

Cape Clawless Otters

Proposed research on the Cape Peninsula



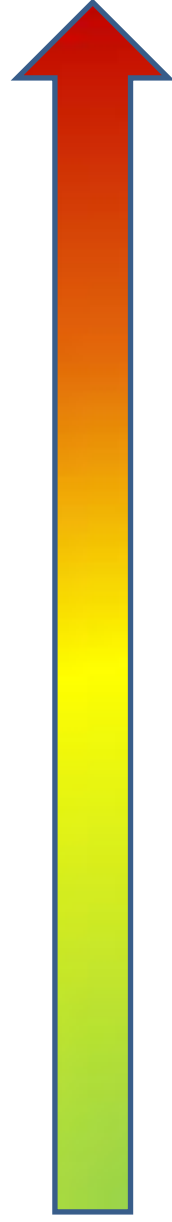
Nicola Okes. PhD Candidate. University of Cape Town.



Project Background



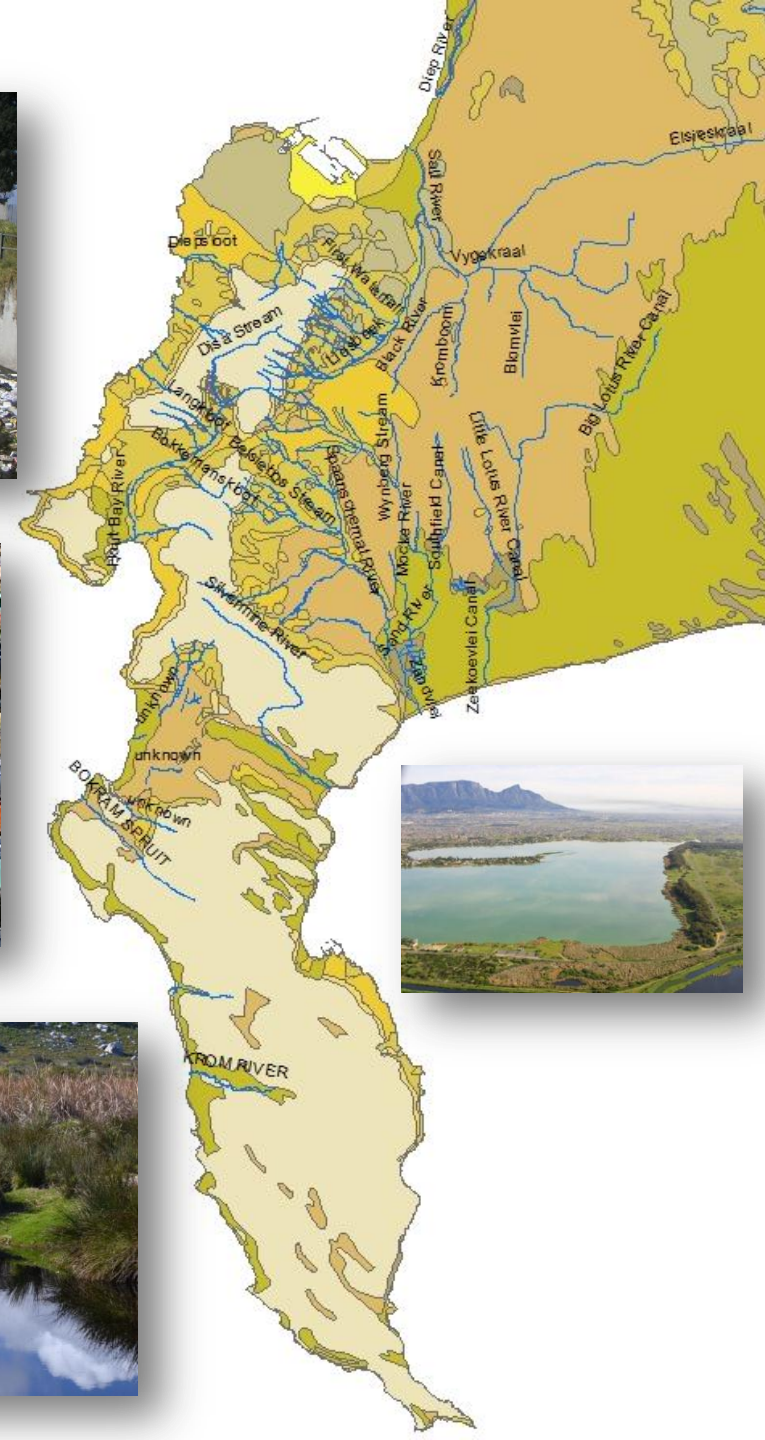
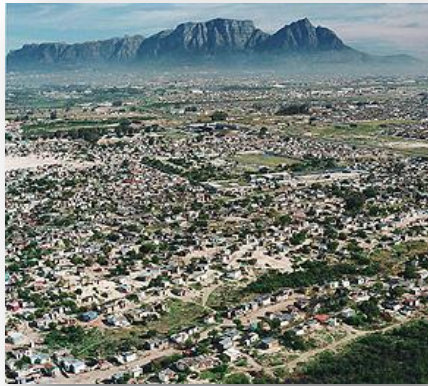
Concentration of pollutants



