



# Be Conservation Active

A newsletter of the Friends of Blaauwberg Conservation Area

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## POINTS OF INTEREST

- Get the latest's conservation news on BCA.
- Find some "green" tips on how you can help change the world.
- Join the Friends of BCA. Find out how inside!

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## BCA reinstates intruder attack

By Reserve Manager, Jacques Küyler

Invasive alien plants have invaded over 10 million hectares of our country. Over 750 tree species and 8 000 herbaceous species have been introduced, with some 1000 introduced species now naturalized, and 200 considered invasive. Whilst not all alien species thrive in their new environments, some do, becoming 'invasive', spreading at the expense of indigenous species and causing significant changes to habitats and ecosystem functioning. The BCA is no exception to this and large areas of the reserve are covered by invasive alien vegetation. According to the Working for Water programme, invasive alien plant

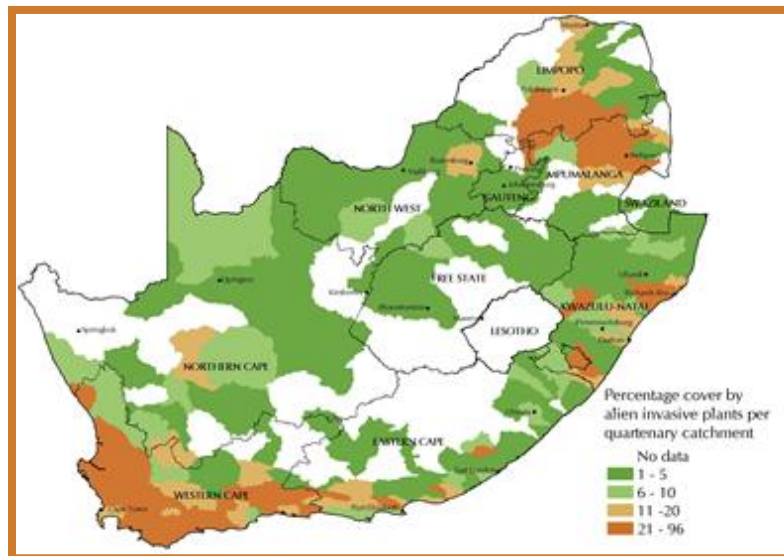
infestations are expected to double within 15 years if left uncontrolled. For this reason a clearing company, Phumelela, was awarded an alien clearing contract for eradicating invasive alien plants within several management blocks of the BCA.

The area, covering 768.83 hectares includes the coastal section and the section from Otto du Plessis up to the foot of Blaauwberg Hill.

The contractors started clearing the coastal section on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2009. Alien plants such as Rooikrans and Port Jackson are being cleared and stacked in piles. A presentation on the BCA, its flora and fauna together with the appro-

priate alien clearing methods, were presented to the contractors. The management staff of the BCA has and continues to carry out a number of site inspections to help ensure the good quality of the work being done on the ground. To date, the coastal section from Big Bay in the south up to Melkbosstrand in the north has been cleared. The contractors are currently working along the West coast road on the southern boundary.

For more information on Blaauwberg Conservation Area and its alien clearing, contact BCA office on Tel: 021 554 0957 or send us an e.mail on [bca@capetown.gov.za](mailto:bca@capetown.gov.za).



Percentage cover by alien invasive plants in South Africa

Source: *Versveld et al (1998)*

We would like to wish all our readers a very happy and prosperous 2010!

## BCA welcomes four new staff members

By Lizanne Langeveld

**Mr Bonile Madolo** has been appointed as the new Environmental Education Officer at BCA since 1 October 2009. Mr. Madolo's career has taken him from being a project manager to an environmental scientist with key experiences in biodiversity conservation, nature reserve management and management of environmental impact assessments.

Bonile's vision for his future at BCA is to consolidate all relevant educational information, to co-ordinate educational activities and focusing more on the evaluation of programmes to ensure better quality of programmes and activities offered. He wishes to align all school programmes with the curriculum and to include the teachers in the planning process of each programme. He also wishes to capacitate the local communities with information and an understanding of future developments within the area and the reserve to enable them to associate with it and to learn to appreciate the area. We wish Bonile all the best with his tasks ahead.



**Mr. Bonile Madolo, new environmental education officer at BCA**



**Mr Daniel Droste, 2010 experiential training student at BCA**

**Daniel Droste**, a student from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, will be completing his experiential training for his National Diploma in Nature Conservation at BCA this year. When asked what his vision for the year is, it was very clear and simple, "To learn as much as possible of all aspects of Nature Conservation, to contribute to the improvement of the functioning of the BCA, if at all possible, and to do well in my projects!"

