



Wilderness Ratepayers and
Wilderness, Western Cape,

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Residents Association,
South Africa, 6560

WRRRA NEWSLETTER – May 2015



"Wilderness the place to be". [Island Lake Sunset](#) –Paul Rixom

Wilderness rated one of 25 top beauty spots



Wilderness Beach has a long, white sandy beach and azure ocean and is rated among the 25 best small towns in the country by the website www.savisas.com. Beach lovers can attest to the fact that it is practically deserted all year round - with the exception of December holidays. Photo: Pauline Lourens

GEORGE NEWS - The town of Wilderness is rated among the 25 best small towns in South Africa on the website www.savisas.com.

It ranks with towns like Graaff-Reinet, Franschoek, Greyton, Villiersdorp, Clanwilliam, Clarens, Coffee Bay, Dullstroom, Gariep Dam, Hogsback, Kakamas, Sutherland, Montagu, Nieu-Bethesda, Nieuwoudtville and

Nottingham Road, Pelgrimsrust, Port St Johns, Prince Albert, Riebeek-Kasteel, St Lucia, Tulbagh and Underberg.

ARTICLE AND PHOTO: PAULINE LOURENS, GEORGE HERALD JOURNALIST.

Wilderness Improvement Program

- **Wilderness Police Station Project.** Please contact the WRRRA on wrra@tiscali.co.za if you are able to contribute in any way. We need some offers for paint and offers of labour to the painting of the offices.
- **Park Benches.** Excellent news ! The Municipality has allocated money to provide new benches in our Ward. The WRRRA has been involved in agreeing where these should be placed to best benefit all our residents and ratepayers.

Street Numbers *Street Numbers vs Erf Numbers*

Over many years, the house numbering system in Wilderness has been largely based on the erf number. However, with sub-divisions and consolidations, some erf numbers do not follow sequentially between neighbours.

While this is perhaps somewhat challenging for the post office street deliveries and couriers, they do their rounds on a regular basis and seem to cope quite well.

The problem area that has been identified is that security (SAPS and private security companies) and emergency vehicles can often waste critical minutes trying to find a particular home.

We are currently engaging the George Municipality on this. It is not possible to change the erf numbers of these properties as this is how they are registered in the Title Deeds Office. However, to make finding a home much quicker, we are looking at possibly introducing an "A" to the erf number if it is the original erf and a "B" if it is a subdivision, and if it is a consolidation, a number that "fits in" between both the neighbours.

If your property has such a number, please will you let us know, together with a brief explanation as to how it came about, quoting all relevant erf numbers around you. Please send this information to the secretary, Vanessa at wrra@tiscali.co.za



For the erf/street numbering system to work properly it is vital that residents put their numbers up. If for no other reason, you may need **Emergency Services** to find your home in a hurry.

Your life may depend on it.

PLEASE put your erf or street number up as soon as possible.

Wilderness water quality

Wilderness Water Quality. Jan, Feb, and March Certificates of Analysis indicate that our water met, if not exceed, the required standards.

Feedback Forum :Possible Projects received from you. These will be discussed at Committee level and the WRRRA will report back.

- The Saasveld road is becoming very overgrown and a road hazard as the trees and branches are hanging lower and lower into the road forcing road users to drive on the other side of the road and not being able to see oncoming traffic
- The entire area around the 2 wooden staircases at the Wilderness Beach Hotel (old Holiday Inn) could definitely do with some attention. Both staircases would benefit from some maintenance and the wooden steps between the Beach Hotel tennis court and the car park below are in a complete state of disrepair (a safety hazard and potential public liability claim). It requires the combined efforts of SANParks, the Beach Hotel, The Views Hotel, Municipal cleansing department and the Wilderness community is needed.

Who are we ?

Some really interesting feedback and quite emotionally charged feedback ☺ ! What are the feelings about these names for us lucky folk who live in *"Wilderness the place to be"*.

So far 22 out of **ALL** of you have responded. Maybe we should keep this open another month !

Wildernerians	7	- the current favorite
Wild Folk	3	- Hmmmmm
Wildernista	1	-as in Fashionista
Wildernesta	1	- like an empty nester in the Wilderness?
Hermits	1	-for people who live in Wilderness ?
Wildernarians	1	-sounds like a cross between Vegetarians and Septuagenarians
Wildernessians	1	- as in Polynesians
Wildies	1	-like the informal & casual atmosphere of our village
The Wilderness Folk	1	- Hmmmmm
Forest Folk	1	- Hmmmmm
Wildlanders	1	- Bilingual nogal !
Wildernissers	1	-in Afrikaans it is easy
Wild-keepers	1	-We do have some strange folk about !
Wildeiros	1	-as in 'Ranchieros'
	22	

Possible Speaker Topics

Positive feedback from Ratepayers and Residents with a lot of interest about having a Wilderness speaker program. Here is some feedback. Watch out for more on this in the next couple of newsletters.

