



# KWAZULU-NATAL CONSERVANCIES ASSOCIATION

www.nacsa.org.za **THE GUINEAFOWL NEWSLETTER NO 2 – 2010**

## Message from the editor

I apologise for the delay with e-newsletter Number 2 of 2010. My home was burgled early October with the newsletter 90% ready. My laptop was stolen and my last backup was not 100% successful and I lost everything back to July 2009. What a disaster!

I am concerned to hear at times that the e-newsletter is not getting to all members. We only e-mail to the Chairperson or secretary and expect them to forward to all their members. We try to keep the newsletter to about 1,200KB with articles about 300 words and all photos on a low resolution. We are often asked what does the KZNCA do for conservancies or what do we get for the R200 yearly fee? This e-newsletter is an attempt to keep conservancies informed of the committee's work and news from other conservancies. Remember we want to hear about your projects – only 300 words and photos on a low resolution.

*Jean Lindsay*

## Message from the secretary and co-editor

Jean and I are acutely aware of how dependant we are on modern technology and never so much so as when we lose it! We are also aware that we don't make full use of the technology available. Trying to reduce the amount of paper we use is a good reason to raise our use of technology and sending E-news out on e-mail was aimed at that. However some practices are persistent and we can't help feeling that we really miss those hard copies of the Guineafowl which were so useful in handing out at promotion events. We hope that our new developing relationship with the African Conservation Trust will help us to raise the funds needed to run prints of Guineafowl again.

Your responses to calls for info to fill your folders have been overwhelming! There are so many that they do not all get printed – it would take a tonne of paper for that. I print one copy of your committee minutes, one game count and one newsletter to put into your folder at Ezemvelo Wildlife. The rest will get stored on a re-writable disc in your folder. What you supply is recorded onto the database. So keep posting. Lastly, the Flora & Fauna Trust have very kindly offered the new Pooley's Tree Book at a R25 discount to conservancy members. Contact me if you would like one.

*Alison Young*

## Chairman's chatter

Apologies on missing the deadline for the previous issue. I would like to thank those who attended a very constructive AGM. Unfortunately allocation of time sometimes is a problem due to the Seminar programme. There were suggestions for a full day but in discussion afterwards there was opposition to this but we will discuss it in committee. Need feedback.

In 2009 we made a decision to formulate a strategy for KZNCA to give us direction. We were not happy with a number of issues of our service to our members. This process was completed the weekend prior to the AGM the initial workshop held up in Kamberg in November 2009 followed by Umgeni Valley mid-May 2010. There are a number of reasons for having a strategy.

- To gain formal recognition from Ezemvelo Wildlife.
- To be able to complete the 'Norms and Standards' for Conservancies to requirements under a formal agreement.
- To help Ezemvelo Wildlife reach its 'Biodiversity' targets
- To have clear direction to EXCO going forward.

What is important is that this is a workable living document so changes can be made along the way. The document has been handed to Ezemvelo Wildlife legal department and will then be presented to the Board and then will be signed off by the CEO having passed these processes. This will be followed by implementation.

A 'Memorandum of Understanding' will then be signed between Ezemvelo Wildlife and the KZN Conservancies Association. This will mean that Ezemvelo Wildlife will be obliged to offer certain services and Conservancies in turn would have certain obligations such as forwarding information to KZNCA on any projects, recording status off certain species.

I hope we get the full support off conservancies as we will now have the tools with which to form meaningful partnerships with Ezemvelo Wildlife and other organizations. This is very brief and we intend to send out a more detailed report later when finalized.

An issue bought up at the AGM was the involvement of the KZNCA in issues such as landfill/refuse sites, Eskom powerlines, Petronet pipelines. Indications are that we seriously need to organize workshops around these issues because they are becoming more of a problem and many of us are at a loss of what to do and also as an Association be able to comment on issues. This was one of the short comings identified in the strategy workshops. We are busy arranging a workshop for February 2011.

