

Newsletter



GROTTO BAY PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE



Beautiful One Day - Perfect The Next

October 2022 Newsletter

RECYCLING

The recycling project has got off to a wonderful start, it really helps that everything can now go together in one bag! Thanks, must be given to Kirsten Vervoer for their generous donation of gravel to neaten the area and to a resident for donating the covers for the recycling holders to stop everything blowing away. Thank you so much!



Above our second load on its way, let's try and double the amount for the next collection and the covers below.



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR – Jacqui Miller

Quite a lot has been going on recently. The Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers (CREW) visited recently and discovered another 2 kinds of endangered plants on our block burn site. Cape Nature invited 2 of our Grottonians to join them on their annual Spring Walk. The Bird Ringers were back and had another successful day.

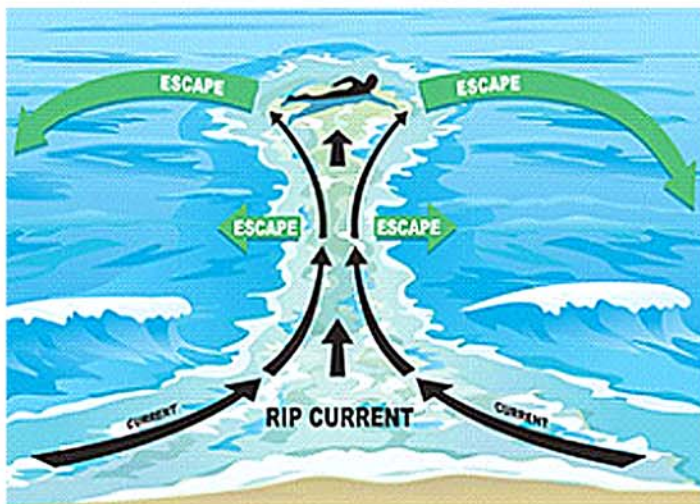
If anyone has any interesting anecdotes about Grotto Bay that they would like to share in the newsletters, please email them to jacqui@grottobay.org

The photographic competition has ended. The entries were sent to us anonymously and were judged by the board and a professional photographer. There were 56 beautiful entries, making judging very difficult, so we chose 7! The winning photographs will soon be displayed in the CC.

It's almost holiday time again and family, friends and guests will be visiting. With the holiday season, comes FIRE season and we need to be extremely careful. Please remember that NO open fires are allowed.

The use of firepits is strongly discouraged especially in windy weather. Braais should only be made in designated fireplaces on your property. No smoking is allowed while walking in the estate or the nature reserve, yet we are still.





IT'S SWIMMING TIME AGAIN!

Please be on the lookout for rip currents that may form on our beaches. When the waves are at their strongest, so are the rip currents.

How to identify a rip current?

A channel of churning, choppy water. An area having a notable difference in water colour.

A line of foam, seaweed, or debris moving steadily seaward. A break in the incoming wave pattern.

What do you do if caught in a rip current?

Stay calm. Don't fight the current. Escape the current by swimming in a direction following the shoreline. When free of the current, swim at an angle away from the current towards the shore. If you are unable to escape by swimming, float or tread water. When the current weakens, swim at an angle away from the current towards the shore. If at any time you feel you will be unable to reach shore, draw attention to yourself: face the shore, and wave for help.

What not to do?

Do not go in to help unless you are trained and have emergency flotation such as the NSRI Pink Rescue Buoy or a surfboard. If you are not trained in water rescue, throw something that floats into the rip current which will carry it out to the person in difficulty. At some beaches this will not work, and the only option is to call for help. The Pink Rescue Buoy signs have emergency numbers for the closest NSRI station on them or call the emergency number 087 094 9774. We have a NSRI Pink Rescue Buoy on Grotto Beach which was kindly donated by a member.