- Dealing with foreign invasive plants on your property (without poison?)
- What to do if someone is bitten by a snake. I have no clue where to even start??? What are the snakes in our area, who has the necessary anti venoms?
- How can we as Wilderness homeowners try and be independent from municipal services such as water and electricity? A lot of us have rain water tanks, why doesn't everybody? What a missed opportunity if you don't. Maybe someone can advise us on the use of solar? If we stand together maybe we can get a better deal with a supplier?
- Dirt roads are so badly graded .Suggest each dirt road is given a 'road monitor' who can give the municipality grader operator a 5 minute insight before the grading starts and looks it over before the grader leaves
- *Lectures in both Afrikaans and English please?*

HELP !! I live in Wilderness and have a problem.

Really ? Living in Wilderness is definitely not a problem ☺ !

But the WRRRA office is inundated with frantic calls from Ratepayers and Residents asking the WRRRA to sort out all sorts of problems. The WRRRA exists to **protect and further the interests** of ratepayers and residents. The WRRRA Executive Committee is made up of your fellow residents and sadly do not have super powers needed to sort out all your troubles.

Ratepayer's first port of call **must be** to the relevant authority that is responsible for the utility or function, (potholes, street lights etc) that is causing you the trouble. This would be the Municipality (George or Eden), Eskom, SAPS or SANRAL etc. The WRRRA can and will only consider taking up your cause if it is clear that you have made the effort to sort the issues out yourself and can supply the WRRRA with your correspondence and above all , a "case number" and date that the case was lodged.

If your efforts are not being fruitful, then by all means drop the WRRRA an email on wrra@tiscali.co.za , outlining the problem and what efforts you have already made to try and sort the issues out. But without a "case number" and relevant info, the WRRRA will not be able to take up your case. If the issue is one that the WRRRA are aware of, the WRRRA will contact you give advice and then possibly take up the fight on behalf of the ratepayers.

SANPARKS

The WRRRA will be attending a SANPARKS Blue Flag Beach meeting on behalf of us all on 21st May 2015. More details in future newsletters. Wilderness would like to thank Vernon Gibbs-Hall , Eden District Municipality-Management Services for his ongoing commitment to Wilderness and for driving our Blue Flag initiative. Great job Vernon !

Peeping Paras



The WRRRA has been advised that an overseas **Passing Paragliding Peeping Tom** has recently broken every rule in the book while flying in Wilderness. This inconsiderate visitor has apparently been skimming over people's houses and actually touched their garden walls with his feet etc. He is obviously a very good pilot, and has made his own video in the air which has apparently gone viral. The CAA has taken this up and this aviator will be banned from flying in South Africa.

"In the nick of time, a hero arose, A funny looking dog with a big black nose.

Snoopy fired once and he fired twice and that Bloody Red Baron went spin-nin out of sight."

PROMINENTLY DISPLAY YOUR STAND NUMBER ON YOUR HOUSE.

Help SAPS and Emergency vehicles to find you. This may well save a life !

GIPTN : Go George



Visit the website for more information
www.gogeorge.org.za

The Roll out to Wilderness and Touwsrante is
scheduled for August 2015

Hold Thumbs !!
Watch the Press for details

Services Feedback

- Wilderness Water Quality. Jan, Feb, and March Certificates of Analysis indicate that our water is pretty good.
- The many faulty streetlamps on Waterside Rd and in front of the Common have been repaired. Thanks Gerald Hoch for your positive involvement.

What to do when you find a stranded turtle



Each year between April and June, a number of juvenile loggerhead turtles wash up on Western Cape beaches.

SOUTHERN CAPE NEWS - Each year between April and June, a number of juvenile loggerhead turtles wash up on Western Cape beaches and people should know what to do if they find them, advises the Two Oceans Aquarium in Cape Town.

Sea turtles are temperate water animals and when they are washed up on Western Cape beaches, they often suffer from hypothermia, dehydration and possibly infection. The Two Oceans Aquarium rehabilitates the stranded turtles and once they are strong and healthy enough, they are sent to uShaka Marine World where they are released into the warmer waters off the KwaZulu-Natal coast.

