



FRIENDS OF FAERIE GLEN NATURE RESERVE (FFGNR) VRIENDE VAN FAERIE GLEN NATUURRESERVAAT (VFGNR)

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www.fgnr.co.za



admin@fgnr.co.za



faerie.glen.nature.reserve



Jaco 071 140 4412



PO Box 915-1496



Louise 072 275 0614

Faerie Glen, 0043



Fax 086 657 8440

Summer Newsletter 2017

In January the FFGNR, along with two rate-paying dog walkers, launched court proceedings against the City of Tshwane's (CoT) decision to ban dogs from the Faerie Glen Nature Reserve (FGNR) with effect from 1 January 2017. CoT decided not to contest our application in court. The case is set down for default judgment on 12 May. We are asking the court to set aside the ban and declare that dogs are allowed in the FGNR.

Although this can be considered a victory for dogs and dog walkers alike, it does not mean that the ill-disciplined dog-walkers can return to their old ways of allowing their dogs to run off-leash and leaving dog excreta behind. Dogs have previously been allowed in FGNR by CoT under the CoT's by-laws on public amenities, yet enforcement has always proved to be problematic. It has therefore been suggested by the FFGNR, and is now supported by CoT, that a dog permit system be implemented. A similar system is in operation in the Table Mountain National Park, in order to obligate dog-walkers to follow the on-leash rule and proper etiquette.

The dog permit system will be administered by CoT Nature Conservation (CoT NC). Permit application forms will be available from the cashier at FGNR from Saturday 13 May, after the court judgment is handed down. The permits will also be collected from the cashier once processed by CoT NC's admin officer. It should be noted that a dog will only be able to gain access to the reserve once the permit has been issued. CoT commits to issue the permits within three working days, so you should be able to again walk your dog in the FGNR before the following weekend. Permits will be issued free of charge at this stage, but CoT plans to introduce a charge with effect from July 2018.

Somer Nuusbrief 2017



Bridget (above) and her owner Tienie, can now look forward to their daily early morning walks again.

The by-laws on public amenities will still be applicable. It is an offence to allow your dog off its leash and also if you fail to pick up its excreta. The FFGNR will provide the public with plastic bags to collect dog excreta. These will be available at the entrance next to the cashier's window. Dustbins are available throughout the FGNR for disposal.

The Tshwane Metropolitan Police Department (TMPD) has agreed to assist in enforcing the by-laws and will be present at the FGNR to take action. Any member of the public witnessing a dog-walker not complying with the by-laws can also lay a formal complaint with the TMPD. Informal complaints can be brought to the attention of the FFGNR. The complaint mechanism is seen as an important aspect of the permit system to prevent non-compliant dog-walkers from using the reserve.

The FFGNR will communicate with its members again after the court date.



Proudly affiliated to the Wildlife
and Environment Society of
South Africa and Adopt
Moreletaspruit Forum



Pretoria het goeie reën gedurende Januarie en Februarie ontvang, terwyl daar bykans geen reën in Maart was nie. Meer as 100mm het weer in April geval. Ander dele van Gauteng, Limpopo, Noord-Wes, Mpumalanga en die Vrystaat het ook goeie reën ontvang. Dit het daartoe gelei dat die Department van Water en Sanitasie die waterbeperkings in Gauteng opgehef het.

Daar is egter kommer oor nog 'n moontlike El Niño weerpatroon wat teen September mag ontwikkel, het die Suid-Afrikaanse Weerdiens onlangs gewaarsku. Dit is duidelik dat mense hulle houding rakende waterverbruik sal moet begin verander, want die realiteit is dat ons in 'n water-skaars land woon en dat reënval in alle waarskynlikheid in die toekoms al hoe minder en meer wispelturig gaan word. 'n Verdere bron van kommer is dat, teen die provinsie se huidige groeitempo, die beskikbare watervoorraad sal opraak voor die tweede fase van die Lesotho Hooglandprojek in 2030 in werking kan tree.

Ons speel met vuur wanneer ons sit met massas afvalwater en bykans geen onbesoedelde water in ons riviere en damme het nie. Volgens die Verenigde Nasies se Wêreld Waterassesseringsprogram sterf ongeveer 800 000 mense, waarvan 360 000 kinders is, wêreldwyd elke jaar as gevolg van die inname van besoedelde water. Tagtig persent van die wêreld se afvalwater word onbehandel teruggevoer in riviersisteme in. Dit het 'n massiewe impak op ekosisteme en menslike gesondheid.

Na die groot reënbuie wat die afgekoep drie maande uitgesak het, het 'n kommerwekkende volume gemors, wat grootliks uit plastiek bestaan, die gedeelte van die Moreletaspruit wat deur die FGNR vloei besoedel. Hierdie besoedeling is afkomstig van die stormwaterstelsel. Riool, wat uit mangate oorgeloo het, het ook op 'n soortgelyke wyse in die spruit beland en bedreig die gesondheid van die hele ekosisteem.

Indien ons nie as individue veranderinge in ons eie lewens aanbring nie, laat ons die natuur en toekomstige generasies in die steek. In Maart, wat ook nasionale watermaand was, het ons 'n reeks artikels aangestuur, geskryf deur Judy Scott-Goldman van die Neem Moreletaspruit Aan Forum, oor hoe ons ons lewens kan aanpas vir 'n skoner omgewing. Gaan maak gerus 'n draai op ons webwerf, waar die artikels gelees of afgelaai kan word onder 'recent posts' of die April agiewe.