European otters *Lutra lutra*



Photo courtesy of Neil Benvie



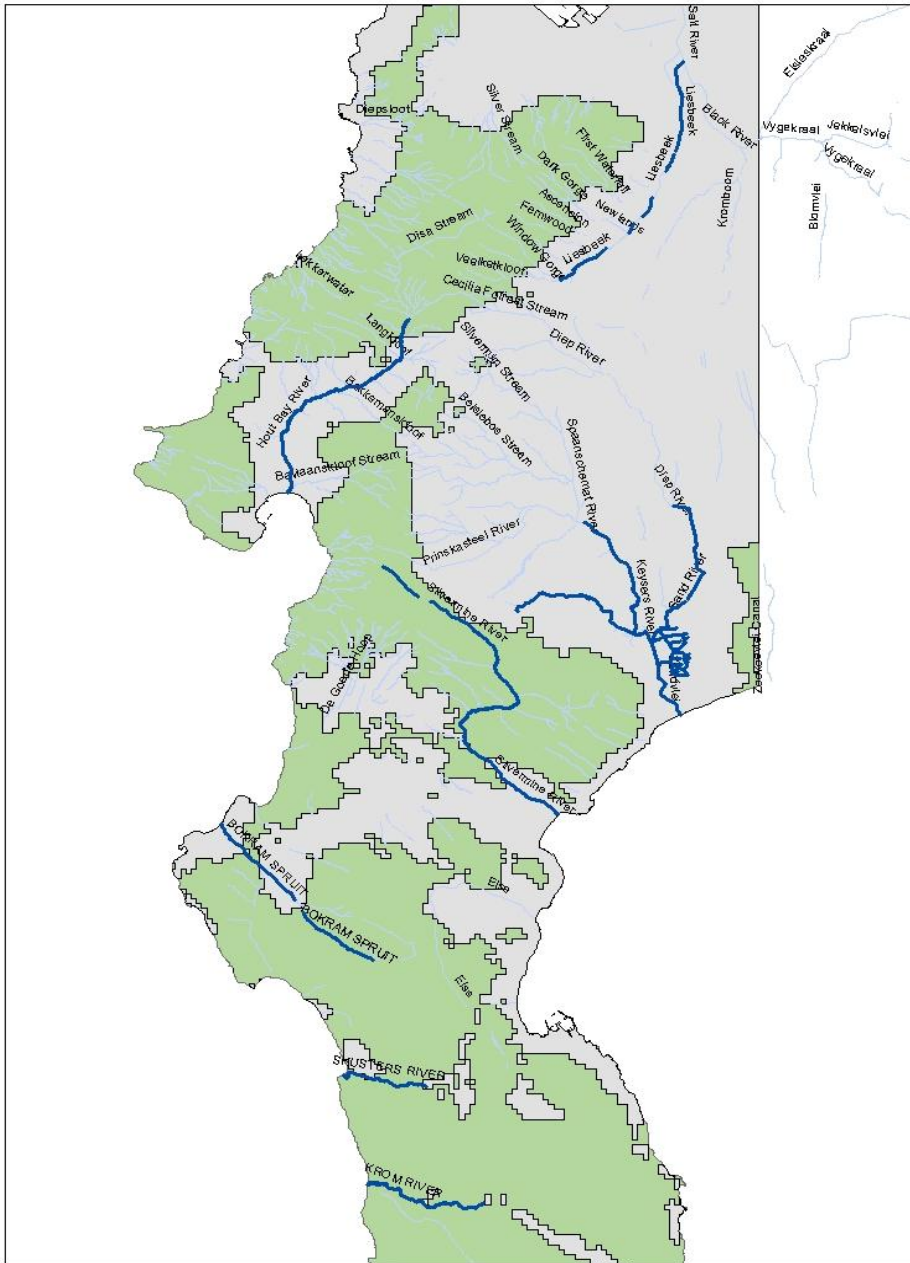
Otter habitat requirements:



Primary objectives:

To determine:

1. the distribution and relative abundance of Cape clawless otters on the Cape Peninsula;
 2. the diet of otters and availability of prey, and
 3. the pollution/contamination levels in otters,
- in comparison to the relative levels of pollution between rivers in the Peninsula.



River System	Water Quality
Black River	Poor
Liesbeek River	Good – Fair - Poor
Hout Bay River	Good – Poor
Zandvlei	Fair/Good
Noordhoek Wetlands	Poor*
Silvermine	Good - Good
Schusters River	Good
Krom River	Natural

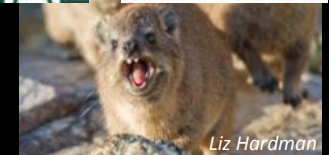
1. Distribution and relative abundance

- Citizen science: Peninsula Otter Watch
- Distribution and relative abundance through a standardised camera trap survey of the Peninsula (MammalMap) plus sign survey.
- GPS track a sub-sample of the population to understand spatial ecology , home range size, territoriality and habitat preferences.



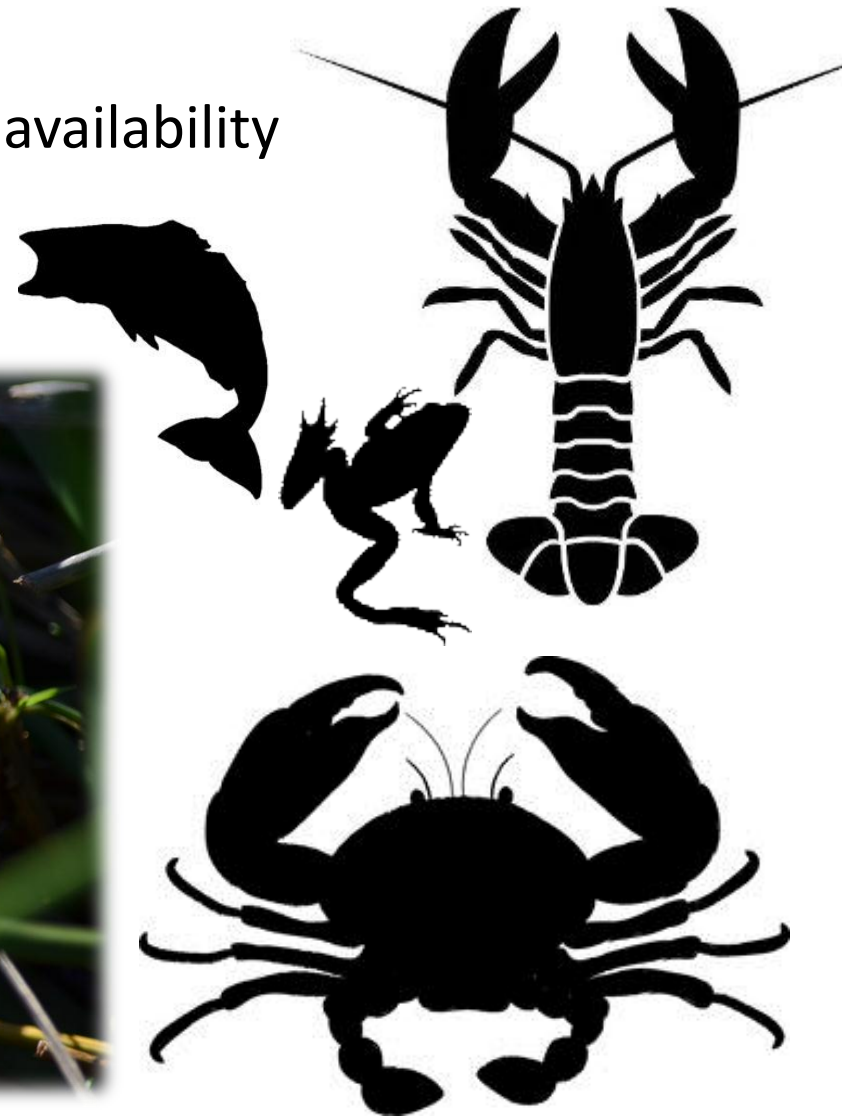


Ahumada et al, 2011
Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B 366: 2703-2711



2. Diet and prey availability

- Relative frequency of prey in diet vs. availability
- Marine vs. freshwater contributions



3. Otter health and pollution burdens

- Body condition of otters in the Peninsula between rivers?
- How do levels of PCB's and heavy metals in otter tissue vary between rivers?