*Malcolm Stainbank*



# 2010 Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Awards

## Conservancy certificates 2010

### Lake Victoria Conservancy

**Chairperson:** Mrs Hilary Vickers

Established 1995

Number of members: 20



Hilary Vickers receives the certificate from Jamie Physick

For the following through outstanding commitment to conservation:

- Barn swallow roost and wetland management at Mt Moreland;
- Research, participation and sponsoring the ringing programme of barn swallows;
- Swallow viewsite management – website, awareness and brochure;
- Reed frog monitoring;
- Talks to clubs and schools;
- Monitoring and reporting of illegal sand mining in the Umdloti river;
- Monitoring and participation in the King Shaka Airport impacts and environmental management programme.

### Everton Conservancy

**Chairperson:** Mrs Andrea Abbott

Established 1991

Number of members 250

For the following through outstanding commitment to conservation:

- Verge and riverbank clearing of invasive alien plants;
- Maintenance of open space grassland;
- Tree planting on verges;
- New conservation awareness signage;
- Height restriction barriers on roads;
- Website management;
- Wildlife protection through facilitation of snare patrols;
- Regular newsletters, pamphlet, walks, invasive plant identification, tree labels on verge trees.



Everton Conservancy chairperson Andrea Abbott receiving the certificate

### Springside Hillcrest Conservancy

**Chairperson:** Mr George Victor

Established 2005

Number of members 15



Pat Draper receiving the award for the Springside Hillcrest Conservancy

For the following through outstanding commitment to conservation:

- Invasive alien plant clearing in Springside Nature Reserve;
- Assistance with entrance verge planting;
- Partnership with “Keep Hillcrest Beautiful” and Hillcrest Scouts in clearing railway line of invasive alien plants;
- Promoting a “Trailway” along railway lines;
- Bi-monthly guided walks;
- Facilitation of regular expert talks eg Bats, Barnswallows, Alien Busting, Falconry, Marine Conservation, Frogs.

Dargle and Karkloof Conservancies also received certificates for 2010. Information on these was not available for this newsletter.

# Legal standing of conservancies

There has been much speculation regarding the legal standing of conservancies and a recent query by Liz Taylor regarding whether or not conservancies are mentioned in any legislation. The way I see it, the fact that the term 'conservancy' is expressly mentioned within the National Environmental Management Act, 107 of 1998 (as amended) (referred to as NEMA) proves that government acknowledges conservancies as an entity with its own standing. Below is an extract from section 24C of NEMA. Make careful note of subsection 24C(2), paragraph (b)(ii). Although subsection 24C(2), paragraphs (b)(ii) refers to conservancies as being omitted from the provision of subsection 24C(2), paragraph (b) within the general context of the legislation, one could argue that by virtue of it being expressly mentioned would be sufficient to legally acknowledge conservancies as a juristic person. Further to this, under part 3 of NEMA (Judicial matters: Legal standing to enforce environmental laws), section 32(1) vests broad *locus standi* among the South African citizenry. Note the following extract from NEMA: Section 32(1)(d) & (e) are of particular relevance to conservancies as, by inference of the definition of a conservancy, it is a public interest organization with environmental conservation and protection being core to its existence. Although section 32 focuses on identifying groups with a legal right to take an environmental matter to court (either criminally or civilly), it does, however, make an *ipso facto* reference to environmental organisations such as conservancies, WESSA, SAVE, etc. and therefore accords such NGO's legal acknowledgement under South African law. *Trafford Petterson*



Bill Duthie's memorial in the Hawaan Forest

## ETHEKWINI CONSERVANCIES WORKSHOP

21 AUGUST 2010

The first of the 2010 workshops was held on 21 August at the Krantzklouf Nature Reserve and it was well attended. It is very exciting that the conservancies are working with the Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department (EPCPD) by participating in their programme of guiding co-ordinated conservation management activities in the eThekweni Systematic Conservation Plan. Maps are available for each of the 40 + conservancies from this Department and together with requests for such descriptions as DMOSS, habitat, alien infestation and soil erosion in each conservancy we are contributing another mapping layer to the city's conservation plan.

Johann Vermeulen reported on the final edition of the KZNCA and Ezemvelo's Strategic Planning and Development policy and the MOU with time frames. We continue to work with other conservation NGOs in the city and this time Birdlife Port Natal presentation "Giving Conservation Wings" by Lesley Frescura demonstrated Birdlife South Africa's commitment to the future of conservation in SA.

The final presentation was by Gary Cullen titled "The Durban Green Corridor" – the Durban Drakensberg Green Corridor partnership which includes nature based sport and tourism development with environmental regeneration of the uMngeni river catchment. This is a very exciting programme and Gary is working closely with DUCT (Duzi Umgeni Conservation Trust).

