



Stanford's Green Report

Healthy frogs = healthy environment

It all started when Naas Terblance (of Vaalvlei wine fame) noticed an endangered Western Leopard Toad jumping around in Stanford's streets – especially the area between De Bruyn and Morton Streets. Whale Coast Conservation (WCC) became involved and in the past 2 years the frog monitoring project has grown by leaps and bounds. Sheraine van Wyk (WCC) has involved local learners in the midnight patrols that identify and count not only leopard toads but also the elusive arum lily frog.

Arum lily frogs, *Hyperolius horstocki*, are found mainly in the Western Cape as well as a small area of the Eastern Cape. They often hide in the flowers of arum lilies during the day, but can also be seen clinging to other plant species such as restios. These pretty frogs breed in small pans, dams, vleis and quiet streams. Although their habitat is being threatened by urban development, they are not (yet) classified as threatened in the 2004 Red Data book of endangered species. However, they are becoming increasingly rare as their habitat is lost to urban development.

The area around the Willem Appel Dams and downstream towards the waste water plant was identified as critical for the survival of both these frog species. Stanford Conservation, always intending to clean up the area at the Mill Stream below Die Bron School, has joined hands with WCC by starting to remove invasive alien vegetation, opening up the area and clearing the reeds that love the high water table but serve no purpose in this section of the stream. We started in the area between Kiewietz Street and the treatment works and already a remarkable difference can be seen. Because the August–November period is the height of the frog migration season, very little work can be done at the moment.

In the meantime it has been agreed that we can cut and remove the invasive trees closer to the treatment works.



*It is hard work to find the elusive arum lily frog — but during the recent night patrol by learners from Okkie Smuts and Die Bron they were rewarded by finding this beauty merrily snoozing away.
Photographs: Sheraine van Wyk, WCC*



The idea is to make this a 2-day concentrated effort and we would like as many SCT members to assist on these days – so keep your eyes open for the email and Facebook invitation.

DID YOU KNOW?

For a few days every year (usually in August), the Western Leopard Toad goes a-courting. This is unusual in that it is confined to less than a week a year. Thousands of toads migrate to suitable ponds or wetlands (in our case the Willem Appel dams) where the courting noises are often unbearable.

Late October/ early November the baby toads decide to go a-wandering (usually downstream) to find a new home. This is where they find their first fatal human invention; concrete kerbstones. Too small to jump up kerbstones, they die of exhaustion or end up being fried by the sun the next day. For example, in the first 2 weeks of last year, 2 055 dead toadlets

where counted at the Kiewietz (Church) Street dip!

To prevent this massacre, Whale Coast Conservation has for the past two years involved learners from Okkie Smuts and Die Bron schools to do night/ early morning patrol and pick up the little ones trying to cross to greener pastures along the Mill Stream. Also WCC has asked the municipality to remove some kerbstones and rather leave a soft verge which the baby toads can easily access on their life journey.

This year Stanford learners will be chaperoning toadlets across the dip from 6:30am - 7:30am for the entire month of November. Anyone interested is welcome to join, but please contact Sheraine van Wyk on (028) 316-2527 (Office) or 083 484 0202 if you'd like to participate as she has to draw up a schedule of volunteers and learners.



Elderberry nuisance

When clearing the stream below Die Bron we found the elderberry bush, *Sambucus nigra*, (pictured above) to be a major problem. This lovely bush, used for medicinal purposes and its delicious elderberry cordial, can be found in almost every Stanford garden. Unfortunately it is a Category 1b declared weed in South Africa and must be removed and destroyed. As it thrives in wet conditions, this garden escapee is becoming a menace in our streams and wetlands.

Stanford Conservation will be embarking on a concerted effort to remove these shrubs/trees from all water courses, and urge all Stanford residents to please also remove these bushes from your garden. As they are flowering at the moment, they are easy to identify and cut down. Herbicide application is necessary on the stumps to ensure that they do not re-sprout. It must be applied within 10 minutes of the stems being cut. Please do not use Garlon, but rather a systemic water soluble herbicide such as Confront or Timbrel.

WEED ALERT!

Do these beautiful invaders grow in your garden?

Spanish broom (*Spartium junceum*) is one of South Africa's most problematic weeds. They block light and use up water, resulting in many native species becoming locally extinct. It reduces forage and creates stands which are inaccessible and unpalatable to wildlife. Brooms can produce up to 12,000 seeds per plant – making it difficult to control once established.



