



## Adopt Moreletaspruit/ Neem Moreletaspruit Aan

Newsletter/Nuusbrief 13, Dec/Des 2014

### Invasive Alien Vegetation

Invasive alien vegetation is one of the biggest problems we face along our rivers, green spaces and road verges. Not all exotic plants are invasive but some of them are very vigorous growers and without their natural enemies to keep them in check, they spread quickly and crowd out the natural vegetation, becoming a great threat to biodiversity. They disrupt local ecosystems as they cause the decline or elimination of indigenous species. This can be seen where fields of pink flowering Pompom weeds have taken over from grasslands. Many of the invasive aliens were imported into the country because they are very pretty and grow well in gardens but they spread when seeds are washed along the roads by storm water, dispersed by wind, or when birds eat the fruits and distribute the seeds in their droppings. With urban development and new gardens, more and more alien vegetation has escaped and started to grow along the rivers.



Left: *Tithonia rotundifolia*, Red sunflower, an emerging threat. Large shrubs covered in these flowers appeared along the river in Lynnwood Glen (and all over the city). Middle: *Araujia sericifera*, Moth catcher – here a dead bee is stuck in the sticky sap in the flower. Moths and butterflies are also caught. The vines strangle trees and the seeds can fly for many kms. Right: *Crotalaria agatiflora*, Canarybird bush, Bird flower, once a favourite garden subject is now listed as category 1b and must be removed wherever it occurs.

The South African National Biodiversity Institute, SANBI, formed an early detection and rapid response programme to control and manage emerging invasive alien plants. They have published a series “Invasive Alien Plant Alert” with photos and information on the various aliens, which is available from them. Email: [invasivespecies@sanbi.org.za](mailto:invasivespecies@sanbi.org.za)

On 1 August 2014 the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) published new **Alien and Invasive Species Regulations** which came into effect in October. A total of 559 invasive aliens, of which 383 are plants, are listed and a further 550 aliens are listed as prohibited and may not be introduced into South Africa. The full regulations and species

lists can be downloaded at [www.invasives.org.za/legislation.html](http://www.invasives.org.za/legislation.html) and a list of the most troublesome invasive aliens along the Moreleta is given at the end of this letter.

**There are three categories of invasive alien vegetation:**

**Category 1a:** must be removed, destroyed and eradicated from SA.

**Category 1b:** compulsory control; must also be removed and destroyed.

**N.B. ALL listed invasive alien plant species in riparian and wetland areas (within 32 m of the edge of a river) are categorized as 1b in these habitats, even though they might be category 2 or 3 in other habitats, and they must be removed.**

**Category 2:** have commercial value, regulated by area, demarcation permit required.

**Category 3:** regulated by activity, of ornamental value, permit required to import, possess, grow or breed. May remain in prescribed areas or provinces but new plants may not be planted.

**Listed invasive alien vegetation must be disclosed by sellers of property.** Where it is not practical to remove the plants, new owners must apply for permits in their own names. There are hefty fines for non-compliance of up to R5 million for a first offence.

**Management Plan for controlling invasive alien vegetation along the river:**

CoT Nature Conservation has divided each area along the river into numbered blocks on aerial photographs. CoT workers, contractors and volunteer groups work according to these blocks and fill in forms listing the type of alien, the treatment and the follow-ups so that full records are kept. Volunteer groups obtain approval for proposed alien removal activities from Nature Conservation and receive advice and the appropriate herbicide.

**Two Pieces of Good News Regarding Aliens**



The CoT allocated funding for the control of **Pompom weeds** in Faerie Glen Nature Reserve and in Moreletakloof Nature Reserve and contractors have been engaged to work on these infestations. The first pompoms started to flower in November.

Note: Volunteer groups working on Pompoms should cut off the flowers and bag them. The whole root system should be carefully removed, with as little disturbance to the soil as possible and also bagged. The flowers and roots should be burnt or kept in plastic bags until completely rotted.

