation, environmental education, recreation, and ecotourism centres in the country, providing environmental, tourism, social and economic opportunities and benefits for all Capetonians, particularly those in nearby disadvantaged areas.

Objectives

- Conserving and enhancing biodiversity
- Providing and promoting environmental education
- Creating recreational and tourism nodes and opportunities
- Striving to create job opportunities
- Striving to achieve financial self sufficiency of the Park





More information

GREEN MAP and NATURE RESERVES BOOKLET - Other good sources for planning your weekends are the Cape Town Green Map (www.capetowngreenmap.co.za) and the Nature Reserves booklet (www.capetown.gov.za/naturereserves).



Poster competition

– **WIN** exciting prizes!

Age groups
Up to 7 years
8–10 years
11–14 years
15–18 years

Create an A2, A3 or A4 size poster to make people aware of the value of our biodiversity and encourage them to protect it and stand to win one of many prizes.

Main prize – take your pick!

A bush adventure with 10 friends!

You and ten of your friends could win an exclusive outing to Rondevlei Nature Reserve, where your very own ranger will show you around, and take you to see porcupines, live snakes, the aquarium, and the lookout towers with their fitted telescopes.

A bush-camp sleepover on your very own island!

You and a friend (and your parents ... boring) get to sleep over at the Island Bush Camp at Rondevlei Nature Reserve, where you can fish for carp from the jetties, or simply 'hang out' in a hammock. See if you can spot our shy hippos while taking in all the sounds of nature ...

How to enter

E-mail your entry to enviroworks@capetown.gov.za with 'Poster competition' in the subject line.

OR

Post your entry to Enviroworks Poster Competition, Environmental Resource Management Department, City of Cape Town, PO Box 16548, Vlaeberg 8018.

**Entries close on
3 September 2010.**

Other prizes include complimentary tickets to Rondevlei Nature Reserve, a solar garden light, a battery-free flashlight and radio, notebook and pencil from recycled material, a can crusher, Smart Living Handbooks, and a range of other books.



More about Rondevlei Nature Reserve

The wonderfully peaceful Rondevlei Nature Reserve is part of the False Bay Ecology Park. It is only a 20-minute drive from the hustle and bustle of the city centre. Visit this reserve, and be amazed at the natural beauty of the vlei and its many birds. Keep your eyes peeled for the grysbok, Cape clawless otter, Cape grey mongoose, and of course, the ever-present family of hippos. Low-profile and shy by nature, the hippos often sneak a peek at visitors when they least expect it – so, don't forget your camera.



Rules

- The competition closes on 3 September 2010.
- Participants must be the correct age for their category as on the closing date.
- All posters must be children's own work.
- Only two posters per child will be allowed.
- The City of Cape Town reserves the right to publish or use all posters, with acknowledgement to the artist.
- Winners will be announced in the December 2010 issue of Enviroworks.
- Prizes cannot be exchanged, and there is no cash option.
- The judges' decision will be final, and no correspondence will be entered into in this regard.
- An entry implies adherence to these rules.
- E-mailed entries should be in jpeg format, and no more than 1 megabyte in size, but should be available in higher resolution on request.
- Please remember to include the entrant's name, age and contact number if e-mailing entries.
- Receipt of entries will not be confirmed.

The least you need to know

Not only can children give their creativity free reign with our competition, but they also stand to win great prizes. Even better – their posters can help us change the minds and hearts of people, so that we can all care for our environment together!

More information

THE COMPETITION: www.capetown.gov.za/biodiversitycompetition

RONDEVLEI NATURE RESERVE: www.rondevlei.co.za; www.capetown.gov.za/naturereserves; www.imvubu.co.za

Are we racing towards mass extinction?



Extinctions may be a natural part of life on our planet, but as humans, we are accelerating the process immensely in our continuous search for food and a place to stay.

It is estimated that 50% of the world's fauna and flora could be on their way to extinction within 100 years. This fast rate of extinction has only occurred five times since the start of 'complex

life', and was always due to natural catastrophes (such as the meteorite crash that probably resulted in the extinction of dinosaurs). Our planet is facing yet another mass extinction, but this time, it will be due to humankind. We develop and pave over entire landscapes; we cut (or burn) down forests; we pollute our oceans and rivers; we deplete our ozone layer, and populate almost every

place imaginable – and we usually do this with little regard for the species who were there before us.

