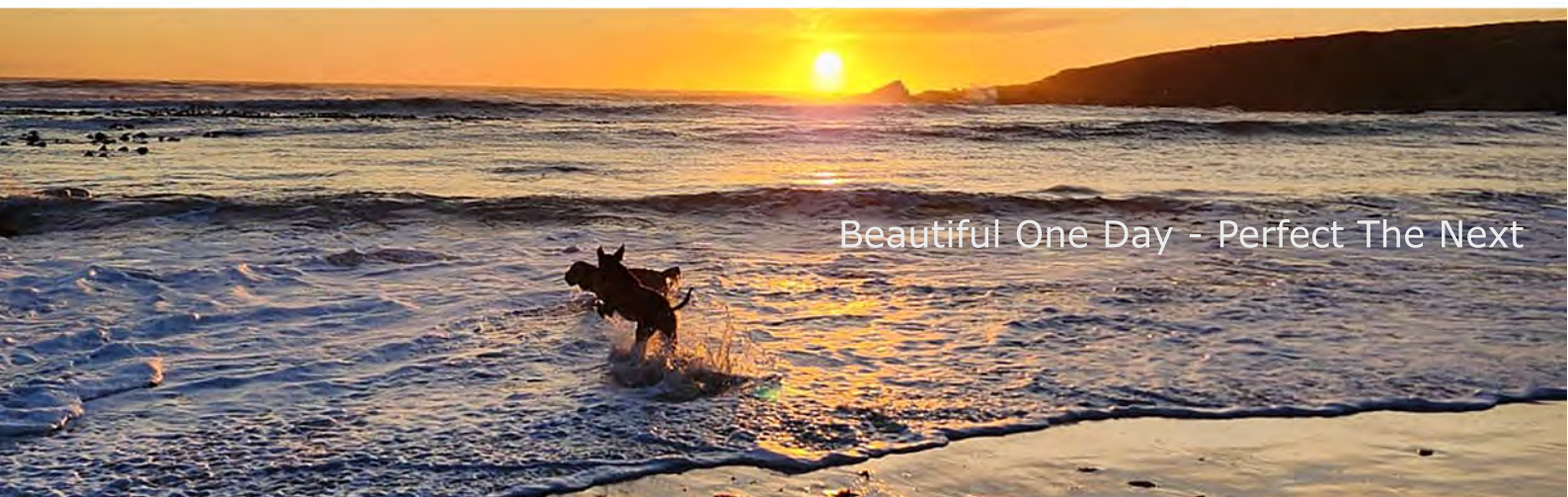


# NewsLetter



GROTTO BAY PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE



Beautiful One Day - Perfect The Next

## April 2023 Bulletin Letter From The Editor

Jacqui Miller

Where is this year going to? Easter is already upon us! With that comes an influx of family, guests & friends. Please remind your little ones to obey the rules of the road and to look out for the increased traffic flow.

There is quite a lot of building and renovations going on at present. These sites are strictly out of bounds to unauthorized persons for safety reasons. Please make your children and guests aware of this.

Welcome to the new residents. We hope you will enjoy living in this beautiful Coastal Nature Reserve. There are many voluntary initiatives you may wish to join. To find out more, contact the Board on [theboard@grottobay.org](mailto:theboard@grottobay.org)

## Still haven't organized yourself and kinda feeling guilty about it

by Driekie Collins-Odendaal

Recycling is really eazy peazy. You can even get the kids involved – choose your little recycling champ at home and get them to feel responsible for this activity. Do your bit and pat yourself on the back for contributing to saving the earth.

**STEP 1:** Buy a plastic domestic trash bin for R174.19 as per the price sourced from Plastics for Africa. Keep this one in your scullery or kitchen and make sure everybody knows it is only to be used for recyclables.

