



# ***GC&SA Ear to the Ground***

**Gauteng Conservancy & Stewardship Association Newsletter – No 28 - December 2010**

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## ***Chairman's End of Year Message***

The past year has been filled with many positives. As we approach another Christmas and another New Year, I wish to extend my gratefulness to all that have supported the GCSA. It has indeed helped us on our journey to fulfil our mission to conserve and protect the environment. I look forward to working together with all stakeholders in 2011. May we be ever mindful of the spirit of caring, sharing and love as we look forward to 2011 together.

## ***Snippets From Around the Province***

### ***Cullinan Conservancy: Removal of Alien Vegetation***

#### **Strategy**

Cullinan Conservancy developed a strategy for the control and removal of alien vegetation five years ago. On a large map we have plotted where alien vegetation occurs, using different colours per species. Herbicides are bought in bulk from the membership fees and distributed to members. Each year we evaluate the sites on which we have worked, if necessary we re-spray the emerging plants. Training courses are held annually to train unemployed people in our community; they form teams of four and work with a project leader. To date we have four trained teams which rotate between farms, the farmers employ and pay them. November 2010 was the month for training of new teams in the removal of alien vegetation in the Cullinan Conservancy.

With the assistance of GDARD Directorate of Sustainable Resource Management we managed to run two very successful training days during the month.

**Manual Removal of Alien Vegetation 5<sup>th</sup> November** A course on the manual removal of alien vegetation was held. Posters with pictures of alien vegetation were given out and course participants were shown the "Dirty dozen" alien plants. Course attendants were shown the most common aliens in our area.

Course participants were given a lecture on safety measures which have to be in place, a practical demonstration on the wearing of protective clothing from hard hats, long sleeved overalls, safety glasses, protective gloves and steel toed boots. First aid and hygiene measures were also discussed.

Practical demonstrations were given on Foliar spraying, cut stump treatment, frilling and debarking of trees. A demonstration on the use of a chain saw was also given and the extra safety precautions stressed.



Harmen den Dulk from GDARD showing how to frill a tree



Samuel Zwane practicing to frill a tree

All members attending were given the opportunity to practice what they were taught.

After the course an attendance certificate from the Cullinan Conservancy was handed to all participants.

We will be able to place two more teams to work in the community under the guidance of the project leader, thus creating sustainable employment for eight people.

## Biological Control of Queen of the Night. 19 November 2010

(*Hypogeococcus pungus* agent)

Prior to the event a survey was done in the Cullinan Conservancy to ascertain the extent of the infestation. Our highest concentration occurred on rocky outcrops and in gardens. We were fortunate to have a good "nursery" of previously infected plants which we could harvest from.

The team from GDARD Sustainable Resource Management conducted a demonstration on the biological control of Queen of the Night. Harvesting started as soon as everybody had arrived.



After harvesting 12 crates full of pieces of infected plants the team moved to the first site.

We arrived at: *Planet Alien*, the owner has been trying to eradicate alien vegetation on his plot since he bought it. In an area of about 2h there were about seventy huge multi stemmed plants, some touching the Eskom power lines. The team moved in and infested all the plants higher than one meter.



Harmen den Dulk from GDARD, demonstrating how to place infected material on the Queen of the Night. Note the Monstroses growing at the base which will also be infested.

Cullinan Conservancy would like to take this opportunity to thank the team from GDARD which consisted of Harmen den Dulk, Nic de Klerk, Jabulani Siyayi, Happy Baloyi and Masala Tshaman for the work done, and for also being prepared to get their hands thorny.

The Committee would also like to thank all the members who assisted, and those who went through their properties in search of Queen of the Night Cactus

Our teams have already started foliar spraying emerging Pom pom weeds and Wild Verbena regrowth in some areas.

## **Conservancies Receive Four New Fire Trailers from the Midvaal Local Municipality.**



At a recent meeting of the Midvaal Fire Protection Association II held at the Meyerton Fire Station on 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2010 notification was given that we as an FPA have officially been registered with Pretoria. It was also noted and agreed on that a new Sector (Sector 6) be created and that it would include Thorntree Conservancy, Apple Orchards and Sunset Conservancy located in De Deur.

There was also great excitement when the Executive Mayor of Midvaal Cllr. Timothy Nast officially handed over brand spanking new fire carts. Two New Carts were received by Sector 6 and one by Sector 5 which includes the Welverdiend Triangle Conservancy (W.T.C.) and the Welverdiend Forum (W.F) area's east of Meyerton and which were previously part of Sector 2. The fourth trailer was handed to Roxie Du Toit from the klipriversuikerbosbrand conservancy

The Gauteng Conservation and Stewardship Association feel that as a now registered and official organization the Midvaal FPA II through partnerships with ourselves, Midvaal Fire Management, Working On Fire and Various Government Departments will now better allow us to work hand in hand as regards fire management and the control of our environment. It has been a long and sometimes difficult walk over the last 6 years but we, as representatives of Midvaal Conservancies and Gauteng Conservation are now very optimistic and look forward to a successful fire season in Midvaal for 2011.

