

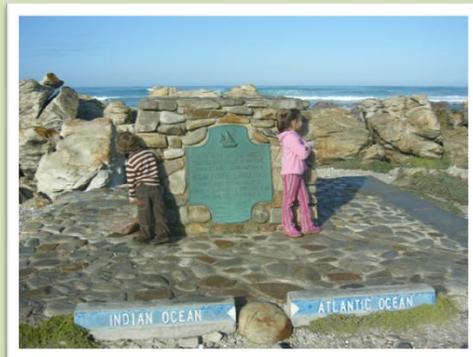


## OCTOBER eBULLETIN

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### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOUTHERNMOST TIP OF AFRICA

S34°49'59" E20°00'12"



The southern point is recognized by the International Hydrographic Organisation as the **geographic dividing line** between the Indian and Atlantic oceans, following the meridian of 20° east.

The Agulhas and Benguela currents that originate in these mighty oceans mingle some hundreds of kilometers south of here, over an area of some hundreds of kilometers that is not fixed in size or location.

### RESTCAMP NEWS

#### Shipwrecks near the Restcamp coastline



The Cape Agulhas coastline is well known as The Graveyard of Ships. Reefs, gale force winds and heavy seas with onshore currents are the main reasons for this coastline boasting coverage of one wreck per kilometre. The

immediate coastline bordering the Restcamp, however, has only two shipwrecks, the *Yung Tai 2* in *Bloubaai*, Suiderstrand, and the *Le Centaure* in front of the house, known as the "Lord's House", at *Die Walle*.

The *Le Centaure* was a French ship on a voyage from Mauritius back to France and was wrecked on 19 January 1750 in what was known, at the time, as *Hoek se Baai*. The survivors walked back to the Cape

along the coast. Of the survivors, 400 crew and passengers eventually reached the Cape safely.

The *Yung Tai 2* was a 200-ton Taiwanese fishing trawler which foundered on 1 October 1982. The crew of 20 members landed safely with the aid of inflatable life rafts.

### Lighthouse Precinct Development

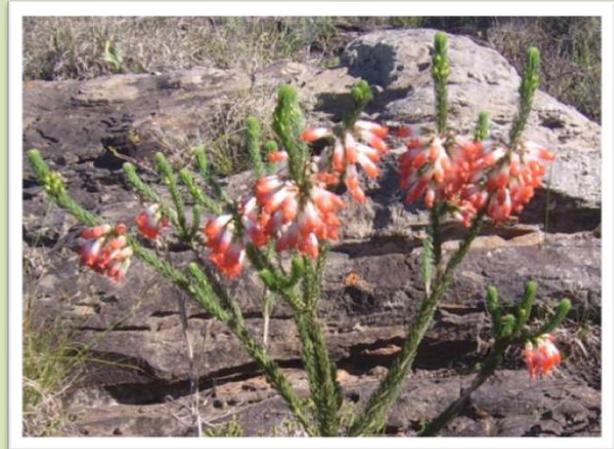
#### Lighthouse Precinct Development

We reported in September that Option 5 - the road options were proposed in the EIA document - for the road development passing the Lighthouse Precinct Development was accepted by all role-players excluding the Cape Agulhas municipality. The Cape Agulhas Municipality, however, decided in the mean time that they preferred Option 4 which entails stop signs to regulate traffic flow. The whole Suiderstrand road is now CAM controlled and not a provincial responsibility any more. A meeting is scheduled between the Civil engineers, Municipality and SANParks on 11 October 2010 to finalize decisions around the road development.

### RED DATA SPECIES

#### *Erica regia*

Status: Endangered



**Family:** Ericaceae  
**Common Name:** Elimsheide, Elim heath  
**Distribution:** Restricted to the Elim area of the Bredasdorp district.

**Habitat:** Sandy flats  
**Description:** Grows into a straggly, erect, woody shrub reaching up to 0,7m high, remarkably long-lasting, sticky red and white flowers, but mainly in spring.

**Reason for Status:** It is endangered in its natural habitat due both to agricultural expansion and infestations of alien plants.

