

Cadet station and a restaurant with boat hire facilities on its shores.

There is a bird sanctuary, one of the very few areas where picnics and braai sites are still available, bowling greens, tennis courts, football fields, and good toilet and changing facilities, a children's playground and a caravan park.

It is used for sailing, canoeing, boardsailing, recreational boating, model boating, fishing, swimming and bird watching. It is one of the few water bodies with rescue launch facilities for its users. It is also the site of the Marina da Gama residential area with its complex of waterways and prestige homes.

The Zandvlei is the only estuary which has importance as a fish nursery on the entire coast of False Bay. It is a feeding ground for a diverse range of bird life. 150 species of birds have been recorded at Zandvlei, which constitutes more than 50% of all species known to occur in the Cape Peninsula.

UNDER THREAT

But the Zandvlei is under the threat of total collapse as a recreational area.

The water running from the catchment area of the Zandvlei flows through Government land, agricultural land, forestry areas, residential areas, industrial sites, areas of informal settlement and nature reserves. These lands are under the control of various state departments, the SADF, the Department of Correctional Services, RDC, CPA, Spoornet, private landowners, and Cape Town City Council.

The result is a lack of co-ordinated planning that impacts adversely on the water body.

We are also seeing increasing pollution from chemicals and sewerage run-off, both from uncontrolled land usage and defects in sewerage systems, and litter dumped on the banks and brought in through storm water drains.

Following poor control of invasive species and run off of excess nutrients from farming and gardening activities, there has been dramatic water weed infestation, with several species of noxious weed appearing. This has badly affected the activities of those who use the area for water-based sports. There has also been a change in the plant population on the banks, with exotic vegetation taking over river and vlei banks.

The deteriorating quality of the water is leading to infection of people using the area with complaints of skin rashes, ear infections and septic sores that will not heal properly.

There appear to be many interlocking reasons for this unsatisfactory state of affairs:

- * poor management of the waters feeding the Vlei
- * an increase in building activity in the area, leading to increased siltation
- * increasing agricultural use and the use of fertilisers
- * more hardened surfaces which promote faster storm-water run-off, leading to uneven pulses of water
- * decreased salinity caused by the poor control of the mouth of the Vlei
- * heavy recreational use, leading to a serious litter problem
- * sewerage inflows both from run-off from the land and spills from the nine sewage pump stations near Zandvlei and its influent rivers.
- * an increase in the number and density of residential areas surrounding the Vlei.
- * split responsibility within the City Council for the management of the water bodies of the Vlei and its tributaries.



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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION JULY 1991 - JUNE 1992

NAME:
ADDRESS:
POSTCODE:
TELEPHONE:(home) (work)
AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST/EXPERTISE:

NEW / RENEWAL (please circle as appropriate)

I enclose a cheque/postal order for R10.00 in Annual Membership fees.

DATE: SIGNATURE:

Please post this form to the above address or hand it in at the General Meeting on 24 July 1991.