



KLOOF
CONSERVANCY



E-NEWSLETTER | JANUARY 2014

INDIGENOUS
Open Gardens
set to dazzle
visitors!

INDIGENOUS OPEN GARDENS 2014

Planning is well under way to bring you a great show on the weekend of 24-25 May. We are going back to basics and focussing all our attention on the gardens and indigenous gardening. We have a compact route and eight gardens on show with the Tea Garden based at Clifton Hill Estate where two gardens will be on show in addition to the main landscaped road through the estate.

We are adopting our main slogan "*Inspiring Change, Protecting Nature*" for the event and we are confident that the show will achieve exactly that! Visit www.kloofconservancy.org.za/indigenous-open-gardens/ for more information.

In the newsletters leading up to the event we will feature the various gardens to give you a sneak preview of what is to come. This month we look at two gardens in Forest Hills.



▲ Garden No 5: Jackie and Ivan Foster,
32 King George Avenue, Forest Hills

The Fosters were attracted to the property in 1994 because of its potential as an indigenous wild garden that would be home to and a haven for various bird species and wildlife. The garden was unintentionally re-landscaped in 2009 by Cyclone Demoina which swept through the area. The Fosters were heart-broken to see the devastation caused to the garden by that event, and it was hard to find the motivation to re-establish it. However, it allowed the grassland to flourish and opened up space for more succulent beds. The garden is mostly informal due to the Foster's policy of minimal disturbance, which allows the wildlife to thrive.



▲ Garden No 6: Brenda and Trevor Perks,
20 Kloof View Road, Forest Hills

The Perks bought the property in 2011 from David Wijnberg, a man with the foresight to plant many indigenous trees some 25 years ago. This is the backbone of the garden from which Brenda and Trevor started. Inspired by past Open Gardens events, books and observing plants in nature, they set about designing their garden with the concept of having a landscaped garden nearer the house, becoming more natural and wild the closer it approached the Krantzklouf Nature Reserve, their main next door neighbour! The Perks are excited about the variety of birds, butterflies and animals that have been attracted to their garden.



1

PROTECTING NATURE
INSPIRING CHANGE



▲ *Molweni River Community Park takes shape with the clearing of a section of the river and the installation of the first park bench.*

MOLWENI RIVER COMMUNITY PARK TAKES SHAPE



The project initiated by Kloof Conservancy to create a community river park on a 2,5km stretch of the Molweni River from Krantzklouf Nature Reserve to the Umgeni River is making good progress.

Just before Christmas we cleared a trial section of river and installed a park bench. The project has created 5 full time jobs and the team started work on 7 January clearing the invasive alien vegetation along the river and demarcating a path on both banks.

It is anticipated that it will take approximately 7 months for the first round of clearing to be completed, and this will then require regular follow-up. The management of the project is being funded by Kloof Conservancy, while the workers are funded by DUCT/Durban Green Corridor with funds from the government's Extended Public Works Programme.

UPDATE ON IAP COURT CASE

Our legal proceedings against the Government of South Africa on the issue of Invasive Alien Plant legislation is continuing. Since our last update we have now been allocated a Court date of 25 April 2014.

On 19 December the State delivered their Answering Affidavit and Supporting Affidavit in response to our Review Application. Our legal team is busy preparing a Replying Affidavit which should be delivered in February after which the application will be heard in Court.

We currently have two applications – the first is the main application we launched in December 2012 to compel the publication of proper regulations under NEMBA; while the second is to set aside the “interim, shortened” regulations subsequently published on 19 July 2013. The second application is necessary to allow us to obtain the relief we seek in the main application. The two applications are intended to be heard together.

The main court documents, including our Review Application, are available on our website at: www.kloofconservancy.org.za/alien-busters/enforcement-project/





▲ *Glow worm: This glow worm (a wingless female firefly) was photographed by Bruce Crouch in his garden. Glow worms are part of the Lampyridae family of insects in the beetle order Coleoptera. They are winged beetles (males), and commonly called fireflies or lightning bugs for the light they make to attract mates or prey. They produce a “cold light”, with no infrared or ultraviolet frequencies. This light is produced chemically from the lower abdomen and may be yellow, green, or pale red.*