**STEP 2:** Insert a CLEAR plastic bag.

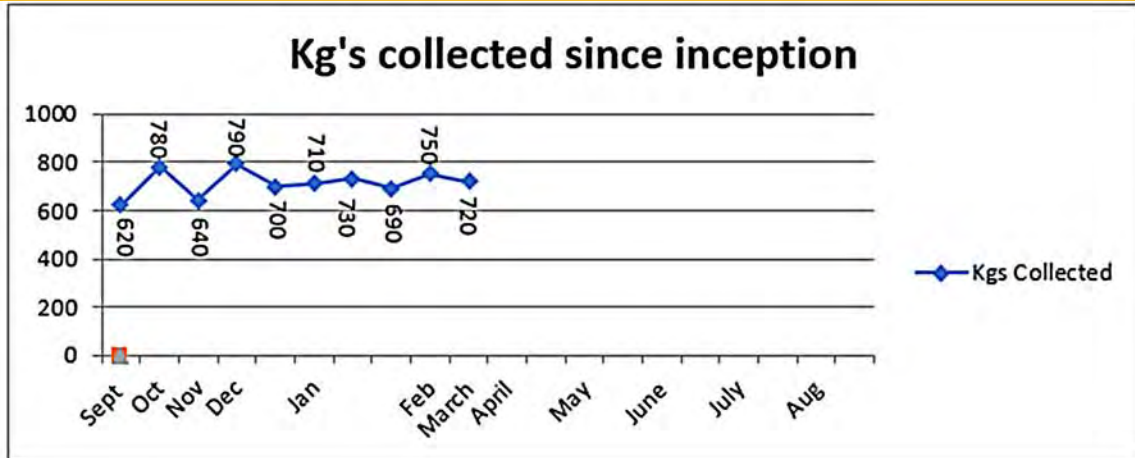
**STEP 3:** Start filling it baby!

**STEP 4:** Remove your trash from your dedicated bin and put it outside your erf for collection on a Thursday.

It just couldn't be easier. ALL your recyclables can go into one bag. Hard plastics, plastic bags, cans (even with the paper wrapper on), glass, paper, and cardboard. Please just make sure that your cardboard is flattened. PS, remember to make sure that any broken glass is double bagged so that it doesn't cause injury to the staff. And remember, your recyclables must be deposited in a CLEAR bag, solid-coloured bags won't be collected.

What is not recyclable = Styrofoam trays, foil packaging unless if it specifically stipulates that it is, gooey stuff like fish or meat bags, tissues, personal wipes and nappies.

**Below is what we as a community have achieved so far. This is remarkable – a total of 7,130 kgs collected so far!**



Submitted by Driekie Collins-Odendaal

**April is Earth Month** and with this in mind, I post some interesting facts as published in Science Daily – the details of studies can be found on the net.

**The Greenland Ice Sheet is close to a melting point of no return.** Once we emit about 1000 gigatons of carbon, much of the massive ice sheet will melt irreversibly: We've emitted 500 gigatons so far.

Date: March 27, 2023 - Source: American Geophysical Union



Summary:

A new study using simulations identified two tipping points for the Greenland Ice Sheet: releasing 1000 gigatons of carbon into the atmosphere will cause the southern portion of the ice sheet to melt; about 2500 gigatons of carbon means permanent loss of nearly the entire ice sheet. Having emitted about 500 gigatons of carbon, we're about halfway to the first tipping point.

**Plants adapt to climate disruptions to lure pollinators.**

Date: March 16, 2023 - Source: University of Michigan

Summary:

There's been a well-documented shift toward earlier springtime flowering in many plants as the world warms. The trend alarms biologists because it has the potential to disrupt carefully choreographed interactions between plants and the creatures -- butterflies, bees, birds, bats, and others -- that pollinate them.



## HOW DO I STOP MY DOG BARKING



Controlling the noise level of your dog is an important part of being a responsible owner. After all, excessive barking can be annoying, not just for you but for your neighbours as well.

### Why all the noise

The first step to managing the problem is to understand why a dog barks. Some dogs will bark to let you know they want something. Perhaps they are hungry, thirsty, or just want to play. When this becomes unreasonable, it is time to teach him other ways to attract your attention; like pawing or waiting by the door or bowl.

### Playtime

Many dogs will bark when they see other dogs to invite them to come and play. This is perfectly normal, but it is up to you to decide how much barking is acceptable and make your dog wait to play until he can be quiet.

### Home alone

Your dog may bark if left alone. Try leaving some music on or play the radio to provide familiar human noise. You can also give him some toys that require extended work and attention to keep him occupied while you're out. A good way of reducing anxiety is to give your dog an old unwashed piece of clothing or anything that will smell strongly of his family. Once you are home, be sure to enjoy some vigorous play and exercise with your dog. He'll have missed you and there's no better way of re-establishing the bond.