What to do if you find a turtle on a Western Cape beach:

- Remove the turtle from the beach.
- Keep it dry and at room temperature – DO NOT place the turtle in water.
- Place the turtle in a container that has ample air holes.
- Contact the aquarium on 021 418 3823.
- Make a note of exactly where the turtle was found.

Note that this advice only applies to stranded marine turtles in the Western Cape. Should you come across a turtle elsewhere in South African coast, please contact your local aquarium or animal rehabilitation centre.

For further information contact Vernon Gibbs-Halls on 044 1529 or 072 670 5108) He is the Eden Environmental Specialist., www.aquarium.co.za/blog/entry/stranded_turtles_what_to_do.

[Village Ambassador Program](#)

Our Wilderness Monitors have asked that we pass these messages onto you all :

- *People leaving their dogs in the car - please park where there is shade. Don't take forever to do your shopping with dogs locked in the car as they also need fresh air !*
- *Don't leave your car windows even slightly open when parked and ensure the car is properly locked.*
- *Don't leave anything on the seats or floor - they will break in for very little.*
- *Please do not support the lay-outs - they offer you no security or service. There have recently had a few incidents with youngish kids in the village, so please do not support them. WRRRA have reliable monitors patrolling, so please rather support them.*

[Eishkom: Load shedding schedule](#)

Load Shedding for Wilderness & George May 2015: Click on the link below to take you to the May Load shedding Schedule. <http://www.georgeherald.com> , look for the “Load shedding” headline on this page.

Or log onto www.wrra.co.za and click “Loadshedding” under Latest News, midway in the page, on the Left Hand Side of the first page.

[Ward News](#)

Municipal Draft Budget 2015/16: Click this link to see the George Newsletter outlining the key points in the draft budget:

http://www.george.org.za/file/draft_budget_document_201516_march_2015_x.pdf

[Embrace Technology](#)



[Greenie Beans take note:](#)

de Rust Eco Festival 24-28 June 2015

Celebrating the Natural Diversity of the Klein Karoo!

With some of the country's foremost experts on Flowers, Geology, Astronomy, Birding, Insects and Environmental issues

For Bookings contact Gwen: 072 292 4103 More details - <http://www.derusteco.co.za>

For more information contact: Dr. Suzanne Delpont: Suzanne.delpont@up.ac.za - 082 334 1575

Dog Ordinances



Please be a responsible Dog Owner. Another unfortunate incident occurred on Waterside road where a resident and her dog were attacked and mauled by vicious dogs. One was on a leash, but the owner had no control and the dog got away from him, and another dog which was not on a leash. A charge has been laid against the owner with the police.

Here are a few extracts that you, as a responsible Dog Owner, should be aware of :

No person shall –

- worry or frighten any person or animal or **through negligence** fail to prevent any dog from attacking, worrying or frightening any person or animal,
- to **be in any public street or public place except on a leash and under control** unless the dog is in an area designated by the Municipality as a free running area;

Please refer to the full Bylaw on the WRRR website by clicking this link :

<http://www.wrra.co.za/images/stories/PDF/Newsletters/dogs%20and%20cats%20by%20laws%20feb%202015.pdf>



Please pick up the dog pooh. Dog pooh on the beach gets washed into the sea and can and will affect our required Blue Flag water tests. Please don't let your Pampered Pooch be the reason Wilderness loses it's Blue Flag status !

Alien Weeds



The Layman's Guide to Invasive Alien Vegetation in our region Southern Cape Weeds Forum

Ena & Bob McIntyre – Garden Route Branch.

UPDATED LIST: *Ipomoea indica* & *I. purpurea* Family Convolvulaceae (Morning glories/purperwinde)

In the early 1950's the morning glories were promoted as an excellent plant for covering unsightly fencing, embankments and the walls of outbuildings. Its popularity was fuelled by enthusiastic descriptions such as "growing with cheerful abandon in almost any soil" and therefore perfectly suited for the above purposes. Also to the *Ipomoeas* advantage is the fact that they grow very quickly and are self-seeding. Clearly with so much going for it the recipe for becoming invasive was perfect. *Ipomoea indica* is known by several common names, including blue morning glory and blue dawn flower. It is a soft perennial vine native to Hawaii and the New World tropics. It is also found throughout the tropical and warm areas across the globe as an introduced species where it has in many places become naturalized and is often regarded as a noxious weed. In both Australia and New Zealand it has become an invasive species. Predisposed to moist and rich soil, it can and does grow in a wide array of soil types. *Ipomoea purpurea*, the Purple or Common Morning Glory, is native to Mexico and Central America.

