



# STEENBOK UPDATE

## October 2013

### Leisure Isle Festival

The 11th Leisure Isle Festival takes place in 10 days time over the weekend of 26/27 October and will again feature a massive plant sale including many of the plants that can be seen in the Reserve. All proceeds from this sale go to swell the funds of Friends of Steenbok. Please come along and support this initiative and also enjoy the many attractions of the Festival.

### Coastal Fynbos Restoration

Over the past year the fight against invasive and spreading Cottonwool Grass (*Imperata cylindrica*) has continued at the northern end of the concrete path. It is clear from a recent photograph that the results have been dramatic with the restoration of the coastal fynbos, and in places, coastal thicket vegetation.

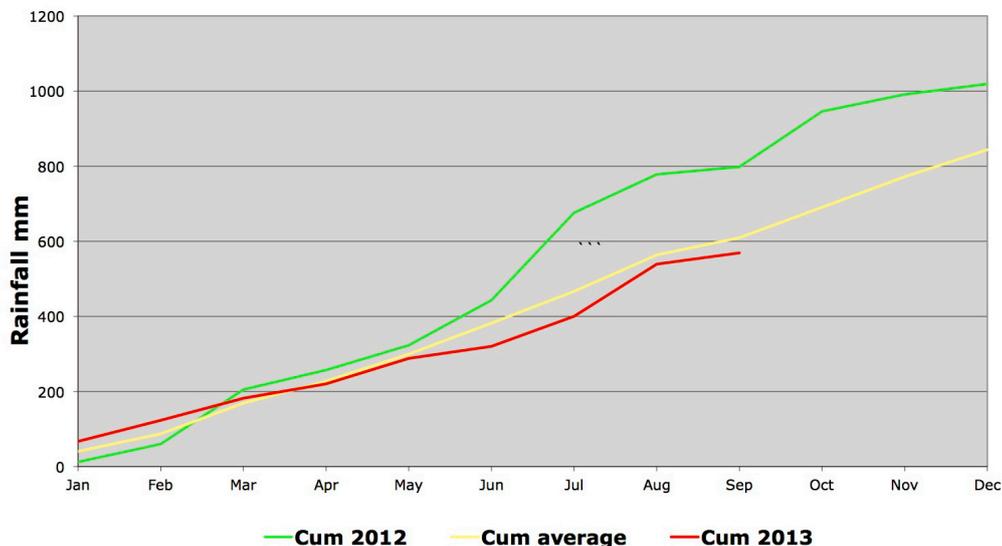


This process will continue in the future at the end of the concrete path and then to the area between the Small Boat Harbour road and the Indigenous Garden.

### Rainfall

Despite a very dry September cumulative rainfall for the first nine months of the year is only slightly below the 10 year average and with approximately 75 mm in the first half of October the 10 month figures will be back in line with the average.

Cumulative Rainfall in 2013 vs 2012 & 10 Year Average



### **The Knysna Basin Project Seahorse Research Initiative.**

The Knysna Basin Project is undertaking an exciting new Seahorse research project. It is 12 years since the last research was carried out.

With the development around the Estuary, the 'new waters' of Thesen Islands Marina and the extension of the Leisure Island Harbour, it has become imperative that the status of the Seahorse in the Estuary be determined.

The Seahorse count will begin in the canals of Thesen Islands Marina, as it finite and easily referenced, and can therefore be used as a model. Thereafter the exercise will be broadened to incorporate ongoing measurement of other key indicator species.



The detailed mapping exercise of the habitat configuration within the 6 km of the Thesen Islands Marina has already been completed by Mike Davies. This information is at present being analysed by Professor Brian Allanson, and it is hoped that the systematic and structured count of the sea horse population will begin before the end of the year.

We hope that these initial studies will be continued in 2014 by graduate students as part of their MSc and PhD qualifications under the mentorship of Professors Hodgson and Allanson. It is envisaged that the initial period of this project will continue over two years. From an estuarine perspective the seagrass meadows on the northern border of Steenbok play an extremely important role in the ecology of the Estuary. Not only do they teem with life; the eelgrass beds provide protection and feeding for the Knysna Seahorse. We will keep you updated as to how the research on the most endangered seahorse in the world is progressing.

### **Friends of Steenbok Subscriptions.**



Many of our Friends have already paid their subs at the increased rate of R320 pa and to these we offer our thanks. To those who have not yet paid please accept this as a reminder.

Bank details : Standard Bank, Knynsa, A/C name : The Friends of Steenbok Nature Reserve, A/C number 082579342 Amount R320

For identification purposes please quote your surname & initials.

If you would prefer to pay by cheque or cash, please hand this to either Susan Richards (9 Hart Road, 044 384 1108) or Peter Godsell (169 Links Drive, 082 781 6414) .

**Management Committee :** Councillor Lizwani, Councillor Hart, and Jonathan Mabula nominated by Knysna Municipality, Ricky Maskew and Roger Voysey by LIRA, Peter Godsell by Friends of Steenbok, Maretha Alant by SANParks and James Botha and Dave Edge co-opted by MANCOM.

**Operations committee :** Roger Voysey (Chairman & Manager), Andrew Campbell, Alix Coxon, Peter Godsel, Esther Townsend and Leonie Twentyman Jones.

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