Fortunately, we are rational beings, who can – if we choose to – stop this alarming extinction before it snowballs and destroys us in the process. Across the world, on our continent, in our cities, and increasingly also in average households, people are joining hands to save biodiversity.

A shared responsibility

Let's look at some of the current initiatives to protect biodiversity, from a global to city-specific level.



Globally

2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity, with 22 May the International Day for Biological Diversity. The parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (see box below) committed themselves to achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss at a global, regional and national level by 2010. These targets will be reviewed at the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010.



Africa

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of local governments and government organisations that have made a commitment to sustainable development. ICLEI Africa's main biodiversity initiative is Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB). (Read section on South Africa below for more on LAB.)



South Africa

- The global urban biodiversity pilot project called Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB) involves a select group of local and regional authorities across the world. It aims to improve biodiversity management at local government level.
- In their own words, the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) is responsible "for exploring, revealing, celebrating and championing biodiversity for the benefit and enjoyment of all of South Africa's people".

The Convention on Biological Diversity, signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, promotes sustainable development. It recognises that biodiversity is not only about plants, animals and micro-organisms and their ecosystems, but also about people and their need for fresh air and water, food, medicine, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment.

GLOBALLY: www.cbd.int

AFRICA: www.iclei.org/africa

SOUTH AFRICA: www.iclei.org/lab; www.sanbi.org and <http://.bgis.sanbi.org>

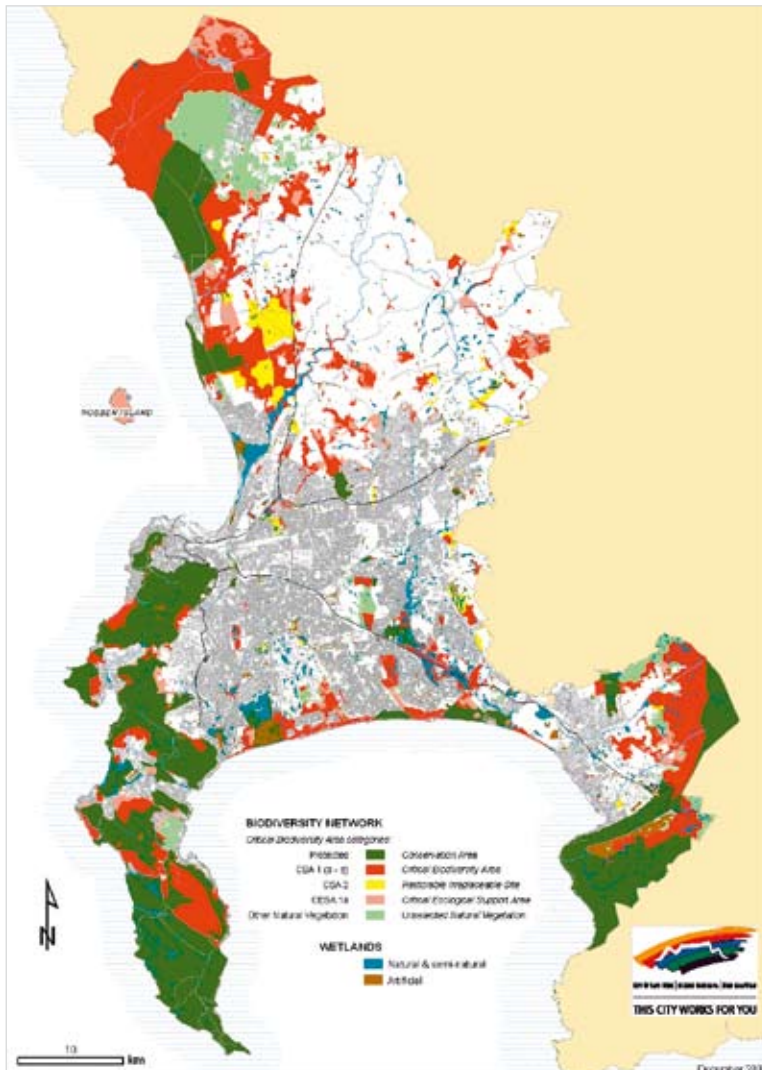
A shared responsibility (continued)

