



VOGELGAT NEWS



Welcome

Tread lightly as you enter the reserve, realise that you are a part of this beautiful wilderness area. As you hike let the wild signs unravel as a mystery novel. Take time to “Get lost in its beauty”. Looking forward to seeing you in the mountains soon.

Giorgio

Mosselnook survives the fire	2
Rediscovered after 100 years!	2
Keep a look out for these birds	3
The Droseras of Vogelgat	4
Members' gallery	5
Baboons of Vogelgat	6

Annual membership renewal: 2023

Vogelgat permit	R 3,800.00
Maanschynkop permit	R 500.00 (optional)
Total	R 4,300.00

Bank details: Standard Bank, Hermanus
 Branch code 05 03 12, Account number 082268053
 Please use your surname and initials as reference.

NB: There is a one-month grace period until 31 October 2022. Members will also still be able to renew during November, but with a 20% surcharge. After this date the permit will be offered to those on the waiting list.



Mosselnook survives the fire

An unexpected fire that originated in Fernkloof Nature Reserve on 14 October 2021 entered Vogelgat.

Fortunately, it only burnt 37 hectares. We were also pleasantly surprised to find Mosselnook unscathed!

The planting of suurviegies (the *Carpobrotus* species) as fire-resistant plants saved the hut.



Rediscovered after 100 years!

About 100 years since it was last discovered, *Brunia pillansii* has been re-found by Dr Chris Whitehouse of [Phillipskop Mountain Reserve](#) as part of an ongoing survey of the flora of the Klein River Mountains.

The species was described in 1947 as *Pseudobaeckea stokoei*, from two specimens collected by Thomas Stokoe around 1920. The description of the location, as with many of Stokoe's specimens, was rather vague: "Klein River Mountains 2,000-3,500ft" and "above waterfalls beyond Rocklands". It has not been collected since and its exact locality lost. It was therefore regarded as Data Deficient on the red list of threatened plants of South Africa.

Dr Whitehouse has been conducting a floristic survey of properties along the Klein River Mountains thanks to funding from The Fynbos Trust and [Whale Coast Conservation](#). He rediscovered *Brunia pillansii* (as it is now known*) on the steep almost inaccessible south-facing slopes of Maanschynkop growing amongst dense tall fynbos, where it has remained out of sight of other botanists for 100 years. He only found two plants, but others may exist on the even more treacherous slopes that face the lagoon below. Nevertheless, the area has been frequented by many a botanist in the past and the plant not been discovered, so it is clearly a very rare species. Its total worldwide distribution is therefore probably only a few hundred square metres and highlights the amazing conservation value of the Klein River Mountains as a centre of endemism.

Many thanks are given to Vogelgat Private Nature Reserve for enabling access to this area for the survey work and our ongoing conservation work that will help to ensure the survival of *Brunia pillansii*, and many other species, for the next 100 years.

*When *Pseudobaeckea* was merged with *Brunia*, there was already a species named *Brunia stokoei*. Therefore, a new name was needed for the species and it was named after Neville Pillans, the botanist who first described it.



Keep a look out for these birds

Next time you walk in the reserve, take time to see if you can spot any of these unusual birds.



From top left:

Cape Rock Jumper. Localised endemic resident (only occurs in Western Cape). Seen at Mosselnook.

African Harrier Hawk. Common resident. Also known by its old name, Gymnogone. A large grey hawk with black flight feathers, it inserts its long legs into crevices in search of bats, lizards and other small creatures.

Sentinel Rock Thrush. Common localised resident. Males differ from the Cape Thrush in that the grey mantle extends from head to breast. Found in higher latitudes.

Victorin's Warbler. Common localised resident. Best identified by its orange-yellow eyes. Song is an increasingly rapidly 'mississippippippi'.

Cape Rock Thrush. Common resident. Seen on mountain slopes, but unlike its cousin the Sentinel which is found at higher altitudes.

Grass bird. Common resident, has a distinctive call 'chirp-chirp-chirp-does it tickle yooou'

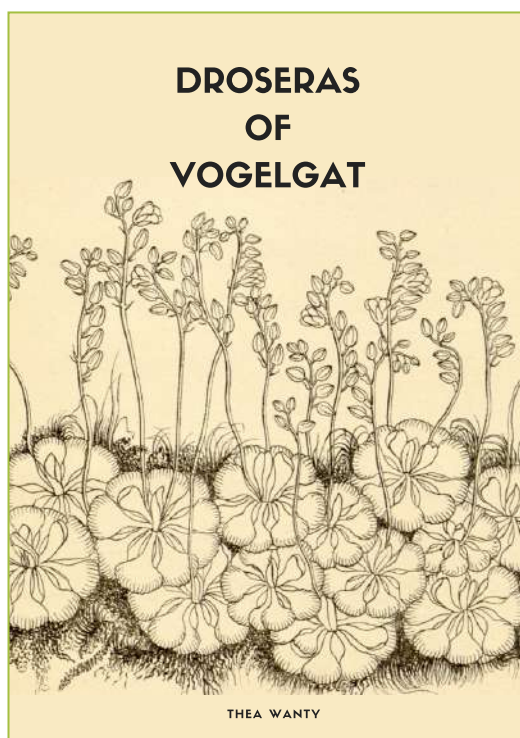
The Droseras of Vogelgat

Thea Wanty, a French nature conservation student, spent eight weeks at Vogelgat last year as part of her scientific internship. During her time here, a particular group of plants caught her attention: the Drosera, commonly known as Sundews, part of the Doseraceae family. There are over 180 species worldwide, of which only 3 species occur in Europe. 10 species and 2 hybrids have been observed in Vogelgat.

Thea says: “The Drosera of Vogelgat are perennial insectivorous plants that grow in varying habitats depending on different factors such as altitude, soil type, orientation and soil moisture content. Each species has its own particular requirements to grow and propagate. Sundews are generally self-pollinated plants, (the anthers rub over the stigmas as the petals fold inwards when the flower closes), and occasionally they may be pollinated by insects.”

Thea has written a booklet based on her research of the Droseras of Vogelgat. Her booklet aims to introduce you to the different Drosera species present in the Vogelgat and Maanschynkop reserves, and includes a map for each species showing their distribution along the footpaths. Thea feels the paths seem to have had an extremely positive impact on a lot of the Drosera populations, mainly due to increased sunlight and less competition with other species.

Please email Giorgio if you'd like a PDF copy of Thea's booklet.



Members' gallery



Baboons of Vogelgat

A few trailcam images featuring just some of the many faces of baboons within the reserve: ever vigilant as the sun goes down, a lazy day in the sun with the family around, monkeying around, and taking care of the troop.

It's our vision to permit the natural foraging of baboons as they are of significant value to the fynbos ecosystems.



Please note...

For everyone's safety and security, CCTV cameras have been installed at the Vogelgat office, viewing the entrance to the reserve for any possible unauthorised persons.



Trail running is no longer allowed in Vogelgat.
Please adhere to these rules.



Thanks to Judes and Carly of Makovo Service Design for helping us put the newsletter together. They help organisations be the best they can be for their employees and their customers.
www.makovoservices.com