

# Our Zandvlei



Newsletter of the Zandvlei Trust

Summer 2016

**IN THIS ISSUE:**



The Greater Flamingo



Psoralea Glaucina



What's On



Zandvlei Kids



Photo by Gavin Lawson

In July 2015 - 224 Greater Flamingos were counted at the Thesens Bridge in the Zandvlei estuary.

We have been spoilt with the presence of Greater Flamingo in the Zandvlei Estuary during the winter months and what a privilege it has been to see them in various waterways in the City of Cape Town.

According to the Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS), there are six species of Flamingo in the world: Greater Flamingo, Lesser Flamingo, Chilean Flamingo, Andean Flamingo, James' (or puna) Flamingo and American (or Caribbean) Flamingo. The Greater Flamingo has the most widespread distribution of all Flamingos. It is also the tallest of the six Flamingo species.

The name 'Flamingo' comes from the latin word for 'flame'- 'flamma'.

The Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) is the most widespread species of the Flamingo family. It is found in parts of Africa, southern Asia (Bangladesh and coastal regions of Pakistan

and India), the Middle East (Cyprus, Israel) and southern Europe (including Spain, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Portugal, Italy and the Camargue region of France).

Greater Flamingos are highly nomadic birds and their presence depends on suitable water conditions. They are usually seen in large flocks and at the Coordinated Water bird Count on 18 July 2015 - 224 Greater Flamingos were counted at the Thesens Bridge in the Zandvlei estuary.

Flamingos are usually seen wading slowly through shallow water and sometimes swimming in deeper water. They are found on large bodies of shallow water, such as lakes, dams, estuaries and salt pans. They are highly gregarious birds and will not breed unless they are in large numbers. They have a unique communal display, consisting of flapping, posturing, preening and make quite a bit of noise. Most of the Flamingo's day is spent filter feeding in shallow water. They usually migrate at night, flying with outstretched necks and legs.

Continues on page 5...



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[www.zandvleitrust.org.za](http://www.zandvleitrust.org.za)

**Caring for  
Zandvlei  
since 1988**

The Zandvlei Trust aims to conserve the indigenous fauna and flora of the Zandvlei and to enhance the natural resources for the benefit of all.

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- Newsletter: Peter & Sharon (Details above)
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- Park Island: Pam Hepple (021) 788 1715
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A Declared Local Nature Reserve Within  
The City Of Cape Town

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*The views and opinions expressed in some of the articles in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Zandvlei Trust.*

**Design & Layout:**  
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**NEWS**



**DREDGING**

The first phase of dredging of the lower areas of the Zandvlei Estuary commenced on 6 July 2015. 2000 cubic metres of sand was removed during the process of opening up a deeper channel along the western bank of the estuary.

**BIRD HIDE**

The fourth bird hide was constructed in the reserve. This hide overlooks the central water body of the estuary. The hide is hardly visible from any of the paths in the reserve.

**ILLEGAL FISHING**

During the night of 10 July 2015 an alleged illegal fisherman was arrested for fishing at night and using nets in the Zandvlei estuary. The suspect pleaded guilty when he appeared in court and was sentenced to a fine of R5000.00 and all of his equipment was confiscated.

**SCHEDULE OF PROVISIONAL DATES FOR MOUTH MANAGEMENT**

**Preliminary planning for the opening and closing of the Zandvlei Estuary mouth 2016. This is a preliminary plan and can change if and when required.**

Date Open	Date Close	Notes
21/01/2016	27/01/2016	-
08/02/2016	12/02/2016	-
07/03/2016	14/03/2016	-
04/04/2016	11/04/2016	-
04/05/2016	10/05/2016	-
03/06/2016	20/09/2016	Will remain open for winter period
13/10/2016	20/10/2016	-
11/11/2016	18/11/2016	-
09/12/2016	15/12/2016	-

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

BY SHARON MCCALLUM

*It has been a long time since the last Chairman's report and the first with our new look Newsletter! A quick round up of what's happened /new!*

Guided nature walks in Zandvlei Nature Reserve have been introduced in 2015. The four that have taken place this year have been fully subscribed and feedback has been very positive. The most recent was Sunday 15 November, a birding experience led by Gavin Lawson.

ZVT participation in the Muizenberg Festival in late 2014 and more recently in October 2015 (environmental education and environmental presentations) has also been received with a lot of enthusiasm, with some saying these were the best of both Festivals.

Joshua Gericke, the Nature Reserve manager, was the guest speaker at our AGM in June and gave a fascinating and thought provoking presentation on the Nature Reserve's vision for Zandvlei and how he sees ZVT's role in supporting that vision.

In more detail and now that most of the money has been spent, what follows is some feedback of progress to date on the Lotteries grant received in February 2014, more than two years after the application was submitted.

