



## Steenbok Nature Reserve July 2016

Following the appointment of Diana Stromberg to oversee our promotional activities and to manage our Facebook site we have been fortunate to receive a growing number of superb photos of the Reserve. As examples we feature below three of the best and thank Di and Lex Faure for these. Friends of Steenbok and members of the public are encouraged to submit their photos for posting on our Facebook site. These can be emailed to Diana Stromberg at [distromberg@gmail.com](mailto:distromberg@gmail.com) together with a short description. To encourage wider participation we are considering the launch of a photographic competition and hope to announce details by the end of July.



### What's been happening?



Our Planning committee of Esther Townsend, Ina Engelbrecht and Lorna Watt continue to guide us in the various projects that are undertaken. A small start has been made on the creation of a north/west entrance garden at the end of the recently extended brick pathway. Further progress will be made once we have extended the sprinkler watering service to this area.

A new sundial sponsored by Gardening@Leisure was installed on the west side of the concrete path running through the Indigenous Garden of the Reserve. It is site specific and calibrated exactly for its global position. It is easy to read and its exact position needs to be adjusted at quarterly intervals. It was made by Malcolm Barnfield of Johannesburg. Further information is available on [www.sundials.co.za](http://www.sundials.co.za)



A new sponsored memorial bench was installed in the upgraded Pump Garden. Although this is a magnificent site the Hadeda ibis agreed, and despite various attempts to stop them, they fouled the bench by using it as their toilet. In the end we gave in and moved the bench to a quieter tree copse that will be developed as a memorial garden.

We are always thrilled to welcome study groups to the Reserve and this quarter we enjoyed a visit from students from Oakhill School who were receiving environmental instruction from their teachers. Each one of the children had been given a photographic portfolio of species to be found on the walk from the Entrance Garden to Kingfisher Creek. These had been prepared from photos and information on our website.



*Leonotis leonorus*, *Hypoestes aristata* and *Helichrysum petiolare* again provided a delightful sight in late August in the Indigenous Garden. These were then followed in June by our favourite *Aloe thraskii* and *A. arborescens*. The aloe display in the south end of the Indigenous Garden, where we have a number of different species have also done especially well; in particular the *A. ferox* for which Albertinia in the garden Route is famous. These flowering species are now being followed by *Euryops virgineus* and *Kniphofia rooperi* (red hot poker). We are including in our indigenous garden planting program a variety of different Buchu (*Agathosma*) *fynbos* species. These plants have an amazing fragrance which will add another dimension to the walk on the concrete pathway through the Garden.

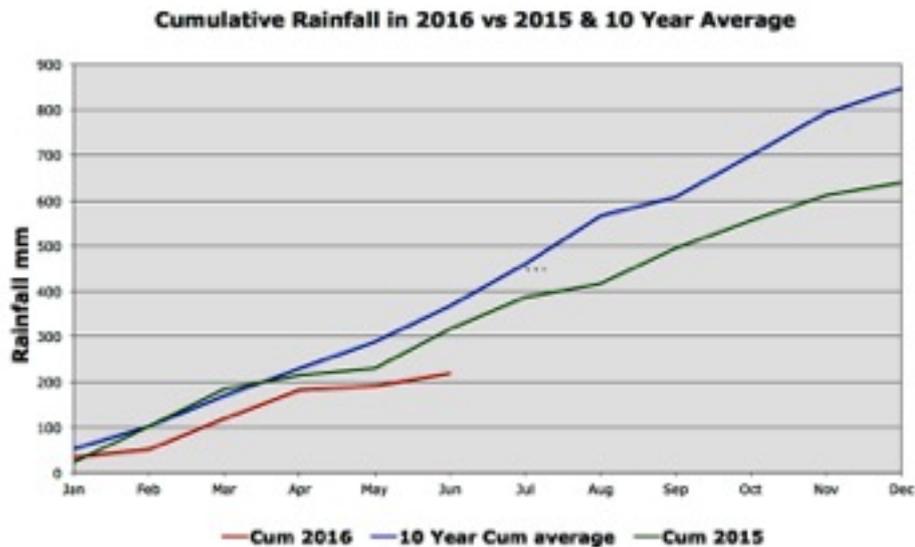


Whilst we rely mainly on Knysna Municipality and Ivy Garden service to undertake maintenance in the reserve the number of volunteers who help to maintain our beautiful Reserve is growing. Recent volunteers include two men both of whom are not resident on Leisure Isle!



As the popularity of the Reserve is spreading it is great to have volunteers from the greater Knysna. Once the weather warms up we are planning male work parties once a month. Watch Facebook for further details or if interested in joining this Group once a month advise Roger. We record our appreciation to the Ivy team as well as to one of the Municipality teams.

## Rainfall



## Oyster Festival

We are hosting again this year the SWD junior marathon trials. This event has been held in the Park for over 10 years and will be held on Monday 11 July.

Set-up will start on the prior Sunday.



## Formal matters

- The application to SARS to widen the registration of Friends of Steenbok Nature Reserve Trust as a Public Benefit Organisation to embrace the benefits under section 18A of the Act to permit taxpayers making donations to claim the amount of donations from taxable income appears to be proceeding well. We see no reason why the application will not be granted.
- New zoning regulations have been published for comment by Knysna Municipality. These make provision for a “nature reserve” classification and there appears to be no reason why we should not qualify. However the nature reserve classification embraces a wider number of activities than we expected. We need to gain a comprehensive understanding and to this end are seeking guidance from a town planning specialist (recommended by our attorneys) and will be attending a zoning workshop being arranged by the Knysna Municipality.
- We are pleased to advise that in the latest draft of the Knysna ISDF (Integrated Strategic Development Framework) Steenbok Nature Reserve is now recognised with Core Conservation status.

## Concern regarding the health of the Estuary

These photos taken from our Knysna Estuary seawall in the past week, and over recent months, indicate an apparent and disturbing degradation of salt marsh grasses with no apparent improvement. Although there appears to be agreement that this is caused by the high nutrient concentrations entering the estuary, particularly poor effluent control, and the seemingly poor circulation and flushing of the Ashmead channel we are not aware of any action or plans to arrest the problem.

This is inconceivable given that the salt marsh grasses are considered by the professional experts to be the life blood of the estuary. How long can this situation be allowed to continue?...or do we merely watch with sadness continuation of the obvious degradation.

It is our wish that the experts publicly recognise that there is a problem and then join together to work towards finding solutions.



## Recipe Book in aid of Steenbok funds

A very big thank you to all the wonderful people who have already sent in their recipes for the Steenbok Nature Reserve Recipe Book that will be sold at the Leisure Isle Festival in November.

We still need quite a few more to complete the book. Recipes can be emailed to Diana Stromberg at [distromberg@gmail.com](mailto:distromberg@gmail.com).

We are aiming to create a Recipe Book with a unique 'Friends of Steenbok Nature Reserve' identity. The Theme of the book will be seasonal to incorporate the changing seasons during the year at Steenbok. You can also include any interesting story you may have relating to your visits to the Steenbok Nature Reserve. Here are a few ideas to help you choose your special recipe for the book.

- ALL YEAR ROUND PICNICS AT STEENBOK Cakes, cookies, breads, healthy snacks etc
- SUMMER FUN Braai favorites, party snacks, salads, special dressing Christmas Meals, etc
- AUTUMN FRUITS Jams, chutneys, preserves etc
- WINTER COMFORT FOOD Soups, stews, pies, hot puddings, hot toddies etc
- SPRING FLAVORS Colourful foods, pasta, veg bakes, fruit cakes, cocktails etc

<http://www.steenboknaturereserve.org.za/>



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