



# KNRA

Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve Association



Caring for Biodiversity for Future Generations

# NEWSLETTER

## SUMMER

Edition 2023



### QUARTELY UPDATE

- ❖ Educational Hikes
- ❖ Senior Hikes
- ❖ Bird walks
- ❖ Hiking Trails
- ❖ Fences
- ❖ Did you know
- ❖ New Members
- ❖ Schools Involvement
- ❖ New Events

### DATES TO REMEMBER

**Educational Hikes** - Join us every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month, starting at 07h30. Meet at the Peggy Vera entrance outside the coffee shop. KNRA is renowned for its stunning natural beauty, diverse ecosystem, and rich biodiversity. This guided Nature walk will provide a unique opportunity for you to explore and appreciate the wonders of this remarkable nature sanctuary. Whether you're a seasoned Nature enthusiasts or just looking...



#### Senior Hikes

Relaxed walk in the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve every last Wednesday of every month; meet at 9:00 at the coffee shop at the entrance. We leave soon after for about an hour walk. Around 10:00/10:30 we have a coffee at the coffee shop (own account) for an informal talk. Topics are randomly chosen by participants... so you could have a turn to talk!

#### SNARE Hunt

Due to increased vagrant activities in the reserve the KNRA is appealing for as many volunteers as possible to join their monthly Snare Hunt. Help them to take positive action against this grossly inhuman method of catching animals and birds. Should anyone be interested in joining the initiative to clear snares from the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve, don't hesitate to contact Bianca Coetzer, email as per the events list.

KNRA would like to interest hikers into our "Adopt a Trail" program, to encourage our hikers and volunteers to take responsibility for regular trail maintenance on a trail or section of trail.

**Bird Walks** with Mr Kevin Lavery - KNRA has over 230 interesting bird species. Please join in every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month @ 09h00, meet at the Coffee Shop.



#### Hiking trails and recreational activities -

For nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts, Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve offers a network of well-maintained hiking trails that crisscross the reserve. Each trail caters to different fitness levels and interests, making it accessible to families, hikers and joggers alike. Whether one chooses a leisurely stroll or a more challenging hike to the top of the hills, breathtaking vistas of the surrounding landscape reward every endeavor.



**Broken fences** - Not only are the broken fences around the Nature Reserve a cause for easy access to resident's homes, but it also enables thieves and vagrants to hide stolen goods and start fires at night. Please report any illegal activities that you may come across along the fence lines.





### Gnidia caffra - Gifbossie



Gnidia caffra sprouts annually from a woody rootstock. The numerous shoots can reach a height of 50cm. Gnidia caffra flowers in early spring and is soon covered in masses of yellow flowers. *Gnidia caffra* is one of the so-called pre-rain flowers and one of the first to flower in Spring. It is very conspicuous after a veld fire.

### SERVAL *Leptailarus*



Solitary in habits. Serval scent mark their large home ranges of 15 - 30 square km. Elusive and shy, servals are for the most part nocturnal, hunting by sight and sound more than scent. It has an excellent sense of hearing and can locate prey that is moving underground. Its preferred habitat is moist, tall grasslands, often associated with wetlands.

### The threat of an indigenous medicinal plant encroacher: *Artemisia afra*



*Artemisia afra* Jacq. ex Willd. var. *afra* (Asteraceae) is a multi-stemmed perennial shrub that obtains its genus name from Artemis a Greek goddess of hunting. *Artemisia afra* has relatively small leaves that grow up to 8 cm in length and 4 cm in width. It exudes a strong, sticky and sweet scent that emanates from the presence of terpenoids and sesquiterpene lactones, and the aroma and bitter taste from these compounds make it unpalatable to herbivores. *Artemisia afra* is wind pollinated, and the seeds do not have a pappus (i.e. a hairy parachute), and hence unlikely to be wind dispersed. *Artemisia afra* is well known and harvested for its medicinal uses, insect repellent properties and even for firewood in the alpine zone of Lesotho. In some instances, it is harvested for smoking or snuffing. One of the pharmacological benefits of *A. afra* is the use of its essential volatile oils. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it has been widely used to treat the symptoms of COVID-19 caused by the coronavirus SARS-CoV-2. *Artemisia afra* and *Artemisia annua*, which are chemically closely related, have been shown to be active against the severe acute respiratory syndrome.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Strange but true – there are 12 times more trees on Earth than stars in the Milky Way! Scientists estimate there are between 200 – 400 billion stars in our galaxy while there are an estimated 1 trillion trees on Earth! Like the stars, trees live a long time and are truly important for life.