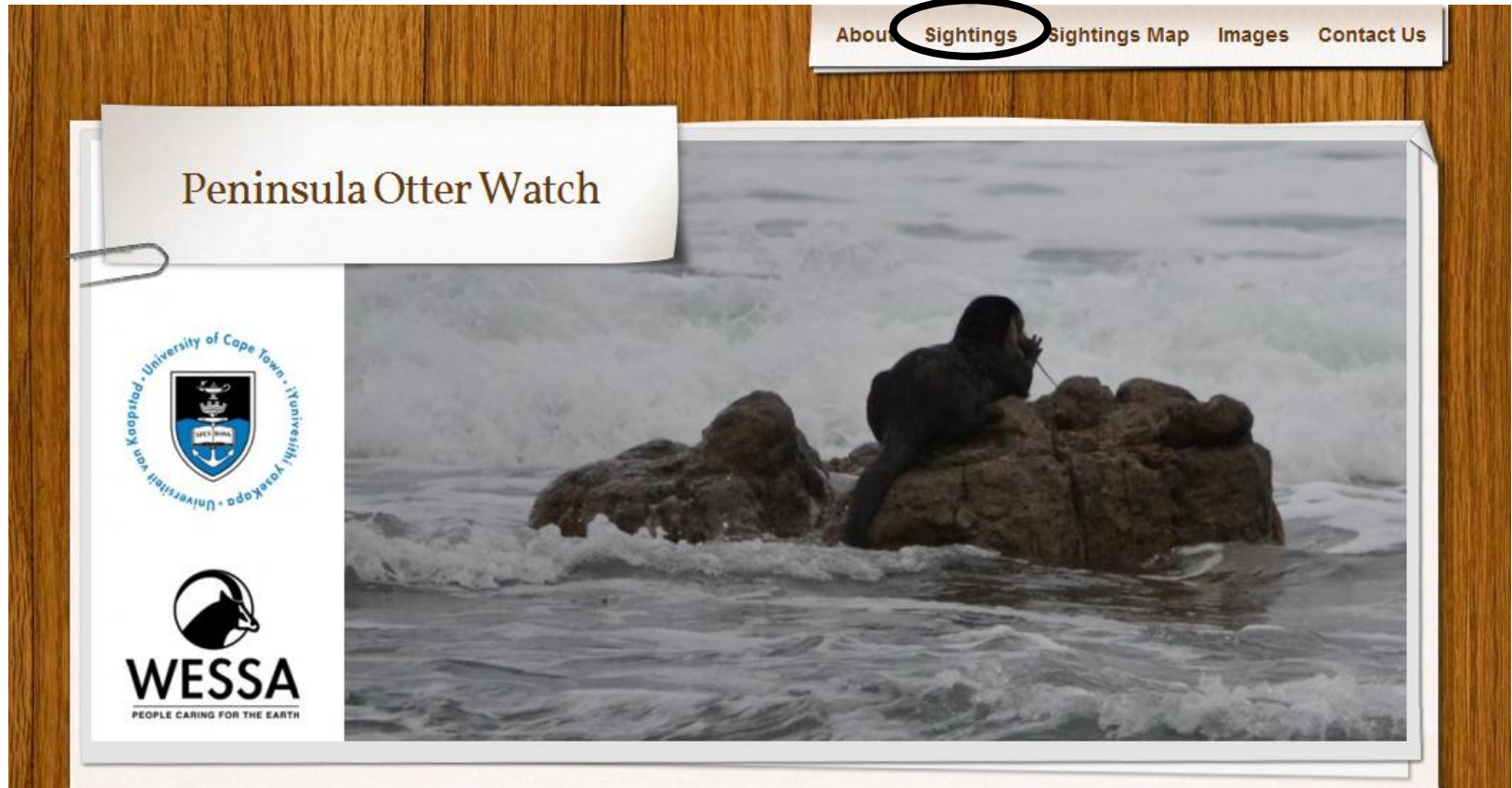
Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Hardman