City of Cape Town

The City's Biodiversity Strategy falls under the Integrated Metropolitan Environmental Policy (IMEP). Also, the City approved the Local Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (LBSAP) in May 2009, and has further signed the CAPE (Cape Action for People and the Environment) Memorandum of Understanding; the Durban Commitment (together with 21 other world cities as part of the City's participation in LAB), and the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Countdown 2010.

Furthermore, the City and its partners have identified a network of sites, called the Biodiversity Network, which needs to be protected in order to conserve a representative sample of Cape Town's unique biodiversity, thereby promoting sustainable development.

The Biodiversity Network



Protecting our world-famous coastline

In a bid to prevent further degradation of Cape Town's coastline, the City of Cape Town is busy establishing a coastal protection zone (CPZ). The CPZ will be managed as a coastal conservancy that aims to protect the natural processes in the area, whilst supporting appropriate social and recreational activities as well.

A future issue of *Enviroworks* will focus specifically on coastal and marine issues, so look out for that!

Stewardship: Now private landowners can help conserve biodiversity

At present, 80% of the land that contains important biodiversity does not lie within formally protected areas, but is privately or jointly owned land. The dedicated biodiversity stewardship programme of CapeNature, the Western Cape's body for nature conservation, offers a range of conservation options that aim to set up positive partnerships with landowners and to support and encourage them as they take on the responsibility of managing and protecting the natural assets in their care. In order to support this, landowners could qualify for certain benefits with regard to land that has been set aside for conservation. (Visit www.capenature.co.za and click on Programmes, Stewardship.)

New: Biodiversity showcase garden in Green Point Park

A biodiversity showcase garden has been designed and constructed within the newly developed Green Point Park, which is expected to become a multi-purpose open space and public facility.

The biodiversity showcase garden, containing our region's indigenous biodiversity and demonstrating environmentally responsible gardening practices, will be an educational and entertaining section of the park, and will act as a major attraction to both local and foreign visitors. The establishment of the garden is part of the City of Cape Town's commitment to the international LAB initiative.

More information

WHAT THE CITY IS DOING: www.capetown.gov.za/environment

BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND NETWORK: www.capetown.gov.za/biodiversitymanagement

SPOTLIGHT ON... THE BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT BRANCH



The Biodiversity Management Branch of the Environmental Resource Management Department is responsible for the conservation of biodiversity within the City's area of responsibility. A fundamental aspect of the branch's work is to ensure that biodiversity and nature are made part of everyday life, which includes delivering real benefits to all communities. More specifically, this branch is responsible for conservation planning, biodiversity management, and alien species eradication. The branch currently manages 24 of the City's more than 30 nature reserves and natural areas.



As part of their new communication strategy, and to increase public visibility, the Biodiversity Management Branch has recently adopted a new logo and attractive new uniforms.

Back (l-r): Julia Wood, Clifford Dorse, Hayley May Wittridge, Mzwandile Ntsokobe, Dalton Gibbs, Mayor Dan Plato, Sakhile Luhani, Owen Wittridge, Nomthandazo Jevu, Adele Pretorius

Front (l-r): Sonwabile Shilinga, Ntomboxolo Matshabane, Lungiswa Mangcola, Bulelwa Nomna, Jikephi Noludwe, Mzukisi Matyobeni

City Parks - The City Parks Department is responsible for managing public open spaces in the City of Cape Town area. Not only are many of these open spaces next to or linked to our nature reserves, but several of them actually contain important biodiversity, which needs to be protected. City Parks and the Biodiversity Management Branch are busy developing mechanisms to have these valuable sites recognised, and want to develop environmental management plans for each of them.