### Wild Pear - *Dombeya rotundifolia* Hochst.



This lovely tree gets its English common name, wild pear, from the masses of white blooms which appear before the leaves in early spring. However, it is no relation of the pear tree. The flowers appear from July to September, the earlier flowering taking place in the warmer northern areas. This is a deciduous, very fast-growing tree, 1 – 1.5 m per year. It may reach up to 10 m in height but is usually between 3 and 6 m. The name *Dombeya* was given in honour of Joseph Dombey (1742 – 1793), a French botanist who worked in Peru and Chile. *Dombeya rotundifolia* has many traditional uses. Strong rope fibre is made from the bark, and the plant is used medicinally for various purposes, including a love potion made from the flowers. The wood is termite-resistant and often used as fence posts. Bee farmers also appreciate the tree for the large amounts of nectar and pollen which it produces.

### White-fronted bee-eater (*Merops bullockoides*)



The species has a distinctive white forehead, a square tail, and a bright red patch on its throat. It nests in small colonies, digging holes in cliffs or earthen banks, and can usually be seen in low trees, waiting to hunt passing insects by making quick hawking flights or gliding down before hovering briefly to catch the prey.



## QUARTERLY QUIZ

Which of the following is the only bird species that can fly backwards as well as upside down?

- A. Hummingbird
- B. Scarlet robin
- C. Spotted pardalote

Answer will be given in the next edition in March 2024

### EVENTS emails:

Treasurer – Christine Loukakis  
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Newsletters : Marietjie Van Zyl  
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### GUIDED WALKS

Vice Chairman : Malcolm Duthie  
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Andy Hasenkopf  
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### SPECIALIST GUIDED WALKS

Trevor Hulleman  
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### SNARE HUNTS

Bianca Coetzer  
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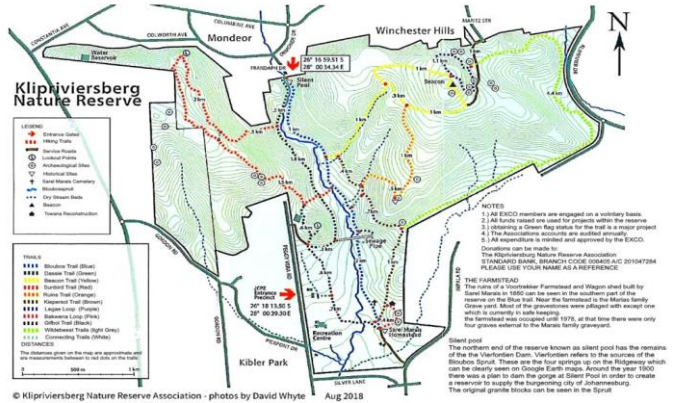


## NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to all our new members!

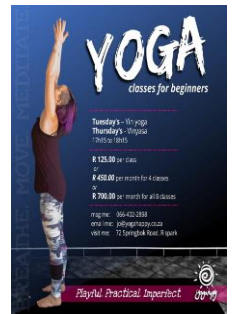
KNRA values your interest.

KNRA invites all interested parties to submit articles, letters and / or photographs for publication. Any suggestions for regular features are welcome. Newsletters will be published quarterly and contributions need to be submitted no later than the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next publication. Late submissions will be considered for the next publication if they are not time sensitive.



### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Support "My School"
- Scout groups welcome
- Club/Trail runners
- Yoga classes
- Kiddies hikes for pre-school
- Schools group programs
- Companies to join our projects
- Become an active Member



Mr Petersen is a business influencer that helps positively influence the results of companies through his engagement with growth-minded business owners, the use of strategic software, strategic workshops, and business owner round tables. Apart from being a member of SOJO, he is also a member of Rotary Johannesburg South 101 for many years.

Become involved and support the new and exciting proactive approach to development which will protect, promote and enhance the value of the biodiversity assets of the area through sustainable economic and social development.