**1. TRAINEE PROGRAMME**

A 10 month non-accredited Environmental Education Facilitators Training Program for unemployed youth between the ages of 18 and 29 - compiled and run by Cape Town Environmental Education Trust (CTEET). The programme ran from August 2014 till May 2015. It consisted of integrated learning opportunities, a 5-day intensive training camp, 10 three day educational camps, monthly enrichment sessions, a mentorship programme and a 3-day assessment & certification camp.

Between June and July 2014 a training manual was developed & finalised. In July 2014, an advertisement was sent out to various institutions, partner organisations and community groups. Twenty-six CV's were received, 24 candidates came for interviews, 19 attended the orientation day on the 30 July 2014 and 18 started on the trainee programme from areas such as Retreat, Khayelitsha, Makhaza, Philippi and more.

The new trainees attended a five day training camp in August. New skills were learnt during the five day training camp such as ice breakers, interactive games, group discussions, presentations and further knowledge gained through various talks.

Eight enrichment sessions were held between August 2014 to March 2015 - these included two holiday programme camp planning workshops, learning how to cook with a Wonderbag, how to start their own vegetable garden; sustainable use of plants

and how to use plants in an EE programme (at Kirstenbosch), a holiday programme camp; first aid level 1 and a cheetah and eagle encounter education programme.

**2. ECO CAMPS**

During the period from receipt of the start of the grant until the 31 March 2015, nine schools and one community group attended environmental education eco camps - more than 500 learners attended the camps during the above mentioned period.

The camps took place at the CTEET eco camps to at False Bay Camp Site. During the programme, the learners had opportunities to attend False Bay Nature Reserve, Rondevlei Section to learn more about the Fynbos plants, reptiles and birds found in the reserve. They learnt leadership and team work skills through participating in the Zeepathon games and Obstacle Course. There were also lessons focusing on wetlands ecosystems and its flora and fauna.

**3. ECO-CLUBS**

During the third school term of 2014, which is when the Western Cape has its rainy season, the Zandvlei Nature Reserve and ZVT partnered with other organisations, Jungle Theatre and Cape Leopard Trust, to create, co-ordinate and implement an environmental education Eco-Club programme on the endangered (in the Western Cape) Western Leopard Toad.

More than 600 learners from local disadvantaged schools were able to participate in this programme and Zandvlei Trust sponsored - through the Lotteries grant - the safe transport by bus and taxi of more than half of these learners from their schools to the site of learning and back to schools as well as other resources.

**IMPACT OF ECO-CLUBS ON COMMUNITIES**

Having the Lotteries funds has meant that many more learners have had exposure to environmental educational activities and programmes than otherwise would have been the case - and this will create a greater awareness of environmental issues and problems with possibly conservation career options in the future!

In addition, the increased attendance of learners to the Environmental Education Centre at Zandvlei Nature Reserve as a result of all the above activities will have created a new awareness of this resource/facility in their neighbourhood and communities.

ALL IN ALL AN IMPRESSIVE STORY!

Finally, ZVT Exco has a new secretary - welcome to Joan Wigram, as we say farewell to Muriel Darke who held that position for many years.

**Sharon McCallum**



A rare sighting of a Grysbok at midday on Park Island! This nocturnal antelope is seldomly seen in the open during the day. It is believed that there could be as many as 15 of these small buck on Park Island.

### REPORT ILLEGAL FISHING

Members of the public can report illegal fishing to the City's Marine Law Enforcement Unit on (021) 596 1999

Recreational fishing at Zandvlei is permitted if:

1. You are in possession of a valid angling permit which is obtainable from the Post Office;
2. You are not using any form of net or spear gun;
3. You are fishing only with a hook that is tied to the end of a line;
4. You are not fishing after dark;
5. You are not fishing from one of the bridges.

### ZANDVLEI KIDS COMPETITION WINNER

In the Autumn 2015 edition of the Zandvlei Newsletter we ran a competition in the new Zandvlei Kids section of the newsletter. Those entering had to colour in the picture and then tell us how many of the Brant's climbing mouse they could spot in the picture?

Congratulations to Isabella Keytel, who correctly said that there are 4 Brant's Climbing Mice in the colouring in picture.

We were told that Isabella was delighted when she heard that she had won the prize. Isabella who is eight years old lives in Welgemoed and is at the Welgemoed Primary School.

*Isabella received a copy of the Fynbos edition of the Creative Nature series written by Kate Muller who is a member of the Zandvlei Trust. For any information on these Colour and Activity books contact Kate at [katemuller77@gmail.com](mailto:katemuller77@gmail.com)*

Continued from page 1...