### On Guard

One of the most common reasons for a dog to bark is as an alarm. If your dog sees someone approaching the house, he will bark to let you know. Since he sees you as the head of the pack, he will want you to investigate. Some dogs have been bred to sound the alarm and this is a behaviour you may wish to encourage. Let your dog bark to get your attention but silence him once you are sure there is no intruder.

### Stick to a System

In all aspects of dog training, you need to have a system. Dogs respond to routine, and this will greatly increase your chances of success. You may have already been to obedience classes with your puppy, if you didn't, then why not give it a go now? It's never too late to teach old dogs new tricks and they are great places to learn skills in handling your dog.

### Hush

One way to teach your dog a 'hush' command is to silence or distract him every time he barks. Use something that makes a loud noise, like a can full of coins, to get his attention then issue a firm 'hush' command. When your dog stops barking, praise and reward him. Never shout when you want him to stop, this can cause anxiety and undermine any learning. Also, you can easily confuse your dog if he thinks you are barking too. Yelling only reinforces the barking habit.

**With our new water usage limit, we are going to have to be mindful of our water usage. Here are some tips to save water.**

1. Check your toilet for leaks. Put a few drops of food colouring in your toilet tank. If, without flushing, the colouring begins to appear in the bowl, you have a leak.
2. Stop using your toilet as a wastebasket. Every tissue you flush away also flushes away up to 10 litres of water.
3. Put a plastic bottle in your toilet cistern so that it flushes less water.
4. Take shorter showers. Limit your showers to the time it takes to soap up, wash down and rise off.
5. Install water-saving shower heads and taps.
6. Turn off the water while brushing your teeth. Before brushing, wet your brush and fill a glass for rinsing your mouth.
7. Turn off the water while shaving. Fill the bottom of the sink with a few inches of warm water in which to rinse your razor.
8. Check taps and pipes for leaks. Even a slow leak can use many litres of water.
9. Use your automatic dishwasher and washing machine only for full loads.
10. Don't let the tap run while you clean vegetables. Rinse your vegetables instead in a bowl or in the sink with clean water.
11. Water your pot plants or garden with the water used to rinse your vegetables.
12. Keep a bottle of drinking water in the refrigerator. This puts a stop to the wasteful practice of running tap water to cool it for drinking, especially in summer.
13. If you wash dishes by hand, don't leave the water running for rinsing. If you have a double sink, fill the second sink with rinsing water. If not, rinse with a jug after washing the dishes.
14. Water your lawn only when it needs it. When you do water your lawn, water it long enough for water to seep down to the roots where it is needed. A light sprinkling that sits on the surface will simply evaporate and be wasted.
15. Water your garden during the cool parts of the day. Early morning is better than dusk since it helps prevent the growth of fungus. Angle the sprinklers away from paving so that they only water the plants and lawn.
16. Plant endemic drought-resistant trees and plants. Many beautiful trees and plants thrive without irrigation once established.
17. Put a layer of mulch around trees and plants. Mulch slows the evaporation of moisture.
18. Use a broom to clean driveways, sidewalks, and steps. Using a hose wastes hundreds and hundreds of litres of water.
19. Don't run the hose while washing your car. Soap down your car using a bucket of soapy water. Use a hose only to rinse it off. Alternatively, go to a carwash.
20. Get your children not to play with the hose and sprinklers. Children love to play under a hose or sprinkler on a hot day. Unfortunately, this practice is extremely wasteful of precious water and should be discouraged.
21. Put a pool cover on your pool to stop evaporation.





## IN THIS BULLETIN WE FEATURE THE CARACAL

This medium-size wildcat roams the savannas, deserts, and forests of much of Africa and parts of the Middle East. Its coat is typically a tawny or reddish gold with a white chin, throat, and underside. Its large, pointy ears, tipped with black and tufted, are a trademark of the species. These extraordinary ears each have over 20 muscles that swivel around like satellite dishes to detect sounds of their prey. The tufts may enhance sound going into their ears or be used to communicate—via twitches and other movements—with other caracals.

