JULY 2022

VR NEWS

Van Riebeeckshof
HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION



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VAN RIEBEECKSHOF TRUSTEES FOR 2022/23

At the AGM held on 21 June 2022, the following trustees were nominated and appointed to serve during the 2022/23 financial year:

- Mr. Emil Scheepers – Chairman & Legal
- Mrs. Talana Crous – Environment
- Mrs. Thelouise Van der Merwe – Architecture
- Mrs. Nicolene Van Niekerk – Finance
- Ms. Erina Veldsman – Communication
- Mr. Johan Bester – Security (NEW)
- Mr. Gavin Riley – Security (NEW)

A special word of thanks to Mr Andre van Blommenstein for his long-standing involvement and contributions in managing the security portfolio.





WILDFLOWER "STEPPINGSTONES" PROJECT

Why is this project important? Did you know that our remaining patches of locally indigenous wildflowers growing in Van Riebeeckshof are amongst the most threatened habitats on earth?

Many people associate renosterveld with grey-looking, hardy shrubs, not knowing it includes the most beautiful wildflowers. Swartland Shale Renosterveld forms part of the fynbos biome and is known as the richest bulb habitat on earth! These bulbs flower at different times throughout the year.

An awareness of how precious and irreplaceable our local wildflowers are, will go a long way in protecting the little that is left. More than 95% of this unique vegetation type, has already been destroyed. The fact that some wildflowers and orchids are occurring naturally in our parks is a miracle. To propagate our local orchids successfully for example, remains an extreme challenge.

Eco restoration

In 2021 the United Nations declared a DECADE OF ECO RESTORATION to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation and extinction of ecosystems and to combat climate change. Conserving and restoring our local indigenous vegetation aligns with this goal. According to South African scientist, professor T. Rebelo - fynbos, renosterveld and strandveld are very efficient at storing carbon.

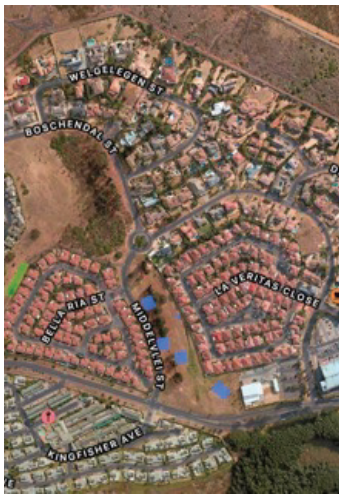
Our challenge

Unfortunately, due to disturbance in soil and relentless mowing over the years, invasive grass and weeds have taken over our parks. All our local wildflowers are on a knife's edge of survival as mowing prevents them from seeding.

The solution

Using poles and twine, we are sectioning off areas in the parks where bulbs, orchids, annuals and shrubs have been found to protect them from mowing and to allow them to flower and seed. Creating small islands of wildflowers (called "SteppingStones") versus applying this to entire parks not to be mowed seasonally, is presently the best option. This ensures user friendly parks creating opportunities for reading nooks, play areas, bird watching, educational spaces etc.

It is a misconception that these cordoned off conservation areas are the reason why the surrounding grass and weeds are not mowed timeously. The City of Cape Town schedules the mowing of parks at approximately 6-week intervals.





The process

A small group of dedicated individuals are removing weeds from these sectioned off areas. They are also ensuring that the poles and twine are kept in place. Hopefully a sense of community will be rekindled, should more residents get involved.

Outcome

A Steppingstone (island of wildflowers) creates an interesting educational space for the community. It has an invaluable environmental impact supporting butterflies, bees, birds and biodiversity in general. This has a positive impact on mental health as it adds to the enjoyment of being outdoors.



HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

- Take photos of insects, animals or plants growing in the Wildflower Steppingstones and upload images on iNaturalist, a free conservation App.
- Get to know your neighbours by joining our restoration sessions. (Removing invasives which are basically suffocating our own indigenous plants within the conservation areas).
- Are you a keen gardener, landscape designer or engineer? Volunteer your skills and knowledge.
- Book a place to join the Wildflower Spring walk in September 2022

For more information, please contact: **Van Riebeeckshof MHOA** OR send a message via **Facebook: Wildflower Stepping Stones Project**



CITY OF CAPE TOWN – HOME COMPOSTING PROGRAMME

COCT recently rolled out their Home Composting Programme – providing free home composting containers to residents to encourage all of us to start composting at home. Instead of throwing away your household organic waste, including fruit and vegetable waste, eggshells, tea bags, leaves, etc. you can use them to generate compost for your garden.

To qualify for a free home composting container:

- You need to be a homeowner or tenant of a single residence (sectional title flats are excluded).
- Your property needs to include a secure garden or yard area.

To generate healthy compost, your secure garden or yard should ideally include a minimum of 1 m² of open soil (where you'll place the container) and a minimum of 30 m² covered by vegetation.

To apply, you will need to bring the following to the venue:

- A copy of your municipal account; and
- Your identity document or passport.

Distribution points for our area (please note, one can ONLY apply during the specified dates and times):

- Morning Star Community Hall: 12 October 2022 between 14:00 18:00
- Durbanville Library: 15 October 2022 between 09:00 & 13:00

A limited number of free home composting containers will be issued per day. Containers will be provided on a first-come-first-served basis.

NEW STORES OPENING AT MAJIK FOREST SHOPPING CENTRE

Turn 'n Tender STEAKHOUSE

at Majik Forest Shopping Centre is now open. For bookings, please call: (021) 000 5406 / 7

IN MEMORIAM



The chairperson of Boschendal Terrace, Dexter Leite, sadly passed away 16 July 2022. Our hearts go out to his family.

The new chairperson of Boschendal Terrance is Amy Da Cruz – we wish her success.