



## Neem Moreletaspruit Aan

Newsletter/Nuusbrief 2, May/Mei 2012

### Introducing Our New Logo

We have a new logo which conveys the idea of the river running through green hilly areas, supported by caring hands. It was designed by Meg Schwartz who grew up near the Moreletaspruit and it captures the essence of the Adopt-a-River programme which is to encourage volunteers living in the catchment areas of the river and its tributaries to help in the protection and management of the section of river and green belt nearest to where they live.

Already there are many “caring hands” active around the river in the form of Friends Groups along much of the river south of Meyerspark but more are needed. To join an existing group in your area or to start a new group, contact Nature Conservation CoT at Tel: 012 358 1510 or the Adopt Moreletaspruit Facilitation Team at 012 361 3190/083 750 2873. We are also establishing a **Forum** which will have stronger “teeth” to enforce adherence to environmental legislation – more about this in future.

*’n Span spesialiste het begin met ’n projek om die **Status van die Moreletaspruit** te dokumenteer en ’n **Meesteromgewingsplan** (MOP) op te stel. Die produk sal ’n oorsig gee aan alle natuurliefhebbers in die Tshwane Metropool van die geskiedenis, eienskappe en gesondheid van ons unieke rivier en sy sytakke. Ons weet dat daar baie inligting, soos fotos, staaltjies, so wel as tegniese en wetenskaplike feite daar buite is, en u word uitgenooi om dit met die span te deel!*

### First Adopt Moreletaspruit Event – Biomonitoring in Eersterust



During Water Week in March a group of 80 grade 10 learners from Prosperitas High School and a group of 60 grade 10 learners from Eersterust Secondary School were trained in biomonitoring along the Moreletaspruit and Rietspruit respectively, using **the miniSASS method** (South African Scoring System). This can be used to monitor the health of a river by looking at the macroinvertebrates (tiny insects) living in rivers and it is based on the sensitivity of various insects to water quality. For example, mayflies are very sensitive and get a higher score than true flies or worms which are not as sensitive.

The learners were first given a short talk on water by the DWA and one on Adopt-a-River. Then they were divided into small groups led by trainers from the JNF Walter Sisulu Environmental Centre in Mamelodi which also supplied the testing equipment. At the river an accredited trainer from Water Health demonstrated how and where to collect specimens and then the groups tried it themselves, analysed what they had found and gave the quality of the water a score.

The whole experience was very positive and we hope the learners were inspired to start groups to care for the rivers.

### **Know your Invasive Alien Vegetation**

Invasive alien plants are a great problem along the river. They grow and reproduce very vigorously, crowding out the natural vegetation. Category 1 Invasive Alien Plants may not be grown anywhere in South Africa. The two below are among the worst offenders:



#### **Solanum mauritianum**

Bug Weed/Luisboom (S. America)  
Small tree up to 4 m with large oval leaves, grey-green with felt-like hairs. It has purple flowers and bunches of yellow fruits which are poisonous except to certain birds.  
Pull small ones out by the roots. Cut large ones down and treat stump with herbicide.



#### **Araujia sericifera**

Moth catcher/Motvanger (S. America)  
Vigorous creeper with thick fleshy stems, dark green opposed leaves and white, cream or pinkish bell-shaped flowers and milky sap which is poisonous. It has pear shaped pods which burst open to release about 400 seeds with tufts of silky hairs.  
Dig out by the roots and destroy pods.

**Twenty owl boxes** for Barn owls and Spotted eagle owls were donated by Imperial Select and will be put up along the river.

**Tree tags** were donated by SA Jagters Pta-Oos. Some have been attached to trees by students and some will be given to Friends Groups to attach.

### **Contact Details/ Kontak-besonderhede**

DWA: Gauteng Region – Tel 012 392 1362. Email: RakgothoT@dwa.gov.za

CoT: Nature Conservation – Tel: 012 358 1510. Email: AdeleneL@TSHWANE.GOV.ZA

Facilitation Team – Email: anneli@global.co.za, Tel 012 361 3190, or 083 750 2873

Facebook Group – **Adopt-a-River Moreleta**

The Facilitation Team/Die Fasiliteringspan