Description: *Ipomoea indica* and *I. purpurea* are twining and climbing plants. *I. purpurea* is an annual and *I. indica* is perennial. In both cases the plants flower prolifically and make a stunning display of strong colour. The flowers are long and trumpet-shaped. Most commonly the colours are shades of purple-blue and white but there are also magenta and reddish varieties - sometimes with a contrasting stripe. In the warmer parts of the country the plants flower throughout the year. The leaves are heart-shaped and the stems are covered with brown hairs.



Invasive Status: These *Ipomoeas* have been reclassified from category 3 to category 1b in the updated list. The plants invade riverbanks, woodland, wasteland, arable land and coastal dunes – clearly justifying its classification as transformer. By virtue of its vigorous growth habits the morning glory vine simply outcompetes slower growing and less robust indigenous vegetation. Our country's eastern areas and the

coastal region all the way to Cape Town are the worst affected. **NOTE:** The plants along the lagoon verge in Wilderness are the indigenous *Ipomoea cairica* (Klimop). They have similar looking flowers but the foliage is very distinctly palmate (hand-shaped) as opposed to the heart shape described above.

Control: Registered herbicides are available for both species.

References: ALIEN WEEDS AND INVASIVE PLANTS: Lesley Henderson - Copyright @ 2001 Agricultural Research Council. www.wikipedia.org and Una v.d. Spuy; Ornamental Shrubs and Trees for Gardens in

SA

GARDEN ROUTE DOLPHIN RESEARCH AND ACOUSTIC MONITORING PROJECT



REPORT YOUR SIGHTINGS AND HELP THIS RESEARCH

If you see dolphins or whale, please SMS the following information to 078 550 1742:

- Type: dolphin or whale

The most likely species to be seen along the Garden Route are: the Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin, Indo-Pacific Humpback Dolphin; Long-Beaked Common Dolphin; Humpback whale, Southern right whale; Bryde's whale.

- Number of dolphins or whales (approximately)

- Location of the animal *Example: Bottlenose*

dolphin, 30-40 animals, 100m off Sanctuary Beach. If you are not sure of the species just SMS, e.g.: 30-40 dolphins off Sanctuary Beach Project Coordinator: Dr. Alejandra Vargas-Fonseca (ale@earthcollective.net) Lead institutions: Department of Environmental Affairs; Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University For the full list of collaborators please visit: www.conserbio.org

Security and Safety issues

Put these important numbers into your cell phones and stick them on your fridge NOW!

Wilderness Police Station : 044 877 0011 Wilderness Roving Police Van : 082 444 4326

Commander Bennie Boshoff : 084 300 1151 Fire Station : 044 801 6311

Wilderness Life Guards : 044 801 6311 NSRI : 082 990 5955

SANPARKS (24 hrs) : 044 877 1197

- Report any suspicious looking individuals or activities you may see in our community.



Neighbourhood Security : WHATSAPP Group success

Please take responsibility for our own street security.

Start your own street's WhatsApp Street Security Group.

Community Police Forum

WILDERNESS SECURITY POLICE FORUM : NEW MEETING VENUE in 2015 at The Views Boutique Hotel, Wilderness, Monday 25th May 2015 at 17h30. Please attend. This is in all our interest.

Other News

1. Are your neighbours WRRRA members ??? If not, please recruit them !!!
2. **WRRRA/Rotary Magazine Harvest** Please drop all your old magazines and books at the Tourist office and Rotary will do the rest.
3. **Local Pet database.** Please register your pets with Lisa on 044 877 0629 or wildernessvetshop@gmail.com Your name and contact details, Pet's name, breed, description and a picture.
4. **Have you been receiving the WRRRA SMS Alerts ??** (Power outages, Security Alerts etc.)
If not, please send/update your contact details by sending an email to:
wrra@tiscali.co.za : Erf Number, Surname, First name and cell number.

Good Reasons for joining WRRRA

- Early warning SMS system to inform of road closures, water and electricity supply issues, weather alerts and security news flashes.
- WRRRA engages and petitions relevant providers in Wilderness on behalf of us all.
- WRRRA drives the Wilderness Improvement Program. Village Ambassadors Project, Project Dolphin, Keep Wilderness Clean campaign, Wilderness Wall, sorting out signage issues and campaigning for parking are just few of the successful ongoing WRRRA projects.

Useful Links

Simply click the link below:

Wild News Facebook page : https://www.facebook.com/WildNews?ref=br_tf

Wilderness Tourism Facebook page

:https://www.facebook.com/search/str/wilderness%20tourism/keywords_top

The Last Word:



"Wilderness the place to be".