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## FAUNA

### Swarttobie, African black oystercatcher, *Haematopus moquini*



Photography by Anton Odendal (Birdlife Overberg)

The Oystercatcher is found in territorial pairs, but also roosts in flocks of 20 to 100 birds. It occurs on rocky and sandy shores. It lays one to two eggs in a scraped hollow on the shore. The eggs and chicks are well camouflaged which

increases their chances of being damaged by any movement along the beaches. Their status is nearly threatened and nearly endemic.

## FLORA

### Dune plants, *Angiospermae*

Several plants growing on seashore dunes are important stabilisers of shifting sands and allow other plants to establish themselves. This can promote coastal shrubs and even dune forests. The process is however very slow and disturbance can destabilise these dune communities. That is why mining of coastal dunes is opposed.



Photography by Douglas Euston-Brown

Dune vegetation grows in a hostile environment with salt sprays and shifting sands and is therefore low-growing and has tough or succulent leaves. Two European species of grass have been introduced to fix shifting dunes in southern Africa: sea wheat *Agropyron distichum* and marram grass *Ammophila arenaria*. Both bind loose sands and cut down sand movement, but can starve the adjacent shore of its natural input of sand and have led to the disappearance of beaches in areas such as Arniston.

Examples of dune vegetation are Sea pumpkin *Arctotheca populifolia* and Sprawling duneweed *Tetragonia fruticosa*.

## Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)

### Meg Cowper-Lewis, Suidpunt Environmental Alliance (SEA)

In Canada, many existing organic and natural production farms have been invaded by Genetically Modified Organisms. Recently, for the

first time, GM Canola (oilseed rape – *Brassica napas*) has been discovered in a previously pristine biodiverse botanical area in the Canadian wilds.

With GM Canola being held in high esteem in this country by producers and consumers alike, one can't help wondering how long it will be before GM Canola jumps into our own fragile and world-renowned Fynbos? It has already lined part of the road between Struisbaai and Bredasdorp, whilst fields of yellow can be seen encroaching on the Agulhas Plain. Furthermore it has been documented by health providers that GM Canola is responsible for a myriad of chest, sinus and respiratory conditions.

No one can predict the long-term negative effects that these products will have on the future biodiversity of our planet and on human and animal health.

## OCTOBER – MARINE MONTH NATIONAL MARINE WEEK, 11 – 15 OCTOBER 2010

### Theme: "Oceans of Life"

Oceans cover almost three-quarters of the Earth's surface and give life to our planet. They help to generate the rain that provides us with fresh water to drink and regulate our climate. They provide different habitats for animals that have supplied humans with food since the beginning of time.

### Threats to Ocean Diversity

The oceans around South Africa are still doing fairly well. To conserve the oceans for future generations we should be aware of the following four main threats to ocean diversity.

1. Over-fishing: this is one of the main threats to oceans. Many species that were once very common have become quite rare or have even disappeared.
2. Climate change: the distribution of species along the coast have already been affected. Ocean temperatures on the west and south coast have fallen. Cold-water species such as lobsters and kelp have moved eastwards around Cape Point.
3. Pollution: oil spills from ships kill many sea birds. Plastic pollution is a growing problem for marine life as turtles and sea birds mistakenly see it as food. They also die from becoming entangled in plastic straps and nets.
4. Alien invasive animals: over 86 alien marine species have been discovered in South African waters. Many of them are confined to harbours, lagoons and estuaries, and have arrived on the bottom of the hulls of visiting ships.

### Ocean facts from Enviro Kids, August 2010

Life first appeared in the sea some 800 million years ago. Since then many different animal groups have developed so that today the animals in the sea belong to eight main groups. By contrast land animals only appeared 400 million years ago and only developed into three main groups. The groups are also divided in different species.

South Africa catches over half-a-million tons of fish each year which is valued at about three billion rands. More than 28 000 people, of whom

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nearly three-quarters live in the Western Cape, work in the fishing industry.

About 12 700 marine species have been named in the South African oceans. New ones are being added every year as marine biologists do more research.

The top speed reached by a blue shark is 40 km per hour. Generally a shark swims at a speed of 8 km per hour where a human can swim at the average speed of 2 km per hour.