▲ *Ants: These “cooling towers” photographed in Krantzkloof Nature Reserve are the work of ants. Ants are social insects of the family Formicidae. They developed between 110 and 130 million years ago after the rise of flowering plants. Ants form colonies that range in size from a few dozen individuals living in small natural cavities, to highly organised colonies of millions of individuals that occupy large territories. Ants have colonised almost every landmass on Earth. The only places lacking indigenous ants are Antarctica and a few remote or inhospitable islands. Ants thrive in most ecosystems and may form 15-25% of the terrestrial animal biomass!*



▲ *Paradise Flycatcher: This young nestling was photographed on the edge of the gorge. The Paradise Flycatcher is one of the most beautiful birds in the Kloof forests. The males are easy to spot because of the long tail. They are migrant birds but some are believed to over-winter particularly in the warmer parts of KZN! They are mainly insectivorous but will also eat berries.*



▲ *Green Twinspots: These beautiful birds of the finch family were photographed by Hugh McGibbon off Buckingham Road. They eat mainly seeds taken from the ground or directly from plants, especially grasses, supplemented with small insects.*



THIS MONTH WE EXPLORE ... PALMIET NATURE RESERVE

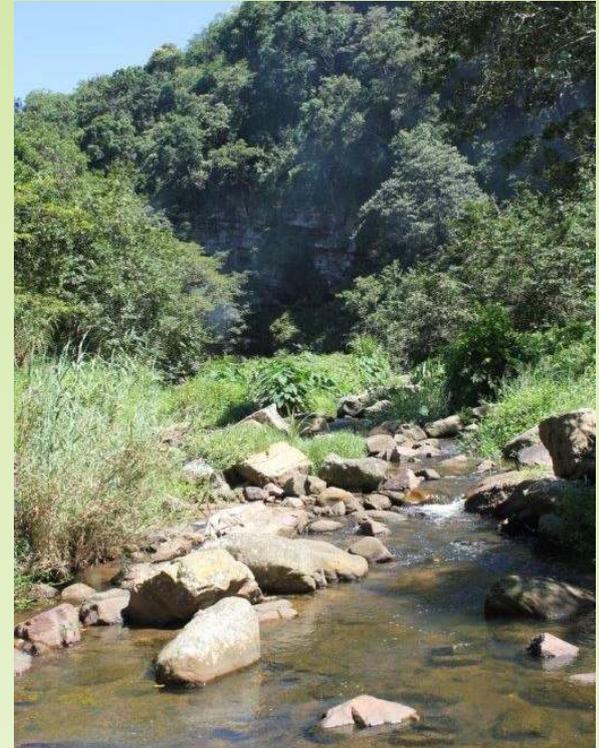
This month we start a new series: each each month we will be featuring one of the many nature reserves we are lucky to have between Westville and Botha's Hill. Many of these reserves are biodiversity gems, each with its own surprising characteristics. They are surrounded by sprawling urban development which poses a serious threat to their long-term sustainability. By featuring a different Highway nature reserve in our e-newsletter each month, we hope to raise awareness about the natural wonder we are surrounded by, and we hope you will be convinced to visit and support your local nature reserves!

Palmiet Nature Reserve
(information from www.palmiet.za.net)

The recent history of the Palmiet area dates back some 200 years. A wild and untamed place full of pythons and leopards. The geology dates back 300 million years and shows how the Palmiet evolved from a desert through an ice age with glaciers to the present day.

Although initially established in 1972, the Palmiet Nature Reserve was officially proclaimed in June 2006 and is located in Westville. The reserve and river is named after the riverine plant *Pronium serratum* (Palmiet) which was formerly abundant in the area. The Palmiet Valley was well known to the original families from Germany who settled here in 1848. It was through this wild rugged valley that they travelled to attend church or to visit friends in neighbouring New Germany. The route followed the present day Old New Germany Road, which is now the starting point of the Palmiet Trail into the Nature Reserve.

An interesting description of the Palmiet Valley is given in the book "*Letters of a Natal Sheriff*" edited by RN Currey. One letter, which was printed in the *Natal Witness* in April 1851, was written by Thomas Phipson. He describes the road between Durban and New Germany: "One piece of landscape on a small scale struck us most forcibly. It was a retired gorge or ravine shut in on one side by overhanging