## Herbicides Mixtures suggested for the control of Invasive Alien Species

PLANT SPECIES	FOLIAR SPRAY	CUT STUMP / FRILL
Australian Blackwood	Confront@0.70% = 105ml/15L Or 7ml/L	Confront@4% = 600ml/15L Or 40ml/L
Eucalyptus Grandis (Saligna gum)	Plenum@0.5% = 75ml/15L Or 5ml/L	Plenum@3.0% = 450ml/15L Or 30ml/L
Eucalyptus Sideroxylon (Iron Bark Gum)	Confront@0.75% = 112.5ml/ 15L Or 7.5ml/L	Plenum@4.5% = 675ml/15L Or 45ml/L
Beefwood	Confront@0.75% = 112,5ml/15L Or 7,5ml/L	Confront@1% = 150ml/15L Or 10ml/L
Black Locust	Plenum@1.5% = 225ml/15L Or 15ml/L	Plenum@3% = 450ml/15L Or 30ml/L
Bramble	Plenum@ 0,75% =112.5ml/15L Or 7.5ml/L	
Bug weed (wild tobacco)	Plenum@0.25% = 37.5ml/15L Or 2.5ml/L	Plenum@1% = 150ml/15L or 10ml/L
Lantana	Plenum@1.5% = 225ml/15L Or 15ml/L	Plenum@1.5% = 225ml/15L or 15ml/L
Mexican poppy Thorn apple/Bitter apple	Mamba@1% = 150ml/15L Or 10ml/L	
Scotch Thistle	Plenum@0.75% = 112,5ml/15L Or 7,5ml/L	
Poplar	Confront@1.5% = 225ml/15L Or 15ml/L	Timbrel@6% = 900ml/15L Or 60ml/L
Sesbania	Confront@0.5% = 75ml/15L Or 5ml/L	Confront@0.5% = 75ml/15L Or 5ml/L
Spanish Reed	Mamba@3% = 450ml/15L or 30ml/L	
Bankrotbos/Slangbos	Plenum@2% = 300ml/15L Or 20ml/L	
Syringa	Confront@0.75% = 112,5ml/15L or 7.5ml/L	Plenum@1.5% = 225ml/15L Or 15ml/L
Wattle	Plenum@0.75% = 112.5ml/15L Or 7.5ml/L	Plenum@2% = 300ml/15L Or 20ml/L
Wild Tomato	Confront@0.5% = 75ml/15L Or 5ml/L	
Privid (Wax Leaf)	Confront@0.75% = 112,5ml/15 L Or 7,5ml/L	Plenum@3 % = 450ml/15L Or 30ml/L
Castor Oil		Plenum@ 1% = 150ml/15L Or 10ml/L
Pom Pom	Plenum@0.375% = 56.25ml/15L Or 3.75ml/1L	
Pampas Grass	Mamba@3 % = 450ml/15L or 30ml/L	
Cat Bush (wild asparagus)	Plenum@ 0.75% = 112,5ml/15L Or 7,5ml/L	
Queen of the Night	Confront@1% = 150ml/15L or 10ml/L or MSMA@5% = 750ml/15L or 50ml/L	MSMA use 1L/2L water. 1 stem injection (2ml) for less than 2.5m. 2 stem injections for more than 2.5m

Add Actipron @ 0.5% to herbicides were indicated. Add Ecoblue Dye @ 1 ml per liter to herbicides if required.

## Articles of Interest

### How you can contribute to healthy river and coastal ecosystems

- Reduce, reuse and recycle your rubbish
- Adhere to water saving programmes in your area
- Report water leaks (from broken taps or pipes) or sewer pipes to your local authority
- Use rain water for domestic and garden purposes by catching and storing run-off
- Use water from your household activities (cleaning of eating utensils or bathing) to water the garden
- Plant a water-friendly indigenous garden and water your garden early in the morning or evening to minimize evaporation
- Repair dripping taps; take care to shut them properly after use
- Take a short shower rather than a bath
- Support water saving practices at work
- Discard waste (for example oil, paint, rubbish) in designated disposal facilities and not into sewers, storm water systems, streams, rivers, or dams
- If you observe unlawful discharge of any waste by industry, report it to your local authority or to the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
- Participate in environmental programmes in your area
- Spread the idea of conservation!