**Meet the Wild Route/Wildlands Team** (left) which has been working northwards along the Moreleta and Rademeyer Spruities since October, removing alien vegetation. At right is Danie van Eeden and helpers with two banners, with logos of Adopt Moreletaspruit, Wild Route, Wildlands and the CoT which are displayed where the team is working.



## **Friends Groups/Vriendegroep**

**Vriende van Moreletakloof** was baie aktief. Sowel as skoonmaakaksies, het hulle 'n toespraak oor die Moreleta deur Mike Silberbauer, 'n uitstappie om na die lentebloem en grasse te kyk met Antoinette Eysell-Knox en Alan Short, 'n rotswandeling met Adam Bumby en 'n voëlringoggend met Hein Bantjies gebied. Links neem helpers die voëls uit die net op 1 Nov.



**Friends of Faerie Glen Nature Reserve** had a Geology Walk with Adam Bumby who explained that the Bronberg actually does not end in the reserve but parts of it appear further east. They also had a Lantana hack on 22 November.

**Vriende van Skuilkrans** het 'n skoonmaakaksie gehou noord van die N4. 'n Opedag was gereël vir die Meyersparkvoëlreservaat maar dit was uitgereën. Hulle het 'n nuwe web adres: <https://sites.google.com/site/friendsofskuilkrans/home>

**Friends of Colbyn Valley** had a Birding Big Day on 29 November.

**Die gemeenskappe van Faerie Glen en Garscom** het 'n nagwandel van 5 km gereël al langs die Tweefonteinspruit en die Moreletaspruit op 24 Oktober. Daar was groot belangstelling en omtrent 60 mense het deelgeneem.

**Friends of Serene Valley** had a Tree Walk for Arbour Month and a combined Flower Walk and "Bird your Hood" morning on 29 November.

## **Sewage Leaks along the River**

To report sewage leaks, phone the CoT call centre at 012 358 2111/012 358 999 and follow the prompts for Water and Sanitation (press 3). Give the exact location of the leak and nearest cross streets. GPS co-ordinates can be given where it is far from streets. You will receive a reference number. Without the reference number being logged, NO repairs will be done and you will not be able to track progress. If the leak is along the river, report it to Nature Conservation with the reference number and details so that they can also follow up – Tel: 012 358 1510, email: [AdeleneL@TSHWANE.GOV.ZA](mailto:AdeleneL@TSHWANE.GOV.ZA)  
If no action is taken, contact the Dept of Water and Sanitation 080 020 0200.

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

DWA: Gauteng Region – Tel 012 392 1362. Email: [RakgothoT@dwa.gov.za](mailto:RakgothoT@dwa.gov.za)

CoT: Nature Conservation – Tel: 012 358 1510. Email: [AdeleneL@TSHWANE.GOV.ZA](mailto:AdeleneL@TSHWANE.GOV.ZA)

Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum – Email: [anneli.kuhn@gmail.com](mailto:anneli.kuhn@gmail.com) - Tel 012 472 0069 or 083 750 2873. Secretary of the Forum: [moreletaforum@gmail.com](mailto:moreletaforum@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.riv.co.za/ms](http://www.riv.co.za/ms)

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

Thank you for your interest in the activities of the Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum during 2014. Ons wens almal 'n baie geseënde Kersfees en 'n wonderlike 2015 toe!

Greetings from the **Facilitation Team/ Groete van die Fasiliteringspan**

**Some of the Listed Alien Invasive Plants found along the Moreletaspruit**  
**Sommige van die uitheemse indringerplante wat langs die Moreletaspruit voorkom**

Category 2 and 3 aliens are categorized as 1b when along the river.  
 Kategorie 2 en 3 indringers word gekategoriseer as 1b langs die rivier.