## CREW news KZN

A brand new 7<sup>th</sup> CREW (Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers) team has just started in KZN. The "A-Team" are a 'Maritzburg based team who cover the areas not covered by existing teams. So now there are Boston, Underberg, Greytown, Pondoland, Mkhambathini and the also recently formed Highway team.

Each team is given a list of target plants to look out for. These may consist of plants that are fairly well known (such as *Hypoxis hemerocallidea* or African potato) which is used so extensively in the muthi trade that it is in grave danger of disappearing. This list may also contain plants that have not been seen for many years and may very well be extinct. The list also covers Data Deficient plants that we need more data on.

The teams make up a calendar of dates and places to visit. Armed with lists, collecting permits, cameras, suntan lotion, hats, drinks and nibbles, a mornings' outing is never unsatisfying. We also have to record when we don't see any target plants. Invariable most of us don't know most of the plants.

If you would like start or join a CREW group in your area contact Suvarna Parbhoo [S.Parbhoo@sanbi.org.za](mailto:S.Parbhoo@sanbi.org.za) or Isabel



## News highlights from local conservancies

- **Amamzimtoti** have become active again under the enthusiastic leadership of Michael Purves
- **Camelot** organised a Railroad Reserve walk. They managed to secure funding from Transnet to clear the Invasive Alien plants along the railway line.
- **Clansthal** have been actively trying to get Stewardship status as a marine conservancy.
- **Drummond Conservancy** had their annual fundraiser 'Walk on the Wildside'. This year the newly formed Highway CREW group met for a walk in a grassland on the ridge. 
- **Kearsney College** have recently established a walking trail.
- **Kongella** – NEW conservancy near Port Edward registered.
- **Kwambo** held a Poaching Forum to discuss the way stakeholders will move forward to reduce the problem with poaching in the area.
- **Lion's Bush** held a talk on identifying Raptors
- **Lower Mpushini** have had their annual Aloe Festival. They have applied for Stewardship Status.
- **Mid-Illovo** and **Beaumont Eston** had their Game count and reported increase in numbers of Oribi from previous counts.
- **Midlands Conservation Forum** consisting of 6 conservancies in the Midlands area started up. They have 4 Stewardship sites between them covering mistbelt grassland and afro-montane forest.
- **Pholela Biosphere** had their annual Game Count and reported 5 Oribi, 35 Eland, 172 Reedbuck and 54 Duiker.
- **Springside/Hillcrest** have monthly wild flower and bird walks.
- **The Richmond Mariannhill Conservancy** hosted their annual seminar at Edgewood College in September.
- **South Coast Conservancies Forum** organised the Shoreline Challenge beach walk. Stewardship status for the Red Desert area.
- **Umgenyane** had a game count in August – they have been keeping records since 1985. Oribi and Reedbuck numbers have dropped recently. One of their members took part in the Pmb annual Open Garden event



## Maputoland Pondoland Albany Hotspot (MPAH)

There are funds that have been made available by an overseas Donor Council for 'Critical Ecosystem Partnership Funding' (CEPF). They choose projects throughout the world where they feel that funds are urgently needed for the protection of key Biodiversity areas. A substantial sum was put towards the Cape Floral Kingdom but due to the recession there are limited funds available for their latest project. They have identified 25 priority sites within the MPAH corridor 19 of these within the KZN grassland areas. If extra funding becomes available at a later stage the number of sites could be increased?

The Donor organization realizes the importance of 'Payment for Ecosystem Services' (PES) as one of its aims.

KZNCA together with EKZNW have been identifying the Conservancies falling within these priority sites and will make an effort to co-ordinate those operating and resurrect the dormant ones. Proposals have to be put forward for these conservancies to access funding. As Chairman of KZNCA I attended a Biodiversity stakeholder meeting the beginning of July where the MPAH was presented by Kevin McCann.

I have requested from KZNCA funds to finance some of the initial work to meet with the conservancies within the priority areas and coordinate proposals. Hopefully the funding required will be able to be claimed back but whether or not this is the case I believe it will be a very worthwhile exercise.