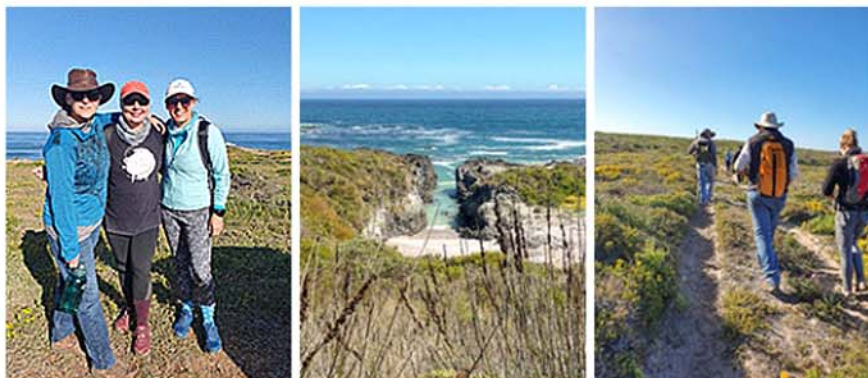
CAPE NATURE ANNUAL SPRING WALK – Submitted by Michelle Vorster-Van Acker

The annual DCCP Spring Walk, aimed at getting partners and key stakeholders together in the field to celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of the landscape, to network and collaborate, was reinvigorated after a period of dormancy during the COVID pandemic.

Partners and stakeholders were invited to the event, included representatives from the City of Cape Town Biodiversity Management Branch, LandCare, Wilderness Foundation, Table Mountain Fund and WWF-SA. For the first time, Grotto Bay received an invitation to participate in this Spring Walk that took place on the 27th of September 2022. Our two Conservation ambassadors were the enthusiastic all-girl team of Lesa and Cindy. In the early morning, the three of us joined the group that set off from Kabeljoubank. The hike followed the coast for approximately 11km to the Bokbaai Homestead. Highlights for the day included perfect weather, a show of flowers and birdlife, four whale and three steenbok sightings. The walk closed with a light lunch and a tour of Bokbaai.

Cindy is a new Grotto Bay resident and when asked what stood out for her on the day, her reply was:

"I would say the beauty and appreciation of the West Coast. A spark was ignited to be involved in the conservation of area". Lesa said she definitely could have continued for much longer. Go girls! Grotto Bay would like to thank Cape Nature for including us in this wonderful event. We are looking forward to next years' walk.



KNOW THY NEIGHBOUR – Submitted by Driekie Collins-Odendaal

!Khwa ttu
SAN SPIRIT SHARED

There's a place on our doorstep, a Nature Reserve which has been carefully rehabilitated and the wild, slowly reintroduced – an organization committed to restoring the dignity and cultural pride of the San People. A place determined to preserve the heritage of our San

A place where the land is precious and each and every thing growing on it, has a function and a place in the kitchen. Under the guidance of the indigenous San People in the kitchen, the young and inspiring chef, Werlise Rautenbach, is bringing the old world's knowledge, heritage, and secrets to us by foraging from the veld for the amazing dishes they put out. We indulged in the Smoked Snoek Fritters and the Roosterkoek. What delectable dishes, these guys definitely know their way with flavours.



Although the restaurant was packed, Werlise still joined us and the chirruping birds under the pergola for a colourful insight into her life.

Interview with Chef Werlise

Did you choose the West Coast? Nope, the West Coast chose me... I just didn't have a choice in the end – the journey of !Khwa ttu just inspired me so much, I had to be part of it.

Which ingredients surprised you the most? dune salad and succulents. And the massive edible varieties one can forage from the dunes.

What spice is a must have in your kitchen? coriander. I like to keep it simple.

What is that one thing in the kitchen which doesn't excite you that much? admin and dishes.

Do you think one can taste the love in food? Definitely, the passion for the food will portray in your dish, and it starts with the sourcing process of your ingredients. Taking care of the quality you buy and choosing sustainable and passionate producers makes a big difference.

What would your last meal be if you found yourself on death-row? curry with all the sambles and lots of Garlic Naan bread.

What inspires you? The way the San People respect the land. They will only take what they need. The way in which they tread lightly on the earth so not to disturb it. The way in which they are sensitive and mindful to leave resources behind for the next generation and the animals which share their land. The very way in which they preserve the earth."





This place has an incredible story to tell and their menu invites you to taste the stories as told by the San. The story of the San is one that many people might not know but is one that everyone will recognise. It is our story – the story of humankind.

We spent some time with the !Khwa ttu Team and were blown away by the flavours they had crafted from the veld to our plates. Werlise agreed to share her Spekboom Soup Recipe with us:

Spekboom Soup

15ml oil

2 white onions roughly chopped.