Interestingly, the Lesser Flamingo is primarily an African species. Populations are found in eastern, south western, and western Africa. Since the construction of an artificial island in Kamfers Dam, near Kimberley, this dam has become the only nesting site of Lesser Flamingo in the country and one of only six breeding areas for these birds in the world.

The Greater Flamingo is a large, very slender, pale pink or white bird with long legs and a long neck. The wing coverts are the feathers, which, as the name implies, cover other feathers. The coverts help to smooth airflow over the wings and tail and are bright salmon pink but are often hidden beneath the feathers on the back when the bird is feeding. In flight however, they are clearly visible and contrast with the black flight feathers of the wings. The bill is deep and turned sharply downwards after about two thirds of its length. It is pink with a broad black tip (the Lesser Flamingo has a dark reddish-black bill). The eyes are yellow, and there is pink skin between the eyes and the bill. Their legs are red.

Flamingos have a very specialized feeding process. They feed on algae, protozoa, aquatic plants, diatoms, worms, insect larvae, small molluscs and crustaceans. It is these shrimplike crustaceans are responsible for the flamingo's pink colour. Greater Flamingos spend most of the day standing in shallow water with their head down. They use their feet to stir up the mud and then filter the water through a filter-like structure in their beaks. Their thick fleshy tongues acts as a plunger to

suck the water and food into the mouth, and then forcing only the water back out. The Greater Flamingo feeds with its head down and its upper jaw is movable and not rigidly fixed to its skull.

Greater Flamingos nest in large colonies on large water bodies. They require very specific conditions before they will attempt to breed. Like all Flamingos, this species lays a single chalky-white egg on a mud mound. The single egg is incubated by both parents for 27 to 31 days. About a week after the chick is hatched it leaves the nest to join a 'creche' (crèches are nurseries that are watched over by a few adults). They fledge after 65 to 90 days.

Flamingos have few natural predators but eggs are taken by other birds including the marabou stork.

Greater flamingos live and feed in groups called flocks or colonies. They find safety in numbers, which helps to protect individual birds and chicks from predators while the adults have their heads down in the mud. Greater Flamingos also breed while gathered in groups. Young Flamingos are born gray and white and do not turn pink for two years. In years when wetlands and pools are dry and food is scarce, flamingos may not breed.

The siltation of the lower parts of the Zandvlei Estuary gave the ideal conditions for waders to make greater use of that part of the Estuary and also provided ideal conditions for the Greater Flamingos to spend a number of weeks in the area.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

### THE ZANDVLEI TRUST

Non-Profit Organisation No. 004-011-NPO  
 PBO number 930034582  
 Enquiries : [soitgoes@iafrica.com](mailto:soitgoes@iafrica.com) / 021 788 8592  
[www.zandvleitrust.org.za](http://www.zandvleitrust.org.za)

### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Single member - R120  
 Couple (each may vote) - R150

### Bank account details :

Account name : Zandvlei Trust  
 Bank & account no. : Nedbank - 1030 882 339  
 Branch & code : Constantia - 198 765

PLEASE SEND COMPLETED FORM & PROOF OF PAYMENT TO EMAIL ADDRESS ABOVE.

FULL NAMES :

.....

ADDRESS :

.....

EMAIL :

TELEPHONE :

What /where is your interest in being a ZVT member?

.....

I/we will uphold the aim of the Zandvlei Trust to conserve the indigenous fauna and flora of Zandvlei and to enhance this natural resource for all.

.....

## WHAT'S ON



2<sup>nd</sup> FEBRUARY

WORLD WETLANDS DAY

Wetlands are also known as vleis, bogs, swamps, marshes or sponges. They are regarded as some of the most productive ecosystems in the world because they serve as sponges that regulate river flow, they provide habitats for a variety of plant and animal species and they help to absorb silt and cleanse water of pollutants.



19<sup>th</sup> MARCH (8:30PM - 9:30 PM)

EARTH HOUR

Earth Hour is a worldwide movement for the planet organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). The event is held worldwide annually encouraging individuals, communities, households and businesses to turn off their non-essential lights for one hour as a symbol for their commitment to the planet.

Source: wikipedia.org



8<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> APRIL

THE SCOUTS KONTIKI COMPETITION

They will be using the north end of the vlei, with the rafts moored in the bay near the Scout and Cadet base from 2pm on Saturday 9th until 2pm on Sunday 10th April.

There will be parking officials and security on hand. Come and have a look at what the Scouts can achieve with just poles and rope!



JUNE

SA CANOE MARATHON CHAMPIONSHIPS

SA Canoe Marathon Championships are scheduled to be held on Zandvlei and the Marina canals. This event is scheduled to be held here but it is dependent on the weed situation in the vlei at that time.