Assistance required:



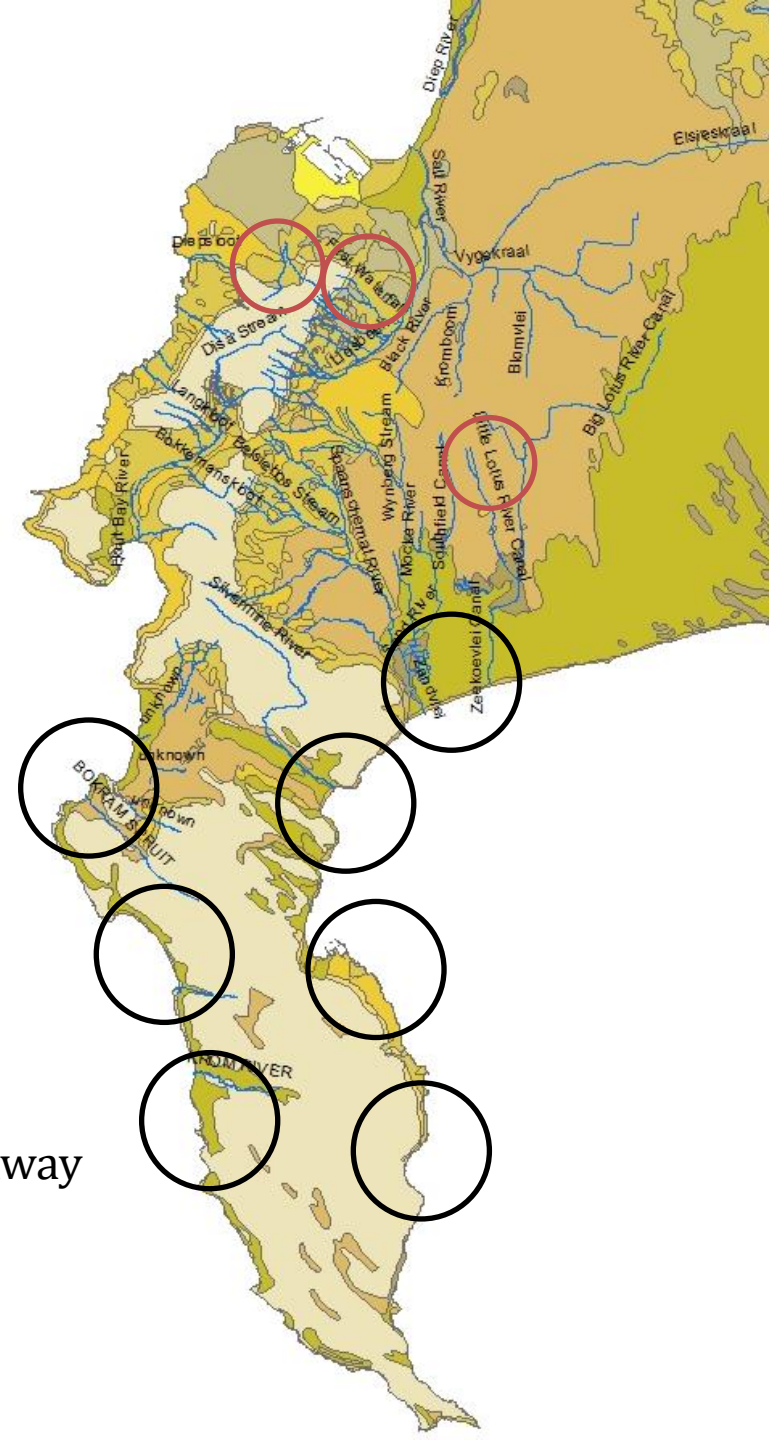
Peninsula Otter Watch:

Submit sightings online



www.nicolaokes.co.za

- Clovelly Wetlands, Silvermine
- Cape Point
- Scarborough
- Kommetjie
- Noordhoek
- Zandvlei and Westlake
- Marina da Gama
- Zeekovlei
- Kloof street, Athlone, Mannenberg, Liesbeek Parkway



Please report otter sighting data:

- Sightings
- Tracks
- Scat



- GPS location
- Time of day
- Behaviour
- Photographs



- Dead otters found to be reported immediately

Thank you!

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