At a meeting held 24<sup>th</sup> August the various organizations put forward skeleton proposals. I presented the KZNCA one drawn up with the assistance of Rob Markham. Each of the proposals were then crit. It was evident in our case that it is necessary to actively involve the conservancies concerned as soon as possible prior to our next meeting where we will be briefed further on how to make application for funding and the sort of initiatives that are acceptable. The 'Wildlands Trust' has been given the responsibility to oversee whatever funding becomes available.

We are looking at whether we should apply for individual funding or together as partners. These include WWFSA, Birdlife SA, Botsoc, Game rangers Association, CREW. Funding will only be done on an outcomes basis for the specific sites and corridors. The donors are very strong on the importance of corridors for the free movement of 'biodiversity'. I believe it has been emphasized by a number of presentations by conservancies in the past.

There was concern as to the recognition of conservancies and this makes the Strategy Document and the signing of the MOU all that more important.

We will be putting forward a letter of inquiry which then triggers the funding process. Each application then requires a full business plan.

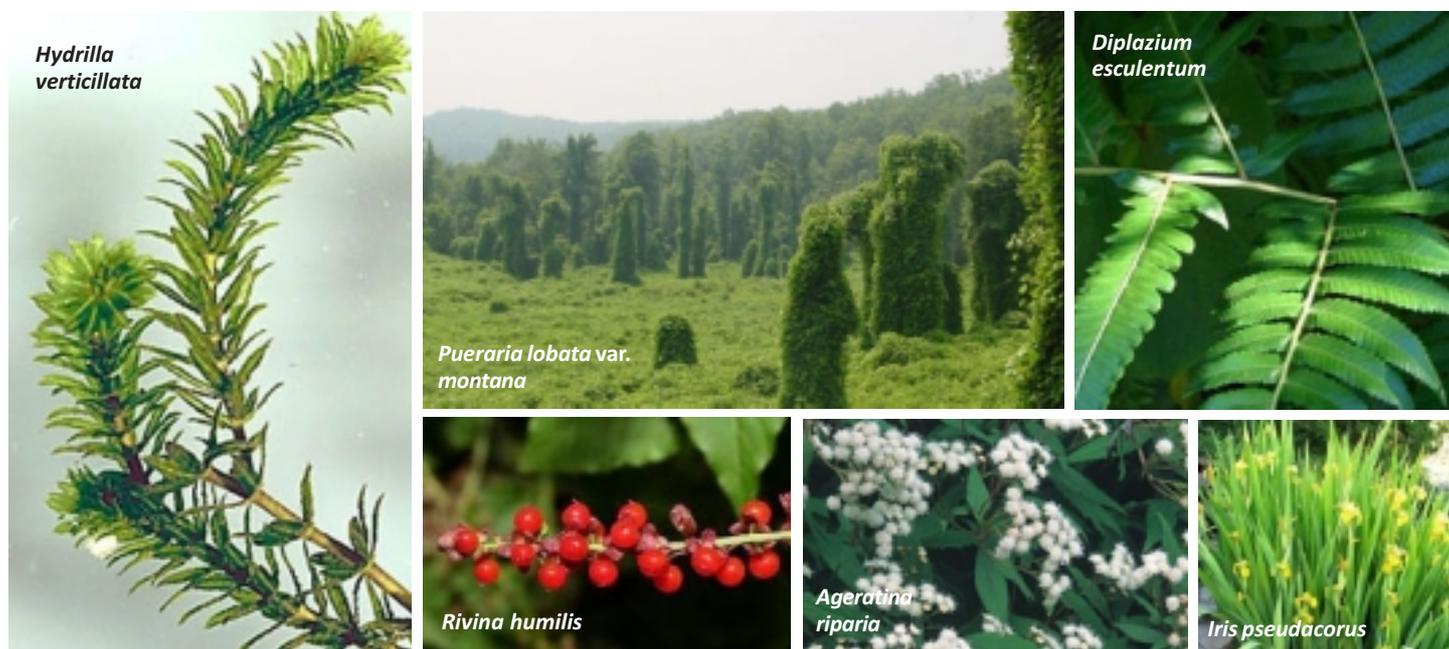
# Emerging weeds

The fifteen plants listed in table 1 are those that are considered emerging in KZN . Upon investigating its distribution it may be seen that a plant is more widespread than was originally thought. This means that whether eradication is feasible is one of the key factors determining whether something is emerging and should fall within the ambit of an Early Detection and Rapid Response programme. The list in table 1 was therefore not set up hastily but after some discussions, research and many practical considerations.