4 medium potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped into about 1cm cubes

3 large garlic cloves crushed

1 litre of vegetable stock

Salt and pepper to taste

Juice of 1 lemon

1 cup Spekboom leaves

In a large pan, add the olive oil, onion and potato and cook gently on a low heat for 5 minutes until soft.

Add the garlic and potato and continue cooking on a low heat for another 5 minutes.

Add the stock and simmer for 10 minutes until vegetables are tender.

Leave to cool slightly, then puree the soup mixture till smooth.

Add the lemon juice, and salt and pepper to taste.

Add the fresh Spekboom leaves to the soup before serving, chopped or whole.

* Do not blend the Spekboom as it will give your soup a gel-like texture.

*Bon
Appetit*

Watch. Connect. Take Action.

There is this wonderful site www.waterbear.com The WaterBear Network is a free Netflix-style streaming platform that brings together the very best in natural history storytelling, covering topics from climate action and biodiversity to community, circularity and much more. Enjoy feature-length documentaries, engaging short films and inspirational media for free.



Audiences will have free access to a plethora of award-winning films and documentaries about the natural world and our relationship with the planet, empowering them to learn more and take action.

WaterBear aims to bridge the gap between watching and doing: users can support organisations and causes they care about by donating, volunteering, signing petitions, or simply by sharing the stories and issues that matter to them most. Through powerful storytelling, WaterBear allows global audiences to engage with our planet and drive action to make positive change for the future.

Create an account for free You can also download the WaterBear app for iOS in the App Store or the Google Play Store for Android

Lets drive impact around the world together. Watch. Connect. Take Action. Nature & Wildlife. Support Sustainability. Nature Conservation.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND AN ANIMAL IN DISTRESS?

If you find a **TURTLE** in distress on a beach:

- Do not return the turtle to the sea
- Do not remove any barnacles from its shell
- If it's a large turtle, remain close and call the number below
- If it's a hatchling, place in a small box and call the number below

Contact TWO OCEANS AQUARIUM: 021 418 3823 / 083 326 1604 (A/H)

If you find a **SEAL** in distress on a beach:

- Do not throw water over it
 - Do not chase it back into the water
 - Keep dogs away from the seal
 - Do not approach or try and touch the seal
- Contact the SPCA on 021 700 4158/9 / 083 326 1604 (a/h)

If you see a **WHALE** or a **DOLPHIN** in distress: Contact the NSRI Emergency on 087 094 9774

If you find a **PENGUIN** in distress on a beach:

- Do not return the penguin to the sea
- Keep dogs away and do not crowd the penguin
- Do not feed, or give water to, or wet the penguin
- Call the number below and await instructions

Contact SANCCOB on 021 557 6155 / 078 638 3731 (a/h)

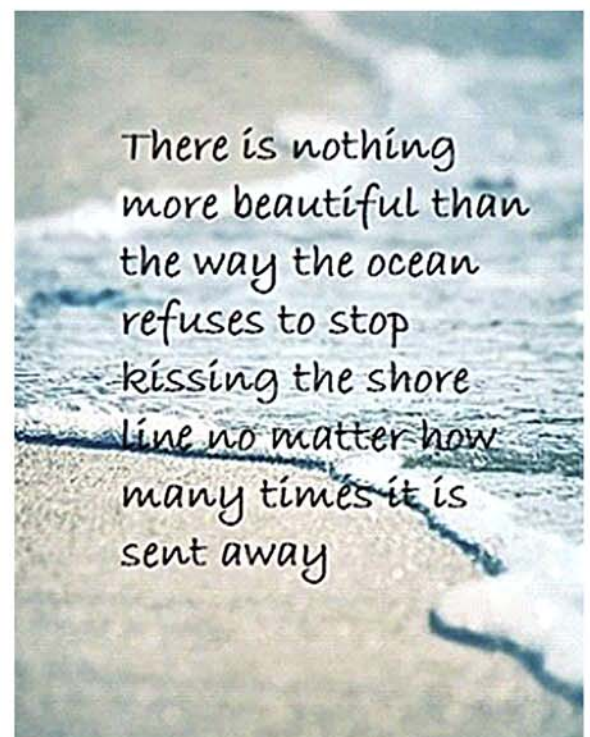
If you find a **SEABIRD** in distress on a beach:

- If possible, catch the seabird with a towel
- Be mindful of its beak, it may try to defend itself
- Place in a large box with good ventilation
- Call the number below and await instructions

Contact SANCCOB on 021 557 6155 / 078 638 3731 (a/h)

Reminder

We urge you not to use pesticides, insecticides, and herbicides they have a detrimental effect on our wildlife.