### KLIPRIVIERSBERG NATURE RESERVE ASSOCIATION

Email: [secretary@klipriviersberg.org.za](mailto:secretary@klipriviersberg.org.za)  
[chairman@klipriviersberg.org.za](mailto:chairman@klipriviersberg.org.za)

Facebook Page:

"Friends of The Jewel of the South"

Johannesburg City Parks/ZOO:

General inquiries: 011 943 3578

Animals in distress: 011 943 3578 (O/hrs)

or 079 791 4368 (after hours)

JCPZ Head Office: 011 712 6600

### NATURE RESERVE HOURS AND INFORMATION

Monday - Sunday

6:00 am - 6:00 pm

Contact 011 943 3578 /084 804 4073

Helpful links <http://www.footprint.co.za>

• NPO NO: 032 638 - NPO • c/o P.O. Box 770, Mondeor 2110  
• PBO NO: 93006602 • [www.klipriviersberg.org.za](http://www.klipriviersberg.org.za)



**"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it."**

— Robert Swan

## Why are the Big Five so important to Hunters?

There exists a photograph of two Zanzibaris standing at the door of Tippu Tipp's house in Cut-Throat Lane, Stone Town on Zanzibar Island. Each is holding an enormous tusk of an Elephant shot in the foothills of Kilimanjaro by Tippu Tip's hunter Senoussi with a muzzle loading musket in 1899. The legend of the Big Five was spawned by early game hunters in Africa who used muzzle loading muskets like Tippu Tip's hunter Senoussi. The Big Five have nothing to do with size, because the Giraffe is not amongst them. ***The Big Five are the Elephant, the Rhino, the Buffalo, the Lion and the Leopard. There are two Rhino species in Africa. The Square Lipped or White Rhino and the Hook-lipped or Black Rhino. Although the White Rhino is much larger and heavier, it is not part of the Big Five.*** The Big Five have been considered by the hunters as the most dangerous animals in Africa to hunt - when they were using muzzle loading muskets. Those muzzle loading muskets have only one bullet – actually a lead ball, and took some time to reload. First the hunter had to pour a measured amount of loose gunpowder down the gun barrel, before inserting the lead ball. Thereafter, he had to force a piece of cotton cloth down the gun barrel, to prevent the lead ball rolling out by gravity. The heavy lead ball flies not very fast and very far along an unpredictable trajectory, especially when the gun powder charge was insufficient. The quality of gun powder was also important, because scruple-less dealers would mix sand into it. Therefore, the hunter had to be very close to its prey and accurate with his aim. Any of the Big Five that did not drop dead with the first shot, was very likely to get the better of the hunter. Although an angry or wounded White Rhino is although dangerous, it is as docile as a cow in the meadow and just as easy to spot and approach. It's cousin, the Black Rhino, has a far worse temper and lives in dense bush, where it is difficult to track and see. Henry Hartley, was possibly South Africa's greatest elephant hunter. He shot about 1 200 Elephants between 1849 to 1874, but came to grief when a Black Rhino charged at him unexpectedly. According to a report I read, he had clubfeet and did all his hunting on horseback. However, he usually would jump off his horse, took aim and pulled the trigger. The report did not mention if he actually was trying to hunt a Black Rhino, but he was obviously on the ground when the rhino's charge took place. He managed to fire a shot at the rhino, before it tossed him into the air. He fell onto the rhino's back at the very same moment when it keeled over and died. Unfortunately, the rhino fell onto Hartley and pinned him down. However, he managed to coax his horse Bokkie to come to his aid and made it lie down next to him. This enabled him to grab a stirrup and somehow the horse pulled him from under the Black Rhino. He was alive, but badly hurt. This was to be his last hunt, because he never fully recovered and died about 2 years later at the age of 60. The moral of this story is – if there is actually any moral in it – it took just one Black Rhino to achieve what 1 200 Elephant failed to do. Therefore, the South Africa Bank Notes, which feature the Big Five, have a major flaw by showing a White Rhino on the 10 Rand note. Maybe the motivation to put the Big Five on South Africa's banknotes was their close relationship to money, because people were and are still spending a lot of money on them - and to others, they are their livelihood – whether dead or alive.