<b><u>Botanical name</u></b>	<b><u>English name</u></b>	<b><u>Afrikaanse naam</u></b>	<b><u>Category</u></b>
<i>Acacia podalyriifolia</i>	Pearl Acacia	Vaalmimosa	1b
<i>Araujia sericifera</i>	Moth catcher	Motvanger	1b
<i>Argemone mexicana</i>	Yellow-flowered Mexican poppy	Geelblombloudissel	1b
<i>Arundo donax</i>	Spanish reed	Spaanse riet	1b
<i>Campuloclinum macrocephalum</i>	Pom pom weed	Pompombossie	1b
<i>Cereus jamacaru</i>	Queen of the night	Nagblom	1b
<i>Cestrum laevigatum</i>	Inkberry		1b
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Scottish thistle Spear thistle	Skotse dissel	1b
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Tickseed		1a
<i>Cortaderia jubata</i>	Purple pampas grass	Pampasgras	1b
<i>Crotalaria agatiflora</i>	Canarybirdbush Bird flower	Voëltjebos	1b
<i>Datura stramonium</i>	Common thorn apple Downy thorn apple	Gewone stinkblaar Malpitte	1b
<i>Dolichandra</i> (syn. <i>Macfadyana</i> ) <i>unguis-cati</i>	Cat's claw creeper	Katteklouranker	1b
<i>Duchesnea indica</i>	Wild strawberry	Wilde aarbei	1b
<i>Gleditsia triacanthus</i>	Honey locust	Soetpeulboom Driedoringboom Springkaanboom	1b
<i>Ipomoea indica</i>	Common morning glory	Gewone Purpurwinde	1b
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Flag Iris	Geel iris	1a
<i>Lantana camara</i>	Lantana	Gewone lantana	1b
<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Privet	Gewone liguster	3
<i>Melia azedarach</i>	Syringa	Sering	3
<i>Morus alba</i>	White mulberry Common mulberry	Gewone moerbeï	3
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander	Selonsroos	1b
<i>Pinus patula</i>	Patula pine	Treurden	2
<i>Pinus pinaster</i>	Cluster pine	Trosden	2
<i>Populus alba</i>	White poplar	Witpopulier	2
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Castor-oil plant	Kasterolieboom	2
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black locust	Witakasia Valsakasia	1b
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	European elder Elderberry	Kanadese viler	1b
<i>Schinus Terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper tree	Brasiliaanse Peperboom	3

<i>Sesbania punicea</i>	Red Sesbania	Rooisesbania	1b
<i>Solanum mauritianum</i>	Bugweed	Luisboom	1b
<i>Solanum seforthianum</i>	Potato creeper	Aartappelranker	1b
<i>Tecoma stans</i>	Yellow bells	Geelklokkies	1b
<i>Tipuana tipu</i>	Tipu tree	Tipoeboom	3
<i>Tithonia rotundifolia</i>	Red sunflower	Rooisonneblom	1b
<i>Verbena bonariensis</i>	Wild verbena Purple top	Blouwaterbossie	1b
<i>Verbena brasiliensis</i>	Brazilian verbena	Brasiliaanse verbena	1b
<i>Vinca major</i>	Greater periwinkle		1b
<i>Vinca minor</i>	Lesser periwinkle		1b
<i>Xanthium spinosum</i>	Spiny cocklebur	Boetebossie	1b
<i>Xanthium strumarium</i>	Large cocklebur	Kankerroos	1b

### **Methods of Control used for Invasive Aliens by Volunteer Groups**

Some of the Friends Groups have acquired chain saws and tree poppers to deal with larger trees but most of the groups use their own loppers, saws and secateurs together with the appropriate herbicide supplied by Nature Conservation.

Hand pull method: grip the young plant low down and pull out by hand. This works very well for small privets, other trees and small shrubs, especially when the soil is wet. Creepers such as moth catchers must be pulled out by the roots.

Cut stump treatment: cut the stem as low as possible. Apply herbicide to the cut surface, making sure it reaches the area just inside the bark, and do this immediately as the cut wound will seal within an hour. *Do not spray the sides of the stumps.*

Other methods: there are several other methods but those should be carried out with professional advice or supervision.

**The key to success is perseverance and following up** to remove re-growth (coppicing) and new seedlings.