All three plants shown here are Category 1b declared weeds — which means they have to be removed from your garden



Centranthus ruber, known as **Devil's Beard**, is reasonably new to Stanford – but already prolific in many street gardens! It is an aggressive invader that may not be owned, imported, grown, moved, sold, given as a gift or dumped in a waterway. The plants are deemed to have such a high invasive potential that infestations can qualify to be placed under a government sponsored invasive species management programme.

Yellow flag-iris — a Category 1a noxious weed that can result in a fine!

Yellow flag-iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) is an eye-catching and fast-growing perennial that creates dense stands in wet areas, thus eliminating native wetland species and threatening plant and animal diversity. They invade ditches, irrigation canals, marshes, stream and lake shorelines, as well as shallow ponds. It is poisonous if ingested and may cause irritation to the skin when handled. Classified as a Category 1a noxious weed, **you are obliged to remove them and may not replant this plant once removed.**

HOW TO ERADICATE

There are no herbicides registered for this plant in South Africa. It can be physically controlled by hand removal, but caution should be used if pulling out this plant because it can cause skin irritation. Remove seed pods to help control population expansion; dig up small infestations; remove all rhizomes; burn where conditions allow. Although a number of insects and pathogens are known to attack the plant, no biological control agents are presently known.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Report sightings of these plants to Stanford Conservation or to the Invasive Species Programme at SANBI. You need to provide the exact locality, GPS information if possible.

CONTACT DETAILS

Email address: invasivespecies@sanbi.org.za; Tel: +27 (0)21 799 8403/4.



SCORE

Stanford Community Recycling



Stanford Conservation has recently taken over the responsibility for this inspiring community project initiated by Stanford Rotary. Apart from cleaning up the environment, it also teaches children that recyclable material carries a value. In Stanford South and Die Kop, the children (and parents) collect all the recyclable material generated at home and found lying around. Every second Wednesday the filled bags are taken to the community centre in wheelbarrows, dangling from broomsticks or any other ingenious means of transport. Here they “swop” their bag for a token with which they can purchase school stationery, playthings, a present for someone special, or a much-needed jersey. In addition the Die Kop Swop Shop is held monthly at the Rainbow Trust premises.

Stanford Rotary will continue to support SCORE by funding the school stationery, whilst currently the clothing side is over-supplied. To address the personal hygiene needs we have decided to launch a monthly drive for a specific product. September was toothpaste month, October we requested soap, and November will be roll-on deodorant month. However, anything is welcome. We’ve already received donations of hair brushes, toothbrushes etc. and thank everyone who have embraced this drive.

Personal hygiene products are in great demand being an unaffordable luxury if you have to choose between a loaf of bread and (for example) deodorant!

Donations can be put into the boxes at Coffee Corner and on Sundays at the Christian service in the community hall.

Heritage Committee saves Buzzy Beez from being demolished



Thanks to some vigilant (grand)parents, the Stanford Heritage Committee became aware of the Department of Education’s intention to demolish the historical Buzzy Beez building and replace it with two facebrick classrooms. This little building, as well as the school, is graded as 3A, meaning that it is of local importance and of sufficient significance to be placed on a heritage register.

The committee immediately sprang to action, met with the headmaster and subsequently found out that the DoE had not contacted Heritage Western Cape (HWC) or the Overstrand Municipality for the legally required demolition order!

A few emails later the DoE’s architect sent new drawings, this time preserving the building but placing the classrooms right in front of it – meaning that the building would be completely blocked off and the existing jungle gym would be demolished. A few more emails and telephone calls later and all of the issues were resolved within two weeks; much to everyone’s delight as work has to be completed by end March 2017

Buzzy Beez will not be demolished (although some fundraising is required to restore the building), the jungle gym stays where it is, the classrooms will be plastered and the roof will be Victorian profile, the building will be positioned behind the temporary classroom. This was erected to accommodate Buzzy Beez pupils after the building was declared unsafe for human occupation and to ensure there is no hold-up in construction.



We would like to congratulate Liz Hochfelden and her committee for their swift action and response – resulting in a win-win situation for Stanford’s children and their architectural heritage.

PS: The committee is in the process to determine what it would cost to restore the building. The department has indicated that it may contribute to the costs. We will keep you informed the progress thereof.

