



## Members' Newsletter February 2009

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### **Message from the Chairperson**

This is a short month, so the newsletter is coming out a little late as the end of the month has crept up unawares! This issue of the newsletter provides some follow-up on the 10<sup>th</sup> February management meeting where a number of important issues were discussed that will affect all the members as we move forward with the Conservancy. Once again, we encourage more members to become actively involved in the decision making processes, since we will need you all on board for the road ahead. Please, if you have any comments or inputs (whether positive or negative!) feel free to email me at [jmorris@csir.co.za](mailto:jmorris@csir.co.za). We are very grateful to those of you who have made the effort to update their payments to the Conservancy. Please, we urge those few members who have outstanding payments to address this matter as soon as possible, as we are now at financial year end.

Jane

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### **Bronberg Conservancy Constitution**

The management committee has agreed that we should move ahead with the Constitution, with the possibility of amendments later. It is now a priority to get all members to sign. Several members of the management committee have already signed, and we will focus on getting signatures from all the management committee members before approaching the remaining members. This will be given attention in the coming weeks. Once the Constitution comes into effect, we intend to move ahead with the dissolution of the companies. Rogan Trading (the holding company for the game) can be dissolved, followed by the Bronberg Bewaria.

### **Bronberg Conservancy as a Protected Nature Reserve?**

The possibility of the Conservancy applying to become a Protected Nature Reserve was discussed at the last management meeting in view of the initiative by the Klipkop Conservancy to apply for this status. It was decided that any advantage to us is not clear at this stage. We should keep a watching brief on the progress of the Klipkop Conservancy and be prepared to re-evaluate the situation later. It could be worth while to move in this direction if municipal rates escalate significantly.

### **Kungwini rates rebates**

Raymond Geens has some forms that members can use to claim rebates on their taxes from Kungwini. There are various categories under which you can claim a rebate, depending on the absence of services provided by Kungwini, and the contribution

you have made to provide services to farmworkers. Please, contact Raymond for copies of the relevant application form.

### **Game**

We have a single nyala in the Conservancy (driven in by Hennie after being found roaming outside the Conservancy). We could potentially introduce additional nyala but we need to take into consideration that they compete directly with bushbuck for habitat. At present it is not regarded as a priority to have more nyala.

Eventually we will need to reduce numbers of zebra. However considering we have had the current good rains, we should be able to wait another year before we have to take action to capture excess animals.

Flip Marx is prepared to introduce 4 giraffe into the Conservancy. Before we agree to this we need to establish if the giraffe are wild or tame. Please, give us your feedback on this idea before we proceed further.

### **Committee for next year**

We are approaching the end of the financial year and it is coming towards the time to elect a new committee. The current committee was constituted somewhat late in the current financial year. Subject to the approval of the Conservancy members, we therefore propose that the existing Committee could continue for the next financial year. All existing committee members should indicate whether they are willing to continue to serve on the committee until end Feb 2010. At the same time, we welcome new nominations to the committee (feel free to nominate yourself if you are interested to participate – don't be shy!)

### Nature news:

#### Miracles of the Veld

Following the rains, some beautiful flowers have emerged in the Conservancy. Perhaps these pictures will encourage you to spend an hour or two having a gentle walk to see the miracles that are around us. Some of these flowers do not bloom every year, but only when conditions are right, and this year there has been a particularly good show.



*Streptocarpus vandeleurii* (Elephant's Ear) belongs to the same family as the African violet. The huge dinner-plate sized leaves can be seen in shady places under the rocks in the Conservancy, but the beautiful white flowers only appear every few years.

The appellation "vandeleurii" is from the name of the Irishman Colonel Crofton Bury Vandeleur who first classified the flower.

Interestingly, it was Colonel Vandeleur's son Lieutenant Colonel "Joe" Vandeleur who, in the disastrous Allied attempt to break through to the Rhine at Arnhem in 1944, led the Irish Guards group that began the initially successful ground-based assault. The story of the Arnhem tragedy, code-named "Operation Market Garden" was told in Richard Attenborough's 1977 film "A Bridge too Far" starring Michael Caine.

Seeds of *Streptocarpus vandeleurii* have been purchased for germination in the garden of the old Vandeleur estate in County Clare, Ireland, which is presently being restored after over a century of neglect. There is a visitors' centre and the gardens are open to the public.

(Information from the Irish Times, March 27, 2008)

*Haemanthus humilis* is found amongst the rocks, particularly where there is sandy soil. It is a member of the Amaryllis family



*Freesia grandiflora* was previously known as *Anomatheca grandiflora*. It is a member of the Iris family and grows in shady places under the trees.



Most of you will be familiar with the beautiful orchid *Eulophia welwitschii* that is quite widespread in the Conservancy.