Catchment, Stormwater and River Management Branch - This branch has two policies that focus specifically on biodiversity. Their Floodplain and River Corridor Management Policy enables the City to deal sustainably with development proposals within and next to flood-prone areas and aquatic ecosystems, along with their associated environmental buffers. The Management of Urban Stormwater Impacts Policy intends to minimise the negative impacts of stormwater runoff from developed areas, by introducing water-sensitive urban design (WSUD) principles to urban planning and stormwater management in the City of Cape Town area.



! The least you need to know
The City is at the forefront of various well-planned and coordinated biodiversity conservation projects.

For most people involved with conservation, it's more than a job – it's a passion!

How can YOU help protect our biodiversity?

Protecting our biodiversity is not the task of the authorities alone – we all need to play our part.

QUIZ: How biodiversity-friendly are you?	YES	NO
Do you always make sure that no cigarette butts, paper, cans or other litter are thrown out of your car window?		
Do you always take your rubble or garden refuse to an established dump, and never leave it in the veld?		
Do you always make sure that oil and other chemical products are disposed of in established dumps, and not thrown away in the veld or down the drain?		
Do you have a variety of local, indigenous, water-wise plants in your garden?		
Do you have birds, lizards, frogs, or local indigenous insects such as praying mantis or moths in your garden?		
Have you removed all invasive alien weeds, especially rooikrans, Port Jackson, kikuyu, fountain grass, lantana and chromolaena (triffid weed), from your garden?		
Does your cat have a collar with a bell to alert and protect local indigenous small animals?		
Do you avoid using harsh pesticides or herbicides in your garden?		
Do you support local initiatives to conserve the natural areas in your region or 'green' your local spaces, such as 'Friends' groups?		
Do you water your garden and lawn either before 10:00 or after 16:00?		



Be biodiversity-friendly and see how creatures such as the Crimson-speckled footman (*Utethisa pulchella*), Cape dwarf chameleon (*Bradypodion pumilum*) and Cape Batis (*Batis capensis*) make your garden their home.

If you answered 'yes' to three or more of these questions, you are well on your way to having a healthy amount of 'backyard' biodiversity! If not, change your lifestyle today, and help conserve nature for our children – the Smart Living Handbook can show you how. Get your copy by downloading it from the City's website (see below), or request a hard copy from Glen Takeloo on 021 487 2829.



More information

SMART LIVING: www.capetown.gov.za/smartlivinghandbook
 INDIGENOUS GARDENING: www.plantzafrica.com

Yours to enjoy!

In Cape Town, we can see more wildlife in one day than many people will see in their lifetime.

Where else in the world can you take a short drive (say from Cape Point to Kogelberg), and see baboons, caracal, otters, whales, penguins, seals, sharks, porcupines, endangered plants, and more? This is one of the reasons why Cape Town is such a fantastic place to live. More than that – it is part of who we are; it is our natural (and cultural) heritage.

You can make the best of our amazing biodiversity by visiting and supporting your local nature reserves and natural areas, of which more than 30 are managed by the City of Cape Town for you to enjoy and protect. They are wonderful places to relax on your own or with family and friends.

Why not start by exploring the beautiful and diverse False Bay Ecology Park? Use the pull-out poster in the centre spread of this newsletter to make the most of your outing!

BIODIVERSITY BELONGS TO US ALL!

Through the City's strategy to conserve urban biodiversity, nature is no longer something in a faraway, fenced-off area that can only be accessed by a few. Instead, people from all backgrounds now have equal access to the many natural open spaces that the City manages.



Hiking in one of Cape Town's natural areas

The least you need to know

All of us can do our bit – no matter how small – to look after our biodiversity ... and we can all enjoy this heritage to the full, if only we choose to do so.



World War II relics on Blaauwberg Hill in Blaauwberg Conservation Area

Resting hikers in Kogelberg Nature Reserve

Liz Hardman



Liz Hardman



Liz Hardman



The least you need to know

Feeding baboons is cruel. It turns them into aggressive car and home raiders, and will inevitable lead to their death.



Chad Chapman

Baboons or humans – exactly *who* are the naughty ones?

Can we blame baboons for destroying our property, when we have encouraged them to do so? How can we keep both our belongings and these clever creatures safe?

We all know the endearing face of a baby baboon, looking at you with appealing, almost human eyes. However, there is far more to baboons than cute faces ...