Myself and my family, we have spent a small fortune on the search and observation of the Big Five during the past 57 years. Tourist from all over the world come here and blow a small fortune on a one-off “been there - seen it all” trip, whilst others are hooked and come repeatedly. Trophy hunters are usually blessed with more money than sense, but they play a very important role in the African economy. To shoot the Big Five was legally not possible in Southern Africa for many years, but since 1997 80 Elephant bulls have become available to hunters to complete their Big Five trophy collection. However, 80 Elephants are a fraction of the demand and some hunters may have to forfeit their planned travel into space for the sake of an elephant head in their trophy room. Thus, controlled elephant bull hunting is the most profitable conservation method for countries that have a surplus due to the effective protection of the species. Unfortunately, some countries, rural communities and individual farmers they visit in Africa do lack the commercial sense that is required for long-term commercial continuity. They allow the hunters to kill the Goose that lays the golden eggs, before sufficient eggs have hatched so that more Geese can hatch golden eggs – and this is not the fault of the hunter. There are still hunters that use bow and arrow to shoot large game today. Although their bow and arrows do not look anything near to those of the bushmen and are not poisoned, the modern bowhunters still have to get fairly close to their intended target. In contrast, hunters with modern rifles and high velocity ammunition have it far too easy. Moreover, they often use a scope on their rifles, that make it possible to shoot and kill an animal, which they hardly can see with the naked eye. ***Not all hunters do visit Southern Africa to shoot big game some come especially for the Tiny Ten. The Blue, Red and Common Duiker, the Cape and Sharpe's Grysbok, as well as the Klipspringer, Steenbok, Suni, Damara Dik-dik and Oribi. There are most likely not many wildlife lovers that have actually seen all 10 species in the wild – including myself. All 10 are endangered habitat specialists and 9 of the 10 live in pairs and are mates for life. They have only one off-spring per year, that not always lives to adulthood. Only the Oribi lives in a small herd, led by a dominant male. Since the trophy hunters are only interested in the male, they always leave widows behind. The current trophy fee for the Tiny Ten is 23 750 US\$ or 380 000 Rand, plus all expenses, which possibly doubles the amount the hunter has to pay for 10 pairs of tiny horns. Hunting of the Tiny Ten can cause their immediate extinction in a particular local habitat, because it is unlikely that there is a worrisome surplus of them anywhere today.*** Therefore, hunting and auctioning should be prohibited of all wild animals living in pairs until they are scientifically identified being a plague in a localised area. However, auctioning of the Tiny Ten in particular should definitely be prohibited, because this is how ruthless farmers stock up their barren farm to fleece well-heeled hunters. At the same time, these rare animals end up at a game auction, because the seller is also motivated by greed and hardly ever has any idea how many are left on his farm. Thus, localised extinction snowballs! If hunting of the Big Five was once an expression of braveness, it has become a testimony to personal wealth today. But hunting the Tiny Ten can only be seen as a stigma of cowardice.

