

# FRIENDS OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE NEWSLETTER

JULY 2011

## Dear Friends

Our walk this month is on **17 July**. Please meet Jayne at the Gate for a prompt departure at 9.00 am. Bring water, hat, jacket, good walking shoes and a snack. The walk will be the Shipwreck Trail.

### Walk Report - Sunday 19 June 2011

#### Walk leader - Kelly



This unexciting? pic of Paulsberg was the only one I took on Sunday as the weather was starting to clear up as Donald and I set off for Venus Pool. It was definitely a case of 'rain stopped play' for the walk on 19th June.

#### **The Recce...**

Stella and I had enjoyed the 'recce' on one of those beautiful midwinter days at Cape Point a few days before - sunny, no wind and a wonderful mixture of scents of fynbos and the 'smack' of the sea. We set off carefully down the steep rocky path from Gifkommetjie (we usually end the walk from the Phyllisia wreck climbing up the path). First flowers to spot were several bright pink Lachenalia rubida which are very photogenic. Coming to the overgrown 'tunnel' of old Milkwoods we were surprised to see a scattering of pink blossoms on the ground which you don't associate with Milkwoods. On investigating further we could see several of these flowers and buds on younger shoots of the old, tangled bush - definitely not from a vine or creeper as we first thought. It was only later on checking in Maytham Kidd and Manning that we decided it was Solanum guineense.



Any comments from the botanists out there? We are confused as we had presumed the arbour was milkwood. Meanwhile down on the beach going towards Pegrans...



*Sacred ibis about to land on pure white sand with ostrich footprints in the background*

#### **And so to Sunday.....**

After this beautiful day the weather changed and the forecast for Sunday was never good which was not encouraging for Friends or visitors wanting to walk. Sunday morning dawned cold, windy and wet - but you never know at Cape Point, it does clear up suddenly... Donald was the only brave (foolish!?) would-be hiker who put in an appearance. We decided it would be foolhardy to risk a long walk like Gifkommetjie/ Pegrans Point as we had planned so after some torrential squalls we drove to Booie se Skerm and did the short walk on the flat, tarred road to Venus Pool. We were both ready for rain in waterproofs and resigned to a disappointing hike. Instead of the pleasant fynbos and 'smack' of the sea we soon caught an unpleasant odour, this was caused by decomposing body of an Eland lying at the side of the path below the steep slopes of Kanonkop above us. There was much evidence of animals and Ostrich on the road. We also noticed soil erosion on these slopes and wondered if this had been caused by fire - unfortunately we saw increasing infestation of Rooikrans where the soil was exposed. On reaching Venus Pool the sun came out and the weather cleared so that we could admire the amazing views of the sheer cliffs of Paulsberg and Judas Peak in the distance. Not quite warm enough to tempt us for a dip in the rock pools - we'll keep that for another time!

**In spite of the fact that we are down (almost) at the southernmost tip of Africa - our favourite place of course! - quite a few of us occasionally venture to more northern climes. Jayne McDermid has recently been moving in elevated circles! Here is her report.**

#### **Visit to Kew - Jayne McDermid**

On my recent visit to the UK I was very lucky to have a personal guided tour of Kew. The visit of the Volunteer Kew guides last year to Cape Town including Cape Point initiated the contact with Angela Fenhalls of Kew. She invited me

with two members of my family for the tour. Angela met us at the gate. Over a cup of coffee we met Julia Lowrie –Kew Guide and Elsa Pooley – renowned SA floral artist, writer and expert on Natal Trees. Julia then took us around the gardens of Kew, to areas away from the Glass houses to view interesting trees and plants, telling us the history as we went. It was absolutely fascinating and I was delighted to see areas of Kew that I have never visited. We were interested to see 'Liriodendron chinense' the Chinese tulip tree with its magnificent flowers and several young trees.



*Liriodendron chinense*

The rare 'Lorantus europaeus' an evergreen mistletoe, growing on 'Quercus velutina', an American Black Oak, is as far as is known the only specimen in the UK and was first noticed in 2005. Where it came from is anyone's guess. Further on we met up with another Kew guide, Jack, with Pam Knipe from Kirstenbosch and her sister. We saw the biggest tree - a Chestnut Oak - and discovered that the bark under these large trees is to help keep the soil open and friable for the surface roots.



*Chestnut oak*

Some trees were in trouble because of the ground being compacted. We walked through the student vegetable patches, (students from all over the world) and went out a side gate to the well named "The Botanist" pub, where we were joined by other members of the Cape Town visit and were all very kindly and unexpectedly given a super lunch. Following lunch we returned via the 'gate in the wall' and saw beautiful Orchids and on talking to the lady in charge we gained insight into the maintaining of the display.

I would like to thank Angela, Julia and Jack for a wonderful day and hope that if they come to Cape Point we can reciprocate. We look forward to the next visit of Guides from Kew in August 2011

### **Red Hill project – report by Stella**

Christa Stringer of Sanparks and I are going to attend the Living Green Organic Vegetable workshop early in August. We hope that Nzo who lives in Red Hill and other participants will be there. Sam Adams of Living

Green has very kindly suggested that we attend at a later date than the current workshop which is oversubscribed and at which we would not get much attention. We are hoping to use this as a springboard for the Eco club but patience is required. While this is not Cape Point-based it is environment-based and there will be cross-fertilisation we hope.

### **Thanks to :**

We were very appreciative of the generous donation made to the Friends at Joanna Sharland's funeral of R2200. The generous donors were family relatives from the UK, Diana Baart? and the Wailes family. Thank you very much!

### **Breaking News!**

**Geology trip Saturday 17 September**

**Dr John Rogers has agreed to take the Friends on a geology outing. It will start in Hout Bay and end up at Cape Point. This will be an an all-day trip starting at Chapman's Peak Drive opposite The Sentinel. Then we will be going on to Cape Point. The stops will include Smitswinkel Bay, the Cape Point parking area from where we will proceed to the Old Lighthouse, the New Lighthouse viewsite, down the staircase to Diaz Beach and walk on to the Cape of Good Hope. We are looking forward to this very much. It will replace the regular Sunday walk. If you are not that fit you will be able to tag along without doing the heavy stuff! More details will follow.**

**\* Remember the Fogh web site**  
[southerncrossroads.info/fogh/](http://southerncrossroads.info/fogh/)

### **COMMITTEE**

Joan Ackroyd –Tel/Fax 021 5304435  
Stella Geel – Tel 021 7801472/  
[stellageel@gmail.com](mailto:stellageel@gmail.com)  
Kelly Izzard Tel: 021 789 1260/  
[izzard.kelly@gmail.com](mailto:izzard.kelly@gmail.com)  
Richard Phillips Tel: 021782 4254/  
[afquilt@telkomsa.net](mailto:afquilt@telkomsa.net)