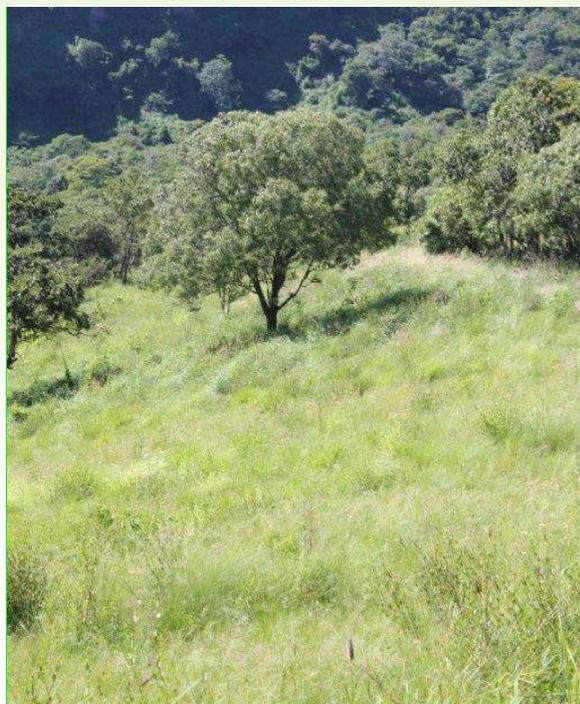
cliffs, and barely accessible on the other by a descent as steep as a ladder. In the bottom ran a gurgling stream of cool and limpid water; while all around thick wood, in many places quite safe from apprehension of the axe, hung over and enclosed the grey rocky glen."

While suburbia has spread around the reserve, and road access has improved significantly, the wild area within the reserve is much as it was 160 years ago!

The reserve is the only community-managed nature reserve in the Durban Municipal area. The City employs a manager and environmental officer, three field rangers and an alien weed removal team to manage the Nature Reserve. Numerous volunteers assist with the trail and education programme as well as wider projects.

Open from 7am to 6 pm, the reserve offers diverse ecological and wildlife habitats; it's home to more than 150 bird and 170 tree species; and 15 kilometres of hiking trails. Palmiet is one of the few reserves that offers night walks. There is a guided trail on the first Sunday of every month.

Enquiries and bookings: 031 266 8015 or visit www.palmiet.za.net.



TIP
49

REDUCE THE WASTE YOU GENERATE

Think about how you live and what you use so as to reduce the amount of waste you generate.



TIP
50

DISPOSE OF YOUR E-WASTE RESPONSIBLY

Dispose of your old/broken electronic equipment at e-waste disposal sites. These are available at the Pavilion, Makro and Builders Express outlets.



RUBI D ROCKS

VACANCY

We are looking for young learners in Grades 9-11 to assist us with our Rubi-D Mascot (representing the endemic and endangered Rubi-footed Giant Millipede).

The job involves wearing the mascot's costume at our various events where young children are participating. The job can be great fun and can be counted as part of your community service for school, and only involves a few hours a month.

Please e-mail us at info@kloofconservancy.org.za if you can assist!

JOIN US! PROTECTING NATURE and INSPIRING CHANGE. TOGETHER!

Are you a member of Kloof Conservancy?

For only R150 a year you can help us make a real difference by helping to fund projects that promote environmental awareness and conserve our area's outstanding natural heritage.

Visit our website for more information: www.kloofconservancy.org.za/membership/

KLOOF CONSERVANCY EVENTS IN DECEMBER

For more information please visit our website: www.kloofconservancy.org.za

SUNDAY 19 January	Krantzkloof Nature Reserve 4-hour (relaxed) guided walk. R30pp. Meet at Kloof Falls Rd picnic site at 07:45. No booking required.
SUNDAY 2 February	Krantzkloof Nature Reserve 6-hour (strenuous) guided walk. R30pp. Meet at Kloof Falls Rd picnic site at 07:45. No booking required.
SATURDAY 8 February	Msinsi work day – Come and help us eradicate IAPs from this environmentally valuable piece of land. We start at 08:30 and work for as long as we can. Bring gloves, strong shoes/boots/gum-boots, tough jeans and enthusiasm – we will provide the rest! No previous experience required.
SATURDAY 8 February	Glenholme Nature Reserve 2-hour guided nature walk. Meet at 10:00 at the SPCA tea garden. Donations go towards maintenance and upkeep of the reserve.
WEDNESDAY 12 February	Springside Nature Reserve guided walk. All welcome; easy walk on well maintained paths. Donations accepted for ongoing Hillcrest Conservancy projects. Meet at 07:30. Tea/coffee served in the resource centre after the walk. Contact Sue on 031 765 6809.
SUNDAY 16 February	Krantzkloof Nature Reserve 4-hour (relaxed) guided walk. R30pp. Meet at Kloof Falls Rd picnic site at 07:45. No booking required.