Van die plastiek wat op die walle van die Moreletaspruit beland het na 'n groot reënbuie en 'n gevaar inhou vir die FGNR se natuurlewe. Lede van die VFGNR en Simon, wat in diens is van die VFGNR, het reeds baie van die vullis verwyder.

The best place to start education on the importance of our natural environment, is the youth. On 3 February, the FFGNR introduced the FGNR to the Glenstantia Primary Junior Rangers by means of a guided walk. Many of the kids were unaware of the nature reserve in their very own neighbourhood. We hope to involve the Junior Rangers in future projects at the reserve. We thank members Edwin and Vincent van de Wiel for guiding the walk.



Honorary Ranger and teacher at Glenstantia Primary, Linda O'Kelly with her Junior Rangers. The kids thoroughly enjoyed their afternoon walk at FGNR.

Of course there are many people that care for the environment, especially members of the FFGNR. During the first weekend of February, dedicated member Ruth Schmidt, her husband Thomas, as well as Johan Smalberger, Ralph Enslin and Jonathan Kleynhans committed themselves to fixing the holes in the FGNR's palisade fence. It is important for the fence to be maintained, to keep the animals safely inside and to ensure the safety of FGNR visitors.



Thomas Schmidt (left) and Ralph Enslin (right), welding a slat back into place in the FGNR's palisade fence along January Masilela Ave.



Simon Skosana and ekstra helper, Roos Monakhisi, removing and bagging pompom heads and spraying the foliage with herbicide.

Waterbesoedeling en sekuriteit is maar net van die vele uitdagings wat FGNR in die gesig staar. Indringerplante bly een van die grootste bedreigings vir die reservaat se welstand en toekoms. Een van die kategorie 1 indringerplante wat tydens die somermaande sy kop uitsteek, is die pompom onkruid (*Campuloclinium macrocephalum*). Pompoms groei baie aggressief in die somer en het veral hierdie jaar ekstra fluks gegroei met die baie reën. Pompoms is ook baie gehard en kan droogte en vuur weerstaan, deurdat hulle sterk ondergrondse risome het wat water en nutriënte stoor. Dit is belangrik dat hierdie indringer aangepak word voor die pienk blomme verbruin en die wind die droë sade oor groot afstande versprei.



Members of the Lux Mundi Church contributed to the massive task of eradicating *Lantana camara*.

Die VFGNR het in 2014 alreeds begin om pompoms in die FGNR te bestry en elke jaar is die infestasië kleiner. Dit is egter baie arbeidsintensief en sou nie effektief gewees het sonder 'n spanpoging en strategie nie. Ons het 'n ekstra werker vanaf Desember tot Maart aangestel om Simon by te staan, wat gedeeltelik geborg word deur lede Tony en Beverley Moore. Die pompom-dames het ook die afgelope paar maande hulle merk gemaak op die pienk indringer, asook Edwin en Vincent van de Wiel, sonder wie die FGNR landskap meer kleurvol sou vertoon het hierdie somer. Ons bedank ook vir David Fourie en sy gesin, wat die pompoms in die noord-oostelike hoek van die reservaat in toom gehou het.



Members of the FFGNR utilising the Friends' tree-poppers during a Lantana hack on Sunday 23 April.

Apart from the dreaded pompom weed, there is a long list of other serious invasive plants and trees that need to be eradicated from FGNR. Another major invasive plant in FGNR is *Lantana camara*, native to Central and South America and one of the

world's worst invaders. It is especially problematic on the slopes of the Bronberg and other hills and koppies in Pretoria. The FFGNR organised a series of hacks from February to April to target this herbaceous shrub, including the first hack of the year, which took place on Saturday 4 February in collaboration with members of the Lux Mundi

Church. We would like to thank them for helping out with this important task. We also thank member Barend Taute for attending and bringing his brush cutter to two of the hacks.

Recreational activities were also high on the agenda during March. On Saturday 4 March we had an insect walk led by taxonomist Michael Stiller from the Agricultural Research Council. The outing attracted the interest of a lot of kids. The kids proved to be very skilled at catching the insects for everyone to inspect, including a black grass-hopper from a branch burnt during last year's fire.



Michael Stiller (middle with outstretched arm) showing the crowd a tiny insect. Those that brought along a magnifying glass were able to look at the bugs in detail.



This unusual black grass hopper was found during the insect walk on 4 March in the section on the koppie that burnt in October last year.

On 11 March, an early morning bird walk took place at FGNR. The walk was led by Philip Calinikos, former chairman of BirdLife Northern Gauteng. Those that attended on this chilly morning were rewarded with sightings of over 50 bird species, including an Ovambo Sparrowhawk.



People attending the bird walk on 11 March setting off in single file towards the river, where many African Palm Swifts were seen catching insects.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Geology walk with Prof. Adam Bumby:

When: Saturday 22 July at 09:00

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

Bring along: Hat and water

- R50 payable for non-members

Invasive plant hacks:

When: • Saturday 20 May at 08:30

• Sunday 18 June at 08:30

• Saturday 15 July at 08:30

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

Bring along: Lopper/pruning shears, hand-saw, gloves, hat, working shoes, water

*Please e-mail or sms if you plan on helping

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