

FRIENDS OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE
NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER 2011

Dear Friends

Sunday Walk: Stella will be leading the Sunday Walk on 20th November.

Walk around Teeberg, 16 Oct 2011 Walk Report – Magda Alberts

Members only. This walk was entirely within the northern wilderness area of the Cape Point section of the TMNP. We were given permission to do a walk in this area, closed to the public, on condition that it would be for members of the Friends only. So it was different, and in a way more intimate, than welcoming and looking after visitors. We were 14 Friends.

Weather. Medium south-easter. The veld was still fresh after recent good rains.

Route. We parked at the start of the gravel road to the rondavel, and from there took a very old path heading towards the long saddle between Bonteberg and Teeberg. This path eventually petered out, and for a stretch we high-stepped over some (it has to be said) rather dull low fynbos littered with a surprising amount of dead twigs and branches, remnants of a wildfire a few years ago. Then, on the low slopes of the saddle we took a good game trail heading up the saddle, fairly close to the Bonteberg side. As we approached the saddle this path too petered out (as game trails do), but it was only a few steps to a small dry watercourse down the northern side of the saddle. We followed this to the plain below, and from there picked up the remains of the old track towards the park fence and then to the rondavel.

Comments on the route. We were surprised that none of the old tracks we remember have been used for years, except the short stretch from the nearest gate to the Telkom installation on Teeberg. The track we used to take regularly years ago to the top of Bonteberg from the north side of Teeberg has disappeared, as has the track up the saddle from the Klaasjagersberg side. The track we took on our return was indistinct in places and it was interesting to see how the fynbos was slowly taking back the now undisturbed strips. Our route took us through fynbos which burned a few years ago, so it was still low. In a few years' time it would probably not be possible to follow the same route as the vegetation would be too dense.

Views. This route offers a variety of seldom-seen vistas, or perhaps rather views of familiar landmarks from different angles. In the distance we saw Scarborough, Redhill village, vineyards, the Good Hope nursery, and the background of the Klaasjagersberg mountain range.

A special bonus was the large plains of restios waving in the wind (opposite the nursery), which we overlooked during our tea break.



Wildlife. A few tortoises, beautiful view of Jackal buzzard soaring over Teeberg, sunbirds, grassbirds and more. On the two recces we had seen no mammals at all, so it was a surprise to come across 4 hartebees. On approaching we saw that they were part of a herd of 26, grazing in the restio fields – a memorable picture.



We found the skeleton of a large eland in the little watercourse on the north side of the saddle. It was quite old – almost no smell and no insect activity. Some of the bones have fallen apart, but if anyone in the park has a use for a complete skeleton, including skull and horns, there it is.



Vegetation. Once we had crossed the initial band of “boring” veld, we started coming across quite a wide variety of flowers, including

Leucospermum hypophyllocarpodendron	Watsonia coccinea
Passerina corymbosa	Adenandra villosa
Liparia parva	Agathosma capensis
Erica corifolia	

Erica bruniades
Lachnaea grandiflora
Aspalathus capensis
A callosa
A ericifolia
Heliophila africana

Protea repens
Geissorhiza tenella
Wahlenbergia capensis
Roella ciliata
(Many thanks to Kelly for this list)

It was good to see the large numbers of young proteas, leucodendrums, leucospermums, mimetes, restios and many others. We could still see the tell-tale blue stumps of alien clearing here and there, and saw only a few port jacksons, in the saddle area. We did note the growing intrusion of aliens on the KJB side of the gravel track to the rondavel and as they are so close to KJB we hope they will soon be “taken care of”.

Many thanks to park management ie Amos Lombo and David Baloyi for permission to walk where we did, and to save us a trudge along the tarred road by allowing us to park where we did. We enjoyed the walk very much and learned more about the area.

SAGA walk at Gifkommetjie

Once again the Friends were contacted by Ann McGregor who looks after the SAGA group of English garden enthusiasts visiting the Cape each year. Sign of the times - it was a small party of 7 this year but even the unexpected rain when we met them at the BVC for lunch didn't dampen their enthusiasm. Just as we were wondering how enjoyable the walk would be that Jayne had planned from Gifkommetjie to everyone's delight the rain blew away down South and the sun came out. Along Circular Drive Jayne pointed out the difference between the shorter fynbos that had recovered from a “prescribed” fire and the dense taller bush, dry and ready for a burn. As usual the flowers on the Gifkommetjie trail gave us welcome surprises - some had appeared since Jayne's recce - *Arctotis aspera*, *Agathosma ciliaris*, *Adenandra villosa*, *Thesium capitatum*, *Watsonia coccinea*, a tiny *Holothrix* sp in the middle of the path protected by rocks and a beautiful display of mauve/pink *Dipogon lignosus*. Stella and Kelly were kept busy trying to identify correctly - one of the many yellow daisies particularly took so much time identifying for Vincent of SAGA (we decided eventually and unanimously it was *Osteospermum polygaloides*!) that the combi had left but we caught them up in Stella's bakkie!



Osteospermum polygaloides

We ended the most enjoyable outing with Jayne leading us to a fine display of *Mimetes hirtus*.



Welcome to new members:

Muffy Featherstone
Penny James
Angela Clark
Margaret Farquharson

Diary note: Please note the following date for the Christmas picnic - Sunday 18th December at the Visitor's Centre. It will take place just after the walk at round about 12 noon. Please do come and have fun with us even if you do not do the walk.

- Remember southerncrossroads.info/fogh/

COMMITTEE

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