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Winter Newsletter 2014

Despite the substantial amount of rain received in March this year, the Faerie Glen Nature Reserve (FGNR) has transformed into a typical dry Gauteng landscape once again. Although winter is often regarded as an 'ugly' time of the year, it should perhaps be rephrased as a 'different' time of the year.



Beautiful spotted aloes are in full bloom during the driest part of the year and serves as a source of food for insects and birds.

On the 8 May the Annual General Meeting was held at the NG Church Faerie Glen. Although not as well attended as the 2013 AGM, the meeting went very well. Two guest speakers made for an interesting evening: Anneli Kühn (chairwoman of the Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum) gave a presentation on the purpose of the Forum and how members of the public could support the initiative. A map of Pretoria was shown to the audience and Anneli indicated the location of the Moreletaspruit and how it was part of the Moreleta/Hartbeesspruit catchment. Readers of this newsletter are encouraged to read more about this Forum on their website: www.riv.co.za/ms

Winter Nuusbrieff 2014

The second speaker and also well-known member of FFGNR was Izak van der Merwe. His presentation was titled 'The Trees and Tree Habitats of the FGNR'. The presentation was illustrated with colourful photographs, and with Izak's intimate knowledge of trees, this was definitely a highlight of the evening.

One of the more serious issues on the agenda was the matter of the house on the western side of the Bronberg Ridge bordering the reserve. The house is being constructed in an area defined as an ecologically sensitive ridge by the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD), and therefore it should adhere to GDARD's departmental policy on the development guidelines for ridges. This policy not only offers ecological protection for ridges but also covers the socio-cultural value of having aesthetically pleasing environments for the surrounding inhabitants, tourists and recreational users.

The initial establishment of the township was approved with various conditions set out in an environmental management plan (EMP). One of these conditions specifically states that building height should not exceed 2 storeys and should be placed that it does not appear on the skyline.

GDARD's attempts to stop the construction were not successful and they have now handed the matter over for prosecution. Earlier in the year, FFGNR approached the television programme *50/50* to do a story on this matter and the programme was aired in April. The *Eastern Times'* Lisa Dewberry also wrote an article on the matter in March. The article and the video link are available on our website. Anyone that wants to voice their opinion on the house is welcome to send us an e-mail.



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The house on the western side of the Bronberg ridge has grown in size since we first reported on the construction of the building.

On a more positive note, GDARD has officially proclaimed FGNR as a nature reserve under section 23(1)(a)(i) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (No 57 of 2003). This status of FGNR has been unofficial and pending for a number of years, but has now been published in the Provincial Newspaper, No 166, Notice 1973 on 25 June, 2014. This means that the reserve will now receive greater protection from proposed developments than it would have under its former status as a park/open area.

Natuerbewing het gedurende Julie wild vrygelaat in FGNR. Nege rooihartbeeste afkomstig van Groenkloof Natuurreservaat is op Donderdag 17 Julie vrygelaat, gevolg deur vyf zebras en sestien rooiblokke van Moreletakloof Natuurreservaat op Saterdag 19 Julie. Met die toevoeging van die wild tot die reservaat sal daar nou 'n beter natuurlike balans verkry word. Omdat FGNR klein is (124 hektaar) sal dit intensiewe bestuur verg om hierdie balans te onderhou. Die reservaat sal gemonitor en bestuur word deur Tshwane Natuerbewing.

We ask visitors to the reserve to please comply with the rules and please keep their dogs on leashes at all times when walking in the reserve. There is no off-leash area and it is imperative that there be no conflict between dog and wild animal.

Dit is goeie nuus dat die reservaat nou beter beskerming gaan geniet en dit is belangrik om die natuurlike plantegroei te beskerm teen die inval van aggresiewe indringer plantspesies. Ons wil net weereens vir Magdaleen Bertolani, Engela Matthee en Ruth Compion bedank vir die ongelooflike werk wat hulle uitgerig het teen die pompoms in die westelike en suidelike deel van die reservaat vanaf Februarie tot Mei. Gedurende die winter gaan die



Three of the five zebras from Moreletakloof Nature Reserve in FGNR, their new home.

pompoms deur 'n rusfase waar die stele en koppe verdwyn en net die wortels lewend bly tot die groeiseisoen weer aanbreek.

Met die borgskap van Tony and Beverley Moore, aangevul deur fondse van die VFGNR, het Simon 'n hele paar hektaar skoongemaak deur die verwydering van luisbome, moerbeiboompies en Lantana. Gereelde besoekers aan die reservaat het dalk al vir Simon gesien in sy nuwe oorpak.

Ons wil graag **BERNINA** in Moreletapark bedank vir die borduur van die Vriende se embleem op Simon se oorpak. Te danke aan hierdie borging is die Vriende as organisasie nou meer sigbaar aan lede van die publiek wat Simon in die reservaat mag raakloop. **BERNINA** Moreletapark is geleë in 913 Rubensteinrylaan en kan gekontak word by telefoon nommers 012 998 6264/5, of deur middel van e-pos: chstoman@mweb.co.za

Benewens die verskaffing van die volle reeks Bernina produkte en bybehore, word gereelde naaldwerk en kwiltklasse aangebied. Masjiendienste (alle handelsname), sowel as klereverstellings word ook hier onderneem.



Borduurwerk geborg deur **BERNINA** Moreletapark.

Unfortunately not every visitor to the reserve seems to respect the environment. Just after Easter in April, graffiti and shrine-like structures were discovered on top of the western side of the ridge. We thank Hanlie and Louise for cleaning the graffiti from the rocks and taking down the shrines. The reserve should be protected from this kind of activity. Please report graffiti or suspicious persons in the reserve to us: Take down any information (e.g. location, date, time) and a photograph if possible.



Not only is the shrine-like structure (top) visually disturbing, but moving and breaking the quartz rocks from the ridge is also an act of vandalism. The pictures of the rock (bottom) showing what it looked like before and after it was cleaned.

Ons wil graag Tshwane Natuurbewaring bedank vir die oprig van 'n gedeelte van die roeteaanwysbordjies wat geborg is deur die Vriende. Al die bordjies is nog nie in posisie nie, maar ons hoop dat die werk binnekort voltooi sal wees.



Die roete-aanwysbordjies en pale is geborg deur VFGNR en word tans opgerig deur Natuurbewaring.

On Saturday 7 June the Friends, in collaboration with BirdLife Northern Gauteng, undertook a bird walk in the reserve. There was lots of bird activity on this cold June morning. The full list of birds seen on the day can be viewed on our website. We thank Koos Pauw for leading the bird walk.



The group of bird watchers with Koos Pauw from BirdLife Northern Gauteng who led the bird walk on Saturday 7 June.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Arbour Day with the Dendrological Society:

When: Saturday, 6 September at 09:00

Where: Meet on the lawn in front of the entrance building

Bring along: Hat, comfortable shoes, water. Also welcome to bring along a picnic basket to enjoy afterwards.

We will plant a tree provided by the Dendrological Society, followed by a guided walk.

Anyone is welcome!

We would like to thank **Jetline Printers**, located in Glenwood Avenue, Faerie Glen, for sponsoring the printing of this newsletter as well as our posters.

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