Baboons form a very important part of our precious and sensitive ecosystem. They should be protected and properly managed to ensure their continued presence on the Peninsula. This does not mean we should feed, touch or interact with them. Precisely that could in fact be a baboon's death sentence – either directly or indirectly.

“... baboons associate humans with the availability of easy food...”

A baboon that becomes used to having humans around to take care of it, loses its fear of humankind – to its own detriment. These baboons associate humans with the availability of easy food, which leads to increasing aggression in their efforts to obtain food from people. They will

break into cars and homes, run off with bags and cameras, cause great damage, and even attack people. Once they make a habit of raiding cars and homes, they are earmarked for euthanasia – maybe a humane

way of killing them, but a sad ending, nonetheless.

Let's behave responsibly towards baboons – whether you love or hate them, they belong here. In fact, they were here first.



Liz Hardman

What is your role?

Do NOT -

- feed baboons in ANY way;
- leave the safety of your car in the presence of baboons;
- interact or entice a baboon closer;
- litter (including cigarette butts, wrappers, food scraps, bottles, etc.); or
- try to grab back any article taken – wait until the baboon drops it and retrieve it when safe.

DO -

- lock all car doors and keep all windows and sun roofs fully closed;
- drive slowly, but keep going;
- take photos from within the safety of your car;
- enjoy and appreciate the privilege of being in such close proximity to wild animals.

If you are ever confronted by a baboon, stay calm, avoid eye contact, speak sternly to it and – most importantly – drop whatever you have in your hands. It will be examined and, if it is not edible, it will be dropped. Do not corner a baboon – stand aside for it to pass. If you have any problems with baboons, you can call the Baboon Hotline: 071 588 6540

More information

OUR CHACMA BABOONS: www.brublog.co.za



Teaching our children to care

Our children will inherit the planet – but also the messes we have made in the past. That is why it is important to teach them from a young age how to look after this precious inheritance properly.

Through the Youth Environmental School (YES) programme, the City goes to great lengths to educate our youngsters to care for nature. The YES initiative is not only rolled out through schools, but also through educational programmes in City reserves. In the last year alone, the City reached more than 65 000 children in this way, and we look forward to seeing them grow up with a new-found respect and love for the environment.

The current focus of the City's educational programmes is Biodiversity Week and topics such as the survival of the Western leopard toad, white sharks, and baboons.



The least you need to know

The City offers various educational opportunities through the YES programme.



A learner exploring an alternative set of teeth.

Although most of the City's reserves offer educational programmes/events, the following reserves have specially equipped environmental education centres:

- Rietvlei Wetland Reserve
- Rondevlei Nature Reserve
- Zeekoevlei Nature Reserve
- Zandvlei Estuary Nature Reserve
- Edith Stephens Wetland Park
- Tygerberg Nature Reserve
- Bracken Nature Reserve
- Helderberg Nature Reserve

For contact details and more about the educational events on the reserves, download your free copy of the Nature Reserves Booklet from our website – www.capetown.gov.za/naturereserves

Competition: Two lucky readers can win two tickets each to the 'Frogs beyond the pond' exhibit at the Two Oceans Aquarium. Simply find out the name of the specific Western Leopard Toad that lives at the Aquarium. (This can be found on our website: www.capetown.gov.za/westernleopardtoad). Then send your name, contact number and the correct answer to:

- E-mail: enviroworks@capetown.gov.za, with the subject line 'Frog Competition'; or
- Post to: Enviroworks Frog Competition, Environmental Resource Management Department, City of Cape Town, PO Box 16548, Vlaeberg, 8018

Winners will be contacted by phone. Closing date: 3 September 2010.

More about the Western leopard toad

This endangered toad, which is up to 14 cm in size, is also called the snoring toad, because the male's mating call sounds just like loud snoring. Many Western leopard toads are killed during the breeding season, as they have to cross walls, pavements and roads to get to their breeding sites.



Clifford Dorse



More information

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: www.capetown.gov.za/environmentaleducation
www.capetown.gov.za/youthenvironmentalschool

WESTERN LEOPARD TOAD: www.leopardtoad.co.za