# Psoralea glaucina - jewel of the Zandvlei Nature Reserve

BY PETER KRUGER

Image Source: Jaques van der Merwe and Charles Stirton ispotnature.org



We are privileged to live in a city which is located in the Fynbos Biome. This Biome is known for its biodiversity and has over 3 000 plant species - 318 of which are on the Red Data Threatened List. One of the plants on the list is Psoralea glaucina.

South Africa uses the internationally endorsed IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria. This scientific system is designed to measure species' risk of extinction. The purpose of this system is to highlight those species that are most urgently in need of conservation action. This little plant is in this category because of its declining population caused by continued habitat loss due to urban development and alien plant invasion.



It flowers during the summer months until February and it is at this time that one is able to see what has been described as the jewel of the Zandvlei Nature Reserve. This plant is endemic (confined to a particular geographical region) to the Cape Flats and one of its habitats is the lower, terrestrial areas around the Zandvlei Estuary. It is a low growing plant

and has tiny pea-like flowers that are deep purple in the centre and paler around the fringe of the flower. They are usually found in clumps amongst the grass and if you look closer you will find that the leaves are trifoliate - they have three leaflets joined at the base.

It's Common Name is **Bloutee** or **Blouteebossie** or **Peninsula Threeleaf Pea**. This critically endangered species, was previously

only known from a handful of tiny populations around the Muizenberg/Capricorn area. A recent, surprise discovery by the Dassenberg Coastal Catchment Partnership (DCCP) found populations of the plant on the edges of the sand Fynbos wetlands around the Atlantis dunes.

Psoralea glaucina prefers seasonally damp, neutral to alkaline sandy soils that occur below 100m above sea-level. This plant was still 'locally plentiful in the low scrub near the Muizenberg Cemetery' in the 1950s. The housing complex, Soralia Park, adjacent to the Capricorn Pick 'n Pay bears witness to its presence there.

So look out for it, and appreciate it while you can! Your grandchildren may never have that privilege!

## BLOOD LIONS



**ZANDVLEI TRUST FUNDRAISER**  
 THURSDAY 31 MARCH 2016, 6:30 PM  
 AT THE MASQUE THEATRE

The documentary Blood Lions will be screened at the Masque theatre. Lifting the lid on the canned lion hunting industry! Contact [prkruger@telkomsa.net](mailto:prkruger@telkomsa.net) to get your tickets!

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 Main Road, Lakeside  
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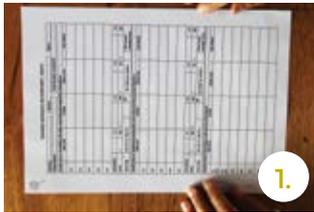
**Sandra 082 581 6128**  
[sandra@corestability.co.za](mailto:sandra@corestability.co.za)

# ORIGAMI BOAT

BY ORIGAMI FOR AFRICA

Learn how to fold your very own paper boat! Follow the instructions below or ask your parents to help you out.

Origami For Africa (OFA) is a non-profit organisation and was founded by Kyoko Morgan, who is a Japanese Origami teacher based in Cape Town. To learn more about origami visit [www.origamiforafrica.org.za](http://www.origamiforafrica.org.za)



1.

1. Start from a rectangle (A4). You can use recycled A4 paper from your parents office.



2.

2. Fold the page in half.



3.

3. Fold the page in half again then unfold.



4.

4 - 5. Fold the corners (from the folded side) to the center.



5.



6.

6. Fold the overlapping strip downwards.



7.

7. Turn over and do the same as in step 6.



7.

7. Fold one of the corners inwards.



8.

8. Turn over and do the same as in step 7.



9.

9. You have a triangle now.



10.

10. Push the corners lightly against each other and squash it into a square.



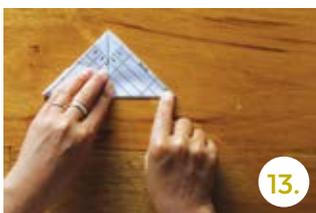
11.

11. Continue folding the open boat, so you end up with a square.



12.

12. Fold the bottom corner upwards to create a triangle.



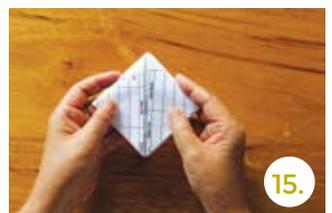
13.

13. Turn over and repeat the same as in step 12. You have a small triangle now.



14.

14 - 15. Open the triangle as in the step 10 and 11 and squash it into a smaller square.

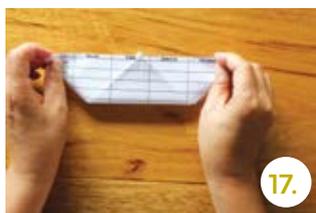


15.



16.

16 - 17. Take upper corners and stretch them out



17.



18.

18. Crease the bottom.



And there is your finished boat!