



VOGELGAT NATURE RESERVE NEWS - August 2013

NEWS FROM THE BRIDGE

The devastating fires that swept across Vogelgat in December 2012 have been a blessing in many respects.

Firstly the fynbos needed a fire, the results of which we will experience in a botanical explosion in spring;

Secondly the out-pouring of support from our members has been overwhelming.

We have decided not to rebuild The Shieling, but rather turn Sip into a 6 bed lodge instead.

I would like to thank the following persons for their kind and generous donations;

Mrs A Alberts, Alette Rousseau, Almero Oosthuizen, Brian Ratcliffe, Boetie van Zyl, David Brice, Dave, Trevor and Lynn Reid, Dawn Garish, De Haes Family, EJ Du Plessis, Felix Unite, Geordie Ratcliffe, Henk Groenewald, Christine and family (France), Ian Smith, Ronnie Hazel, Illing family, Ingrid Weideman, Robin Lapping, Marita Kriega, Marlinda Wright, Ivan McKeag, Neil Wilson, Peter Golding, Tino Delle Donna, Peter Booth, Richmond McIntyre, Ruediger Kaffe, Mr/s RS Ratcliffe, Drs Graaff and Strebel, Strydom family, VEC Acorn Charitable Trust, Mr W Nieman, Wakefield family, Casandra Parker, Dawn Garish, Rod and Rachel Saunders, De Haes family, David Brice, Boetie Van Zyl, Mr Nicol, Vince and Barbara Thompson, Mr Eadie, John Lightfoot, ExculsiveWorks, Erna Dry, Cynthia Turner, Helene Van Niekerk, Barry Pretorius, Jeannie de Villiers, Antony Van Hoogstraten, Viv and John Ward, John McKinnell, the Williamson family, The Olive Purchell Charitable Trust, Ian Dickie and Company for Honda generator and finally Ronald Mos for his carpentry skills at cost. We are in the process of creating a "Certificate of Gratitude", an embossed frame that will be displayed in Chalet Philippe (where we normally sign in,) with the names of all our donors.

We are still in need of funds to complete our restoration and therefore appreciate any further contributions.

BOTANICAL EXPLOSION

Fynbos requires a fire to sweep across its path between 12 and 15 years otherwise the fynbos become senescent i.e. older plants become aged and lose their vigor to grow and do not function effectively anymore. In spring there will be a spectacular "Botanical display". After a couple of months the charred remains of the fynbos suddenly explode for a short period into a mirad of colours and forms... the unusual and extraordinary display then disappears until the fynbos is triggered once again by fire and smoke.

Make the effort to hike up into the mountain and witness this floral wonder. *Pillansia templemannii* will be as if an orange fire has caught the mountain, *Disa racemosa* in masses, red hot pokers *kniphora uvaria* dotting the ridges.

Below are some snippets of what can be expected.



Pillansia templemannii



Disa racemosa

ANNUAL PERMIT FEES

Vogelgat Nature Reserve	R1770.00
Maanshynekop NR	R250.00 Optional
Buys se Huis	R400.00 per night for the whole cottage, Sleeps 4
The White House	R300.00 per night for whole cottage, sleeps 2 +
Leopard Camp	R50.00 per person per night

Banking: Vogelgat Nature Reserve
Bank: Standard Bank Branch: Hermanus
Branch code: 050312 Acc No: 082268053

Closing date: 31st October 2013

NNB!! You need to bring your permit booklet to be stamped at office during weekends only.

16th December – BRING N BRUNCH – All members are invited to come along at 11h00. Relax and meet some other hiking companions.

OUR NEW SIP LODGE

The rebuilding of Sip has been a daunting task. . . . 4 tons of material have been carefully transported, one and a half hour up the mountain via a treacherous 4x4 dirt track and then physically carried 25 minutes down plank by plank on our shoulders to reach the site. All thanks to our Malawian team of Addie, Ollins, Wisdom and Wiseman.

We at Vogelgat have decided to create unique destinations for our members. No longer a matter of just entering the reserve to head straight up the mountain and missing out on all the mysteries of our incredible fynbos.



We want you and your friends to embrace the uniqueness around you. You will be able to relax, lounge and picnic on a wooden deck off the ground, spread your towel and soak up the sun's rays.

As mentioned, we have created a spacious 6 bed lodge. This comprises of 2 settees that draw out into 2 queen size beds, plus a double bunk at the side. The large sliding windows and sliding double doors allow the natural light to permeate into the lodge. And for our chefs: The kitchen now has a 2 plate gas cooker and a wash-up basin outside!

There is also a sunny deck with ample seating/sunbathing arrangements... all this while you are overlooking your own plunge pool! Sip will be the perfect picnic venue, tucked away in its own kloof.

We aim to encourage people who do not normally see themselves as ardent hikers, to visit Vogelgat together with members as guests, to have a leisurely walk to Sip and relax in their private getaway.

PROVINCIAL STATUS FOR RESERVE

On the 7th of June 2013 Vogelgat officially received Provincial Reserve status. This means that the reserve gains a higher degree of protection and has a working agreement in the fields of research, alien clearing and management planning disciplines with Cape Nature.

MOSS CARPET



The Moss Carpet, created by Nguyen La Chanh, looks like grass at your feet. Made from imputrescible foam called plastazote, the mat includes ball moss, island moss and forest moss. The humidity of the bathroom ensures that the mosses thrive, and that's why you need to place it there and not anywhere else.

GM FOODS IN RSA?

US seed producer Monsanto has said it would withdraw all new requests to grow genetically modified crops in the EU. However, the firm's president stressed that the decision would not mean Monsanto was withdrawing its application to renew the approval for its insect-resistant MON810 maize. There is an application currently in South Africa!



IGNITE THE CHILD IN YOU

With our hectic lives we seem to have been swallowed up in a swirling world, too much information gathering, facebook, twitter, emails, deadlines... No time to pick up the phone or have a cup of tea with your family nor friends? We at Vogelgat would like to embark on a journey to ignite the child in you. Most of us have to act like adults, because society demands this of us. When was the last time that that you lay on the grass on a warm, clear night and gazed up to the vast universe above? Too busy to hear the sounds of those clicking stream frogs? Yes! They are not young chicks

chirping. We urge you to embrace the wondrous environment that you live in... You know the saying "How do you eat an elephant?..." In small bites! It only takes a couple of minutes of your spare time to "chill", Ignite the child in you, crawling with your children or grand children investigating the luminous glow-worms,.. Let the evening fragrance of the fynbos sweep you into a quiet state, or let the after-glow of the African sun tingle the hairs on your body. Everyone wants change in their lives, but do not change their behavior and are then surprised that there is no change! You have to be that change.