



Adopt Moreletaspruit/ Neem Moreletaspruit Aan **Newsletter/Nuusbrief 10, March/Maart 2014**

The year 2014 started on a very positive note for water with the **Urban Hydrology Workshop: Water in the City of Tshwane** at the University of Pretoria in January. The organiser, Matthys Dippenaar (UP), together with Anneli Kühn of Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum and Prof Hannes Rautenbach (UP), gathered together about 100 participants from different backgrounds who are all interested in the best practices to safeguard our water. There were 23 short presentations with subsequent discussions on different aspects, including an overview of the city's water supply, climate, wetlands, the vadose zone, the dolomite formations from which our springs originate, impacts on water quality and water sensitive urban design. Current research projects were also covered. Rens Botha of the DWA explained how the Moreletaspruit fits into the greater Limpopo Catchment Management Agency and five members of the Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum, seen here with Rens Botha, gave presentations showcasing the Moreletaspruit.



From left to right: Niel van Wyk (Friends of Skuilkrans Kopje): 'Improving the Moreletaspruit, Involving the Community'; Dr Anneli Kühn (Team Leader, Adopt Moreletaspruit): 'The Moreletaspruit – Caring for a City Stream'; Adelene Marais (CoT): 'Ecology of the Moreletaspruit'; Rens Botha (DWA): 'The Moreletaspruit – The Bigger Picture'; Dr Mike Silberbauer (DWA): 'Land Use Changes in the Moreletaspruit'; Carol Martin (Friends of Serene Valley): 'The History of the Moreletaspruit'.

The purpose of the workshop was to work towards incorporating all role players to the benefit of the water resources of the City of Tshwane. As Dr Shafick Adams (WRC) said in his presentation, to use the tools of our physical, chemical, biological and social sciences most effectively, we must collaborate and share information, data and research rather than working in isolation. We must also find methods of changing public perception of water and consequently changing the public's behaviour. "It should be a way of life to keep water clean, to keep every stream, culvert and rivulet clean" as Prof Neil Armitage (UCT) said in his presentation on Water Sensitive Urban Design.

The presentations given at the workshop are available as PDF's at www.up.ac.za/water

MAP (Moreleta Apies Pienaars) Forum

Another positive development is that the MAP Forum got off the ground at the end of 2013 and has had the first two meetings under the leadership of Esmay Madumo (DWA). Adopt Moreletaspruit represents the Moreleta on this forum and stakeholders from the Apies and Pienaars Rivers, representing residents, industry and agriculture are also on the forum, as are representatives from the CoT and the DWA. The MAP Forum forms part of the greater Limpopo Catchment Management Agency. The key to successful catchment management is to have good leadership to bring laws and research together

and to involve local communities in decision making to have the best possible social, economic and environmental outcomes. More representatives are needed on this Forum, especially from the Apies and Pienaars which are seriously underrepresented, and from the agricultural sector as the stronger the Forum, the more it can achieve. Agriculture along the Pienaars is impacted by chemical runoff and along the Apies by pollution from sewage plants. The Forum meets once a month at Roodeplaat Dam and anyone who would like to attend or wants more information can contact Erica van Zyl at moreletaforum@gmail.com

Practical Work by Civil Engineering Students from the University of Pretoria

At the end of November, Adopt Moreletaspruit, in conjunction with CoT Nature Conservation, hosted first year students to do practical work along the Moreleta at Serene Valley, Weavers Nest and Faerie Glen Nature Reserve. The students were trained to identify and remove invasive alien vegetation (below right at Serene Valley), which they did at all three sites. They cleared stormwater drain outlets, stabilized a section of river bed and also carried out erosion control (below left at Faerie Glen).



Friends Groups/Vriendegroepe



Vriende van Moreletakloof Natuureservaat het 30 Jan 'n fassinerende lesing aangebied oor die Sampioene en Fungi van die Moreletakloof deur Helena Coetzee en Liz Popich (foto deur Jeannie du Plessis). Dit is ongelooflik hoeveel verskillende vorms en kleure voorkom.

Op 15 Feb het hulle pompomblomme verwyder en op 23 Maart hou hulle 'n voëluitstappie gelei deur Rihann Geysler.

Friends of Brookside Meander held cleanups in January and February and a Birding Morning led by Rihann Geysler on 1 February.

Vriende van Faerie Glen Natuureservaat het harde fisiese werk gedoen tydens hul menige indringerbestrydingsaksies teen Lantana camara, Acacia podalyriifolia (Pêrel akasia) en Acacia dealbata (Silwer wattel).

Friends of Serene Valley held a Bird Walk led by Phil Paige-Green on 15 Feb and will hold an Insect and Spider Walk led by entomologists from the ARC on 15 March.

Vriende van Skuilkrans Kopje hou Sondag 16 Maart 'n braai vir al die vriende wat belangstel in die bewaring van die koppie – sien ons Facebook vir besonderhede.

Friends of Colbyn Valley held a very well attended Pompom Hack in celebration of World Wetlands Day in conjunction with the ARC, WRC, the South African Wetlands Society and WETREST. The morning began with talks on the functioning of wetlands and invasive plants and bio control. Then the participants went out into the field for

practical work. They took part in the release of the bio control (*Lithiothrips tractabilis*) by



attaching small sections of thrips-infested pompom plants to the healthy pompom plants with cable ties. The bio control works best in dense stands of pompoms. The thrips cause deformities in growth and reduced height and flower production. It will take about 5 years before results are seen. Single plants should still be removed manually. The flower head must be carefully cut off and bagged as well as

the complete crown/root. They must be left to rot for about two months before being disposed of. Left above: Alan Urban hands out small pieces of pompom infested with thrips, right: attaching the bio control.



At left Piet-Louis Grundling demonstrates taking soil cores and examining the colour of the soils – the soil in the drier area is red because of the iron in it and it gets darker and blacker towards the permanent wetland area. He also showed participants the different flowering plants and grasses associated with wetlands. Did you know that wetland plants have “snorkels”?

Bird News

Rion Lerm, BirdLife Northern Gauteng Vice Chairman, has prepared a complete Avifauna Report for the Hartbees and Moreletaspruit catchments. It is available on our Facebook Group: [Adopt-a-River Moreleta](#) and on our website: www.riv.co.za/ms

Environmental Special Days and Weeks

March 17 – 23 National Water Week
March 22 World Water Day
March 29 Earth Hour 20:30 – 21:30
May 22 International Day for Biological Diversity
June 5 World Environment Day
July 18 Mandela Day

Membership of the Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum

Membership of the Forum is open to everyone who is interested in the well-being of the Moreletaspruit and it is free of charge. We now have a **membership form** on our website and we would like all existing and future members to please complete it online.

Contact Details/ Kontak-besonderhede

DWA: Gauteng Region – Tel 012 392 1362. Email: RakgothoT@dwa.gov.za
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Website: www.riv.co.za/ms

Facebook Group – Adopt-a-River Moreleta

The Facilitation Team/Die Fasiliteringspan