The EDRR programme has made considerable progress with determining the distribution of Hydrilla. A number of awareness workshops regarding this plant have been held with great success; in addition posters and identification cards have been constructed to increase the public's involvement in the project. Thus far it has only been detected in Pongolapoort dam.

Three terrestrial plants of particular interest are the Ant tree, Mistflower and Mauritius hemp. The ant tree, a garden favourite in the 1970s, produces many wind-dispersed seeds that have a high germination rate. The Mistflower is related to the Triffid weed and it can be found in the Hilton-Pietermartizburg area. Mauritius hemp is an Agave-lookalike with a number of populations in low lying coastal areas, but there are also populations in forests further inland, such as the Krantz Kloof nature reserve.

A fern to look out for is the Vegetable fern which has become naturalised along watercourses. Spore production seems to be rare for this fern in South Africa and it spreads mostly through vegetative means and during erosive flooding events. If anyone encounters these plants please send the information to [alienplants@sanbi.org.za](mailto:alienplants@sanbi.org.za)



Species	Common name	Origin	Habitat
<i>Ageratina riparia</i>	Mistflower	Central America	Forest margins & Roadsides
<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>	Cabomba	South America	Aquatic
<i>Diplazium esculentum</i>	Vegetable fern	South east Asia	Forests & River margins
<i>Diplocyclos palmatus</i>	Lollypop climber	Tropical Africa to tropical Australia	Forests & Savannahs
<i>Furcraea gigantea var. gigantea</i>	Mauritius hemp	Central America to Venezuela	Forests & Savannahs
<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>	Hydrilla	Asia	Aquatic
<i>Hydrocleys nymphoides</i>	Water poppy	Central & South America	Aquatic
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow flag	Europe, Siberia and North Africa	Aquatic
<i>Ludwigia peruviana</i>	Peruvian Primrose	South America	Aquatic
<i>Marsilea mutica</i>	Australian water clover	Tropical areas of Australia and New Caledonia	Aquatic
<i>Paspalum quadrifarium</i>	Tussock paspalum	South America	Grasslands & Roadsides
<i>Pueraria lobata var. montana</i>	Kudzu vine	Subtropical and temperate Eastern Asia	Forests & Savannahs
<i>Rivina humilis</i>	Blood berry	Tropical South America to southern North America	Forests & Savannahs
<i>Sagittaria platyphylla</i>	Arrow head	North America	Aquatic
<i>Triplaris americana</i>	Ant tree	South America	Forests & Savannahs



# CONTACT LIST OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

## Chairman

Malcolm Stainbank (Chairman) Eston  
031 781 1691 083 781 1130  
md.s@priscillavalefarm.co.za

## Secretary

Alison Young: Pmb South  
033 260 5154, 082 4065638  
younga@ukzn.ac.za

## Committee members

Rosanne Clark: Southern 'Berg  
033 702 1061  
rosanne@dbnmail.co.za

Ralph Dobeyn: Zululand  
035 550 4142  
dobeyn@mtuba.co.za

Fokko Fokkens: North Coast  
032 551 3260  
squarefox@telkomsa.net

Johan Vermeulen: Durban  
082 931 8335  
vermeulj@kznwildlife.com

Tony Wint: Durban  
031 765 2112 083 326 6716  
tonybarb@nashuaisp.co.za

## Vice Chairman

Trafford Petterson (Vice-C): Durban  
031 311 2011  
pettersont@durban.gov.za

## Treasurer

Gary Edwards: Durban  
031 736 2323  
gary-sandi@absamail.co.za

Rob Crankshaw: Durban South  
031 702 6053 082 900 9593  
rob.crankshaw@igotravel.co.za

Jean Lindsay: Durban  
031 705 5448 082 550 4427  
lindsayjd@mweb.co.za

Kevin McCann: Stewardship  
033 845 1805  
mccannk@kznwildlife.com

Cecil van Heyningen: Umtumvuna  
039 311 1216  
cecilmartens@gmail.com

Doug Burden  
033 897 4034  
dougburdan@mondishanduka.co.za



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