The European summer of 2023 has had the climate alarmists reaching for their thermometers what with forest fires and the usual heatwaves of this time of the year. These greens of all shades prefer to be called eco warriors or eco activists, which are actually accurate nametags seeing they try to get their point across not by intelligent debate but by violence and havoc in otherwise peaceful societies. Aply and enthusiastically supported and abetted by mass media and faithfully regurgitated by the Secretary General of the United Nations every fire (pyromaniacs?) and each and every hot day is blamed on human action. Old Homo Sapiens, and his/her anthropocene epoch, that being the military/industrial complex since WWII, has never before had to take on a greater burden than now. Cooler heads (pun intended) pose a few questions. Like, when before in history were such high temperatures recorded? When before were such floods experienced? Eco-greens label the current phenomena as “unprecedented”, which in ordinary parlance means that they ignore anything which happened longer than forty years ago, and certainly anything that happened before old HS had to stand in for so-called “green-house gases”. Did you know that when the Yellow River in China burst its banks on 28 th September 1887, 900 000 people died in the first onrush and another estimated 1,3 million drowned? A further 3 to 4 million died from flood-related waterborne disease. [Reference: 501 Most Devastating Disasters, published in Great Britain by Bounty Books in 2010, p19]. If anything, remotely similar should happen today veritable battalions of Swedish teenage girls would descend on the United Nations General Assembly making impassionate speeches. The same with temperatures. Scratch below the suntan and you will find that in 9 out of ten cases similar mercury readings were recorded 80, 90, 100 or more years ago. And, in the remaining ten percent of the cases the differences between then and now are measured in fractions of degrees Celsius. That is, if one can rely on the accuracy of the robust and rudimentary instruments of those long-ago days. And all of this happened long before the effects of the Industrial Revolution could be felt. But, the greens cry, these high temperatures and floods nowadays occur a lot more often than before. Not so: they just get reported on all the time. Recall that TV sets were practically non-existent before WWII and a rarity in most households for years thereafter. Mr. Marconi’s invention did not get traction until well into the 1930’s. Also, in South Africa why have we not had a Demoina or a Laingsburg every four years or so since 1981/1984? And Durban’s floods were the result of bad infrastructure maintenance (blocked drains) coupled with a blatant disregard of the 50-year flood line. Just in passing, it is of interest to note that Chilean fishermen were aware of the el nino/el nina effects more than 300 years ago. Long before those dirty humans and their filthy habits. To sum up, Mother Nature does not need humans to produce assorted natural disasters, thank you very much. The greens maintain that the phenomenon of global warming is backed by The Science. If this was the case each and every weather station across the world would have reflected a, say, 2% increase in both the highest and lowest temperatures of actual, raw-data numbers since the Industrial Revolution, and we would not have to sit and listen to the “global and regional climate simulations” and “paleoclimate reconstructions”, and “higher resolution models” of massaged, weighted average smoke and mirror numbers trotted out by The Science contained in IPCC 6. Artificially calculated readings which research suggests” and of which “indications are” can hardly be claimed to be real science. More and more real and unfettered scientists are coming forward to debunk the global warming myth despite the risk they run of being “cancelled”. Last named is a real threat which The Science has mounted with the zealot fervour of a fundamentalist religion complete with millenarianism doomsday predictions and which allows for no debate. Let’s briefly look at some numbers that even The Science cannot refute: The atmosphere is 78% nitrogen and 21% oxygen. The balance of 1% is made up of a variety of gases with carbon dioxide, that being the main greenhouse culprit, CO<sub>2</sub>, that the greens have their knickers in a knot about, making up some 0,038%. Nature, that being plants [did you know there are more plants on earth than there are stars in the heaven?] account for some 97% of all CO<sub>2</sub> produced. And Africa produces about 1% of global CO<sub>2</sub>. So, humans in Africa are responsible for 1% of 3% of 0,038% of all gases in the atmosphere. As the Yanks say: “Go figure!” Some greens say that the Antarctic ice layers are thinning. This apparently is a matter that has been intensely studied since 2016, that being seven years, without a satisfactory explanation for it being put forward, which is The Science-speak for not being able to blame our old friend Homo Sapiens for it. Crucially, not a single one of the cataclysmic existential predictions made by the greens, from a predicted ice age in the 1970’s, to the flooded cities Al Gore, has come to pass. This despite the 95% manipulated consensus predictions (aka “groupthink”) which The Science made at the time. And, just a reminder: the Amazon was not always a forest and the Sahara was not always a desert: and that with not a drop of oil or a clump of coal in sight. There is a lot of money to be made from the type of panic mongering we have experienced, ably supported by what is coyly referred to in South Africa as “load shedding”. A lot of people have invested a lot of money in alternative/sustainable energy resources and this is reflected in the tsunami of advertising and talk shows on the topic. Fact is that these can never replace what we used to have electricity-wise. Not in cost, not in quantity, not in universality, not in consistency. The particular brand of misery imposed by the greens on humanity is only now getting traction and the worst is yet to come. Humanity has never before been healthier or wealthier, and despite the fact that we live longer the total world population growth rate is slowing down. Climate related deaths are at their lowest, and declining. Give people cheap electricity and cheap potable water and they will create more wealth, and be even healthier, and happier. So, what is the solution to our energy problems? Having de-bunked man-made climate change and global warming myths the solution lies in good old coal-fired power stations. We have the know-how, and the resources and the raw materials. And if the European eco-colonialists crack their carbon footprint and carbon credits investment whips we in South Africa could build them all by ourselves via the floating of share subscriptions in public JSE-listed limited liability companies.

René de Villiers. (August 2023)

Please feel free to give your commentary on this article : [marietjie.vanzyl@gmail.com](mailto:marietjie.vanzyl@gmail.com)

The author will gladly respond.