The fastest of the smaller African wildcats, caracals are supreme hunters. Their sandy-coloured coats provide camouflage, and stiff fur cushioning their footpads makes them nearly silent stalkers. They are opportunistic predators, going after whatever they can find, including birds, rodents, mongoose, and even small monkeys.

Strong hind legs allow them to leap up to 10 feet high and grab birds from midair with their thick, hooked claws. They will sometimes climb trees and cache their prey, like leopards.

Caracals sexually mature from 12 to 16 months old. Whilst the species is mostly solitary, various males will stay with females for several days, mating multiple times during that period. Pregnancy lasts up to 2.5 months, and mothers will use the abandoned burrow of another animal, like an aardvark, as a birthing den. Litters average around three kittens, with six being the maximum. Kittens are born blind and deaf. Their eyes will open at about 10 days old, around the same time their incisors first become visible. They raise the kittens without help from the males, nursing the kittens for four to six months, though kittens can eat meat by the time they're a month old. By nine or 10 months old, kittens are ready to leave their mothers. Males disperse much further than females, maintaining ranges about three times larger.

These predators live to be about 12 years old in the wild. Caracals are not declining in most of their range, but there are still threats to their populations. These include habitat destruction due to agriculture and retaliation killing, as caracals will hunt small livestock if given the opportunity. We are very privileged to have caracal on our estate.



## GROTTO BAY ROCKS

Finding painted rocks is a competitive pastime around the world. Look out for some painted rocks hidden around the estate. If you find one, post a picture on the Grotto Bay Affairs WhatsApp group. Keep it or re-hide it. Buy some pebbles at the nursery and paint your own to join in the fun these holidays.



## THINGS TO DO IN APRIL & MAY

### Riebeek Valley Celebrates Olives

THE annual **Riebeek Valley Olive Festival** will take place from May 3 - 4 and will again celebrate award-winning olive oils and wines from the **Swartland** region.

The festival, hosted by Riebeek West and Riebeek Kasteel, will highlight the region's olive industry and is an opportunity for visitors to sample the neighbouring wine farms.

Visitors to the festival can look forward to olive grove tours, olive and olive oil tastings, wine cellar tours and wine tastings, cheese tastings, farmers' markets, art exhibitions and performances by musicians.



Article Courtesy of [www.tourismupdate.co.za/article/riebeek-valley-celebrates-olives](http://www.tourismupdate.co.za/article/riebeek-valley-celebrates-olives)

### Thali Thali Game Lodge Sunday Buffet

Date: Every last Sunday of the month

Time: 12:00 – 15:00

Location: Thali Thali Game Lodge

Contact: +27 (0)82 372 8637

Description: Bring the family around to Thali Thali Game Lodge for their special Sunday Buffet. Menu's change monthly, so be sure to check on their facebook page for an updated menu. Bookings are essential.



**West Coast Horse Trails** is situated on the guest and game farm, Blombosch, on the R315 just before Yzerfontein, offering horse trail rides to all ages and experience levels of riders. The area is vast and beautiful, and we have the privilege of being the ones to offer horseback safaris closest to Cape Town on an actual game farm. And the cherry on top is our breath taking beach rides on the 16 Mile Beach at Yzerfontein, starting from Blombosch. So, on either ride you will get a chance to experience some of Africa, the fauna, flora and ocean. Our horses are mainly Arabian bred horses with some Anglo Arabs. All the riding gear is supplied, tack and safety helmets and the horses are fit and well-mannered and can cater for the novice to experienced rider. If it is only a memory or bucket list item, you wish to create or achieve or a canter or gallop on the beach we can accommodate you.

To book: Email Dominique @ [info@westcoasthorsetrails.co.za](mailto:info@westcoasthorsetrails.co.za) or WhatsApp 082 463 3139  
<https://westcoasthorsetrails.co.za>



## RESPECT AND FOLLOW (THE PRINCIPLE OF) THE RULES – Submitted by STEFAN LESSING

2023 Marks the 10th year of our stay in this magical place. Many things have changed. Board members and 'Chairs' came and went... three estate managers, each with his own way, did well, and fell short like all human beings. The demographics also shifted from predominantly retired, single nest residents to many homes with children of all ages... streets full of bicycles - often just left on the side of the road for the next day. Over this period, a couple of uncommon challenges, of which Covid was obviously the greatest, tested the board members' heads and hearts.