Daniel has a long list of hobbies that includes fishing, scuba diving, playing guitar, reading, hiking, camping, photography and the list goes on! Soon he will add fire fighting to the list as Daniel went fire fighting on his first working day at BCA! Daniel had quite an enthusiastic reaction when asked about his first fire fighting experience, "Really awesome, really cool!" We hope Daniel further builds on his enthusiasm and stays amped for fire fighting throughout the season, and in every other aspect of his experiential year.



The BCA recently appointed two Visitor Control Officers on a two year contract from October 2009 to September 2011. They are **Yolanda Wembe** (left) and **Melshaw Wyngaard** (right), based at Eerstesteent. They had the enormous task of dealing with an influx of visitors during the festive season. For the period 1 October to 31 December 2009, **5732** people visited the Eerstesteent area.



## BCA tops at team building

By Bonile Madolo



BCA & North District staff members

On 13 November 2009 a sports day was organised for the Nature Conservation Branch at the Parow Sports Grounds. The weather conditions were conducive to undertake quite a number of outdoor sporting codes. This included a Big Walk, Soccer, Tag-of-war, Wheelbarrow Race, Three legged Race, Egg Race, Pillow Fighting and Dominos.

Participants came from the nature reserves in the South, Central and Northern Districts of the city as well as the Head Office staff, i.e. Maitland Office. The day started with a 5 km big walk in the morning which had a finishing point inside the playing grounds. This was followed by a hot cricket clash that entertained everyone. Soccer was the highlight, but did not overshadow the tag-of-war that had everyone participating, including nature conservation top management.

The wheelbarrow race, egg race and the three legged race were the darlings

of the day, while the dominos game was taking everybody to cool, calm and collected midday of the sporting event. The South District won major games, i.e. soccer and tug-of-war male sections, while female sections from North District stole the limelight in this category. The cherry on top for the day was the presentation of the trophies by Julia Wood (Head: Biodiversity Management Branch) to the winning teams and individuals who did their best for the event.

Not forgetting the man of the moment Elvis O'Connell from BCA, who scooped up the trophies for the sportsman of the day. This was a day where new staff members had an opportunity to meet other members in the unit and also showed the highest level of team building.

## Galloping to the top of Blaauwberg Hill

By Yohann Rouillard & Simone Greveling

On Saturday 14 November 2009 nineteen riders from Morning Star equestrian club partook in a horse outride within Blaauwberg Conservation Area.

The riders met at the boom gate at the back of Blaauwberg Hill at 08:00am for a relaxing ride up to the summit. Everyone rode at their own pace, enjoying the scenery and spectacular view from the top. Everyone had fun, enjoying the outride and wished to come again.

The BCA wishes to turn this event into an annual outride to give the local community and neighbouring residents to the reserve a chance of benefiting from this conservation area on their doorstep.

If you would like to participate, contact us on Tel: 021 554 0957 or send us an email on [bca@capetown.gov.za](mailto:bca@capetown.gov.za).



Riders from the Morning Star Equestrian Club



# Caught on camera...

Sports Day



BCA staff members Ntomboxolo Matshabane, Lungiswa Mangcola and Gavin Oliver



Head of Biodiversity Management Julia Wood, and Simone Greveling, BCA student of 2009



A sunset walk was held on 5 December 2009



Hikes

Fires



*Homoroselaps lacteus*  
Spotted harlequin snake found by BCA staff member Nomthandazo Jevu on Tuesday 17 November 2009 at a fire on Garden Cities

**BCA: Nature's window on Table Mountain**

# Congratulations!

## Contact us:

### BCA Nature Conservation Staff & EE Bookings:

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The Friends of BCA would like to congratulate Simone Greveling, Nature Conservation student, and Chaentine Geduld, Fisheries Resource Management student of 2009 for successfully completing their experiential training at BCA.

Simone accepted a post as a Conservation Officer at Milnerton Racecourse, and we are very glad to still have her within the City's conservation department. We wish her all the best in her new job and career ahead.

Congratulations to Chaentine Geduld with the birth of her baby boy on 29 November 2009. We wish mother and baby health and happiness and all the best for the future!

## Green Living:

With a very busy 2010 lying ahead for all, no doubt, why not pause for a moment at the start of each day and just inhale your garden when it's at its best. Even if it means getting up 5 minutes earlier, making a cup of coffee and carrying it out into the garden with you is going to mean the difference between starting your morning routine harassed and rushed, and tripping lightly into the day with a smile on your face. You get to appreciate the greenery around you and chances are you will be more open to all sorts of positive changes through the day.

*From the book "Going Green" by Simon Gear*



## Upcoming events



We had a very eventful 2009, and look forward to another busy year in 2010!



Please be on the lookout for a list of upcoming events on our website and in your local newspapers!



## Join the Friends of BCA



The Friends of BCA organises outings and events for members and other interested persons and groups throughout the year and has a number of activities and meetings planned for the coming year. As a non profit organisation they depend on membership fees and donations. Members of all ages are welcome. To join please visit our website and download an application form: <http://www.bca.org.za>.