## Update on publication of final list of threatened ecosystems under NEMA

*By admin | Published: December 1, 2010*

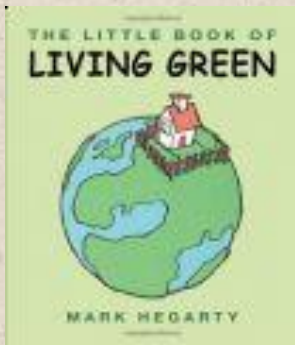
In September 2010, the Centre for Environmental Rights wrote to the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs to enquire when the final List of Threatened Ecosystems would be published under s.52(1)(a) of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004. A draft List was published in November 2009 pursuant to comprehensive consultation, but no news had been forthcoming about the publication of the final list.

In November 2010, the Minister responded to the CER's enquiry as follows:

*"Subsequent to the publication of the draft list of threatened ecosystems in Government Gazette No 32689 in 2009, an additional process of consultation was followed during which a wide range of national departments whose activities may have an impact on these listed ecosystems, were also consulted.*

*"In terms of this consultation process, Transnet requested a meeting with the Department to discuss its future infrastructure expansion plans and the implications for listed threatened ecosystems. This meeting took place on 14 October 2010 and the issues raised by Transnet have been addressed. The internal process to finalise the publication of the list has resumed and it is envisaged that the list will be published before the end of the financial year."*

## Books:



Environmental tips balancing fact and humour

A great deal has been written and said about environmental issues. It is undoubtedly something we have to take seriously, but most people's impressions of environmental threats are of huge, vague and unstoppable nightmares. This gives you two choices: ignore it, or sit and worry. This book aims to provide a path between these extremes: it provides hassle-free tips on how to make your everyday existence a little greener. These facts and tips are (hopefully) peppered with just enough humour to keep you sane while you fret about the future of the planet. Flick through, adopt what you like, and save the planet from the comfort of your own living room.

**Mark Hegarty**

Nightingale Press • ISBN 978-1903222133

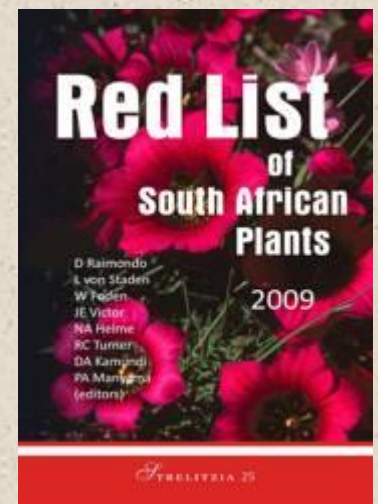
## SANBI publishes new Red List

In one of the continent's largest collaborative conservation projects to date, South Africa has become the first of the world's mega-diverse countries to fully assess the status of its entire flora – a staggering 20 456 species. The assessment has been published in a book entitled the Red List of South African Plants. It was appropriately launched by SANBI in Cape Town on Earth Day – 22 April 2010.

Funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs' development branch Norad, the assessment uses the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List system. This is an internationally endorsed scientific approach to assessing the risks of extinction to species.

Says Domitilla Raimondo, SANBI Threatened Plants Programme Manager and lead author of the South African list: "South Africa is one of the world's mega-diverse countries in terms of its species richness and high levels of endemism. South Africa not only contains one of the world's six floral kingdoms, but three of the world's biodiversity hotspots are located mainly within its borders."

Emphasising the significance of South Africa's floral diversity and underscoring the global significance of this assessment, Craig Hilton-Taylor head of the IUCN Red List programme based in Cambridge England explains: "The Red List of South African Plants is a landmark publication that doubles the number of plants on the IUCN's Global Red List. Compiling this list has been an enormous multi-partner conservation project. More than 200 professionals as well as members of the public have contributed.



## Red List exposes status of Medicinal Plants

The trade in medicinal plant species plays an important role in contributing to livelihoods of South Africans. It has been estimated that there are 27million indigenous medicine consumers in South Africa with a large supporting industry. The Red List exposes these plants at a National level.

- Less than 20% of South Africa's 322 heavily traded plant species are threatened with extinction
- The majority of medicinal plants that have been assessed on the Red List are considered and have been listed not threatened

Looking ahead SANBI has committed to working with Conservation Agencies to help conserve the handful of medicinal plant species that are highly threatened due to over harvesting.



Please send us your news and notices of events for inclusion in *"Ear to the Ground"*. This e-newsletter goes to all the Gauteng conservancies and to a long list of "friends of conservancies" plus other interested people. The list grows by the day. If you would like to contact any of the conservancies or people mentioned in this "Ear", let us know.

[www.conservancies.org](http://www.conservancies.org) / [www.nacsa.org.za](http://www.nacsa.org.za) [www.nacsa.co.za](http://www.nacsa.co.za)

*"The activist is not the man who says the river is dirty. The activist is the man who cleans up the river"*