Balancing our safety with our love for nature, made security one of the more challenging areas both financially and emotionally. Whenever the safety and the pockets of the members are implicated, certain members resort to social media like WhatsApp groups to express their disgust or concerns, sometimes creating long debates and upsetting the decision makers, administrators and often the community at large.

I have learned in my life that it is impossible to keep everyone happy all of the time, and even the best 'thought through' argument, written with the best of attitudes are either misread, misunderstood or flatly disagreed with by someone else on the group. This leads to arguments sometimes spiralling out of control and harming the sense of community most of us want in Grotto Bay. I am convinced that the majority of people who live here have a love of nature, or at least the ocean, in common. Besides this... my view is that most people are good and want to do the right thing. What's 'right' is unfortunately where we start missing each other. That is why the 'law', courts, police service, boards, managers, and rules exist... Leaders wanting to keep their people safe, helping communities to cohabit in a sustainable, healthy, productive manner. We often hear the argument: "Why have rules, when they are not enforced, and when there are no consequences for breaking them?" Another challenge is that where grey areas exist, more than a few individuals will be looking for loopholes to do what they deep down know is wrong... From a management point of view, the danger of creating precedents for these individuals to break the rules in the future, sometimes moves the powers in place to have a "black or white" approach when enforcing the rules.

No community in the world is without these challenges; but is there a way to live and work together to have most people enjoying the reason why we live here, the company we have to keep as a result, and be an active member making a positive contribution to this special piece of paradise...? I believe so. It's possible, if we can create a community culture, where the critical mass is involved beyond words. A board and community who are not following the letter of the rule but remain focused on the principal (the reason) for the rule. Although we will never reach perfection, we will have less meaningless arguments, warnings or punishments and fewer risks of creating precedents. We will have more meaningful conversations around different opinions that should lead to better board decisions and community involvement.

Let's look at an easy example - our dogs. We all know the rule states that we need to pick up our own dog's poo when they leave their marks like all dogs do... why? The reasons or principles I'd think are: 1. Hygiene (health) 2. Aesthetics (pride) 3. Respect (consideration). Security would be to: 1. Keep the community safe. 2. Prevent (reduce) elements that negatively affect our safety, and 3. Ensuring that the value of our properties is secure. If this is the point of departure, discussions will be focused on finding different ways of achieving this without getting personal or advocating selfish agendas.

If we can start practicing this and stop resorting to WhatsApp groups where some are looking for a soap box to feel important... Rather engage people with a positive attitude personally and focus on the things we have in common. Learn to listen to each other to understand, and not to respond. If we can look for, follow and enforce, the 'reason' (the 'principle') of the rule... We will progressively grow into a community, a critical mass of members, who live in harmony.

I Love GROTTO BAY!  
20 March 2023

## SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER



**Did you know** that the Weat Coast National Park is the only national park in the world from where you can see another national park – Table Mountain National Park.

## Easter Egg Hunt

Thanks go to Cathy and Complete Coast Properties for the wonderful Easter Egg Hunt they organized for the little people of Grotto Bay on the 1st of April. It certainly looks like it was a great success and fun was had by all. Wonderful community spirit, thank you!





# Kid's Corner

## Did you know?

Bubble wrap was originally invented as wallpaper.

Grapes catch on fire in the microwave.

McDonald's once created bubble gum-flavoured broccoli.

Santa Claus was given an official pilot's license in 1927.

Lobsters have clear blood.

Shakespeare invented more than 1,700 words.

Einstein's brain was stolen when he died.

"Strengths" is the longest word in the English language with one vowel.

There's a toilet museum.

# Colour Me In



## Spot 5 Differences in 12 Seconds



## How to dye eggs for Easter breakfast.

Mix 1/2 cup boiling water, 1 teaspoon vinegar and 10 to 20 drops food colouring in a cup to achieve the desired colour. Repeat for each colour. Dip hard-boiled eggs in dye for about 5 minutes. Use a slotted spoon or tongs to add and remove eggs from the dye and allow to dry.