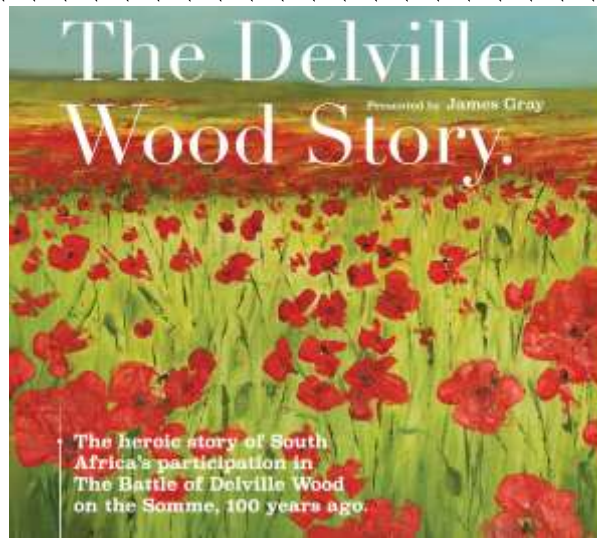
The most iconic military engagement by South Africans in World War I was at the Battle of Delville Wood from 14 to 19 July 1916.

Only five officers and 750 men survived the action which saw 121 officers and just over 3 000 men enter the wood.

It was part of the massive Battle of the Somme which lasted for 142 days and resulted in more than 1.2 million dead and wounded from all sides.

The South Africans had been ordered to hold the wood "at all costs". In a diamond-shaped area only 1 400 by 100 yards, it was criss-crossed by trenches and barbed wire entanglements and raked by German machine guns and rifles from only 70 yards away. They poured 400 shells a minute into the area for six to eight hours a day. The shattered wood made it almost impossible to extract the wounded.

Cape Town paid a particularly heavy price as young men from the city's older schools (Bishops, SACS, Rondebosch, Wynberg and St George's Grammar) as well faith communities, professions such as bankers and municipal employees, and university students were killed.



Re-live this heroic story:

**17 November 2016 @ 10:30 for 11:00
Stanford Valley
R200 (includes lunch)
Mary Knight maryknight78@gmail.com or
Stanford Tourism & Business office**

WORKING TOWARDS A STANFORD MUSEUM



Stanford is officially 160 years old in 2017. What better way to celebrate this milestone than by having a museum in place? Stanford's Heritage Committee, this time with Mike Murray as the driving force, is in negotiations with the St Thomas Church to see whether the "oulap" school building next to the church could be changed into a museum. Wouldn't it just be a lovely addition to the village green and the village in general?

Setting up the museum and getting it to be interactive as well as static recoding of Stanford's history will be a challenge. Anyone with ideas, experience in museum design is welcome to contact Mike on (028) 341-0823 or cattlepost@gmail.com. Fundraising is another issue that needs to be addressed urgently.

JOIN THE CAUSE

For some years now, Stanford Conservation decided to not request membership fees because of a reasonably healthy bank balance. The organisation has been fortunate in that the monthly Wine and Wisdom evenings generate about R24 000/year, which is used to maintain Stanford's green belts and beautify the village by planting trees, removing invasive species, restoring degraded areas etc.

Unfortunately this creates a situation whereby we can never prove how many members we have — something the municipality wishes to know in order for SCT to be seen as an organisation supported by the community, and not just a few.

It was therefore resolved at our last AGM to reinstate an annual membership fee of R100p/p. If you have not yet paid your membership, please do so via EFT and use your name as reference:

*Stanford Conservation,
NEDBANK Hermanus (Branch code 13451200)
Savings Account No. 2383001805*

Watch this space!

At the moment this is what the area looks like downstream of the Willem Appel dam (from the Kiewietz [Church] Street dip) towards the wastewater



treatment works. Years of neglect has resulted in invasive species taking over and creepers throttling indigenous trees and blocking out sunlight.

The rehabilitation of this area is the Wandelpad Team's present project. Biodiversity is already returning to the small area cleared to date, and it is planned to have the entire area rehabilitated by February 2017. The response from Stanford South has been astounding as, apart from the ecological advantages, the clearing is supported from a security point of view. In addition... the frogs, dragonflies and Whale Coast Conservation are very happy...