One of WRRRA's portfolios is that of the environment. This may mean a lot of things to different people but in essence, we contribute where we can, to at least maintaining, if not improving our local environment, be this beaches, rivers, the rainfall catchment area etc. To this end, on a monthly basis we engage with SANParks and the George Municipality.

We have also recently contributed to research undertaken by NMMU's Sustainability Research Unit under the guidance of Prof Christo Fabricius. The research on the Touw River catchment area was done in conjunction with and funded by the Water Research Commission and the CSIR. On 5 May a diverse group of role players, including representatives from the George Municipality, SANParks, Touwsrante community, farmers making a living in the catchment, tourism role players, conservancies and ratepayers met in the Hoekwil school hall. The initial feedback on the research entitled "Our Rivers: Our Future" highlighted some very interesting facts (backed up by science) that should be of interest to most of our members. These include, but are not limited to:

- The "buffer zones" along the banks of rivers consisting of natural vegetation act as a "filter" ensuring that most, if not all pollutants do not enter our rivers. This is certainly true for the majority of the areas and under normal conditions. However, in times of floods or even just excessive rains, these "buffer zones" aren't robust enough to do their job and pollutants do enter the rivers and therefore the lakes as well. It is therefore most important that these buffer zones are nurtured and protected if we are to maintain the current water quality in our rivers and lakes. But, we also do need heavy rains and even some flooding to clear silt and pollutants that have built up in the lakes and rivers over time.

One of the most effective ways to repair the river banks is to systematically replace invasive weeds such as Black Wattle with native vegetation. This can create much-needed jobs and the cut trees can even be used to generate electricity - the technology exists.

- Farming, particularly cattle farming in the lower catchment area is highly sophisticated and the number of cattle per hectare has increased significantly in recent years. Yet, over this period, their use of water for irrigation purposes has decreased by almost 30% thanks to the computer controlled centre pivot irrigation systems used in their pastures. Soil probes down to a depth of 1 metre ensure that the pastures are only irrigated if required taking into account a spectrum of climatic and hydrological factors. The Karatara and Hoekwil farmers, who are already motivated to take care of their catchment, are therefore crucial allies in repair of the catchment.
- The Touw River itself is in a good general state of health under normal circumstances, with one exception: its flow is highly unnatural due to the artificial breaching of the mouth, mainly to safeguard properties along the river. In times of heavy rains when the buffer zones are under

stress, it is particularly vulnerable to effluent from informal areas. An outdated municipal sewerage system which sometimes spills waste into the river is to blame.

- The Duiwe River which flows into Island Lake is not in such a fortunate position. It is provisionally estimated that the Duiwe River's flow has decreased by up to 80% as a result of water extraction and the alien vegetation in the catchment area (so the rainfall doesn't even reach the river).

These threats have a number of negative effects on people and ecosystems. Firstly, the Wilderness lakes, an internationally famous wetland system registered under the international Wetland Convention (named after the city of Ramsar in Iran where it was originally signed) are being threatened. Its plant life, fish populations and possibly bird populations are being altered, to the extent that the lakes might even lose their Ramsar status - a huge blow to conservation in the Garden Route. Secondly, the periodic pollution of the Touw River threatens the tourism industry in the Garden Route and Western Cape. Thirdly, the pollution being trapped in farm dams and resulting poisonous algal blooms could affect the profitability of the dairy industry.

The objectives of the workshop were to create a greater awareness of the issue facing the catchment area, what choices there are to tackle this issue and just how this can be done. Perhaps the most important message is: Whose responsibility is it to ensure our rivers and streams remain pristine? The answer is quite simple – EVERY ONE OF US! Whether we use the rivers and lakes for commercial or pleasure activities, they are integral to who we are, where we live and without them, Wilderness would not be what it is. The Wilderness Improvement Programme is a wonderful example of what is possible if role players join forces. With that same spirit and energy the Wilderness rivers and wetlands could be repaired for future generations.

The next step is to start developing a common vision and collective management plan for the entire river and lake system, with everyone participating and taking responsibility.

We salute those who have undertaken and participated in this research for the amount of time and effort they have all contributed, without which we would be living in a fool's paradise.

The full report of the study will be released towards the end of the year.

Neville Ewing
Chairman WRRRA Committee

As a reminder, you are receiving this WRRRA Newsletter because either you are a WRRRA member, a Wilderness landowner or have interacted with WRRRA in the past. Should you not wish to receive our Newsletter in the future, simply email wrra@tiscali.co.za and your email address will be removed from our mailing list immediately.