BIRD WATCHING GROUP – Submitted by Henry Deacon

Always active, the birding group recently had a walk around Grotto. The Long-billed Crombec (Bosveldstompstert) and the Bar-throated Apalis (Bandkeelkleinjantjie) were the highlights of the outing. They were very active and often sat on top of shrubs. Spring definitely gave them a boost of energy! A total of 39 bird species were noted.

They also visited Table Mountain on 30 September. It was a misty, cool day with only 15 bird species observed, of which the high-lights were the Orange-breasted Sunbird, the Cape Siskin and Neddicky.

Special Request

There was a special request from Dr Megan Murgatroyd, a post-doctoral fellow at The Fitz Patrick Institute at UCT, working on the Raptor Research Programme.

She's currently mapping the migration patterns of the Black Harrier (Witkruisvleivalk). They are southern Africa's rarest endemic raptor.

She requested the residents of Grotto Bay to assist her on noting the sightings and possible nests of these raptors. Will you please be on the lookout for these birds.

Please note where you have seen them and try to determine the GPS location if possible and send it to Henry Deacon (082 921 2490) who will liaise with Megan. Your help will really be appreciated so keep those peepers peeled skyward.



INTERESTING



When sperm whales need a nap, they take a deep breath, dive down about 15 meters and arrange themselves into perfectly level vertical patterns. They sleep soundly and still for up to 2 hours at a time between breaths in pods of 5 or 6 whales, presumable for protection. No one knew that whales slept vertically until a study in 2008, documented this behaviour. No one captured good photography of this in the wild until 2017. Patrick Dykstra was documenting sperm whales in the Mediterranean Sea for his book on creatures when he came across these sleeping whales. Read more about it. <https://bomboh.com/dozing-whales-photographer-shows-what-whales-look-like-while-snoozing>

Kid's Corner

As it's the month of Halloween, I thought the children and their parents may find learning about how wonderful these "scary creatures" are. There is loads of information, pictures, puzzles, colouring in and even a mask to make.

PLEASE CLICK ON THIS LINK:

<https://www.starkeyresgc.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/SAGC-Bats-as-pollinators-2.pdf>



HALLOWEEN MATH WORKSHEET

Count the image. Write the number of images in the boxes above each image and write the total number in the last box.

1 + =

2 + =

3 + =

4 + =

5 + =



DID YOU KNOW?

- African buffalo herds make decisions by voting.
- You'll grow nearly 960 kilometres of hair in your lifetime.
- Armadillos are bulletproof.
- Your femur is stronger than concrete.
- Camel's humps are made up of fat, not water.
- The ocean produces up to 85 percent of the Earth's oxygen.
- A tiger's skin also has stripes.
- Humans eat only 200 types of plants.
- Saturn could float on water.
- Goats have accents.



HALLOWEEN SUDOKU

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IT'S TIME TO MAKE THE CHRISTMAS CAKE AND I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE OUR OLD FAMILY RECIPE WITH YOU.



Ingredients

1 Kg Mixed fruit
 50 g Chopped Cherries (I put more in)
 250 ml Brandy
 110 g Butter
 110 g Castor sugar
 110 g Brown sugar
 5 eggs
 550 ml Flour
 5 ml Bicarbonate of Soda
 A pinch of Salt
 5 ml Mixed Spice
 60g Slithered Almonds (I put more in)

Method

Soak fruit in brandy for 24 – 48 hours.

Cream the butter and sugar. Add the eggs one at a time mixing well. Add a bit of flour if it looks like it is curdling.

Sift the flour, bicarb., and all spice. Add the dry ingredients to the butter and sugar mixture and the fruit alternatively. Mix all together.

Turn into a well-greased cake tin. Put tin into a roasting pan filled with some water. Bake for about 3 hours at 150°C. Test after 2 ½ hours, all ovens are different.

Pour brandy over when you take it out of the oven.

Once cool, wrap in tin foil and put into a storage container. Feed with brandy once a week.

If you want to ice the cake, first coat the cake with melted apricot jam. Then put a layer of marzipan and then fondant icing. You can also just decorate it with blanched whole almonds and glacé cherries before you bake it.