### Suider-Afrikaanse Volhoubare Seekos-inisiatief (SASSI)

SASSI het in 2004 begin om inligting en onderrig oor die toestand van visserye te verskaf aan alle seekosdeelhebbers – van visverskaffers tot restaurant-eienaars tot visverbruikers – ten einde bewustheid van sake rondom marienebewaring te skep. Aangesien vis die gesogte bron van proteïen is, loop baie visvoorraad oor die hele wêreld gevaar om uitgeput te raak, en Suid-Afrika se visvoorraad word ook oorontgin. Help om die oorbenutte visspesies te help swaai na meer volhoubare soorte. Besoek SASSI se webwerf [www.wwfsassi.co.za](http://www.wwfsassi.co.za) as jy oor die regte seekoskeuses wil weet.

### Perlemoen, Abalone, *Haliotis midae*

Abalone are herbivorous and shed their eggs and sperm into the water, where the larvae undergo a brief planktonic development. Sexual maturity is only reached after 8 to 10 years and a minimum legal size after 13 years. Recreational divers must purchase a permit to collect Abalone and are limited to four per day with a minimum diameter of 114 mm. Abalone stocks have, however, crashed through overharvesting and poaching.

### Geelstert, Giant yellowtail, *Seriola lalandi*

The Yellowtail is a circumglobal, fast-swimming and greedy predator that shoals in large numbers in coastal and offshore waters of the Cape. It migrates annually up the east coast following the sardine run. It is a highly prized game fish and an important component of commercial line-fish catches. The Yellowtail is seen as a sustainable specie. They breed at age three and live for 10 years.

SASOL reaching new frontiers

**SASOL STRETTON'S BIRDING WEEK-END**  
5 - 7 NOVEMBER 2010

AGULHAS NATIONAL PARK  
SUMMER BIRDING -AN UNFORGETTABLE BIRDING EXPERIENCE!

GUEST SPEAKER:  
**JAMES CLARKE**  
(ECO JOURNALIST, AUTHOR, BIRDER, HUMOURIST)

CONTACT:  
ANGELA ALTENDORFER  
072 283 5282/078 423 3095  
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eddieandangela@tolkonsa.net

South African NATIONAL PARKS  
STRETTON'S "GIN"  
BirdLife South Africa  
Birding Conservation Wings

### Agulhas National Park Working for the Coast Project

Our mission is to work and care for the Cape Agulhas coastline and the Agulhas National Park, to create job opportunities, and to promote and empower workers through various training programmes. The project is in its final year of a three-year financial cycle.

The Agulhas Working for the Coast project commenced in May 2001 as the Coast Care project. The Working for the Coast project is focusing on beach cleanup, hiking trail maintenance, dune rehabilitation, maintenance of recreational facilities and marine monitoring.

Beach cleanup is done along the coastline that stretches from the Overberg Test Range (Denel fence in the east) to Buffeljags in the west, an area of about 90km. The area is serviced by four teams. Two teams are from the Struisbaai community, one team from the Elim community and one team from the Arniston community. Working for the Coast uses green plastic bags in which beach litter is collected.

The Project's work also entails servicing the hiking trails: Rasperpunt, Heuningberg, and Geelkop near Elim. Dune rehabilitation is done at De Mond Nature Reserve by the Arniston team. Their main aim is to prevent that the dune sand blocks off the river mouth.

The two Struisbaai teams are responsible for terrain maintenance in the Park. This entails the lawns and gardens and cleaning of the Park offices, the Lighthouse Museum and the Tourism office ablution facilities.

The Project also contracts special teams to do specific jobs, e.g. the present construction of storage facilities at Bosheuwel. This team hails from Bredasdorp. Future marine monitoring is in the pipeline and the team must still be appointed. A further five catch up teams must still be employed.

The management component consists of the project manager Ian Kies, assistant project manager Joel Mentoor, the administrative assistant Karen Hamer, and seven contractor teams. Currently the project employs 73 workers from the communities of Bredasdorp, Elim, Struisbaai and Arniston.

For more information on the Agulhas Working for the Coast project, contact Ian Kies, 028 435 6216, Monday to Friday, 08h00 – 16h00.

### Our Coast for Life

### Coastal walk between L'Agulhas and Die Damme 12, 13, 14 October 2010

### Close Encounter of the Marine Kind 22 October 2010

Rocky shore walk with **Professor Gavin Maneveldt**, Associate Professor of the Department of Biodiversity and Conservation Biology of the University of the Western Cape.

Contact: Emmerentia De Kock, 028 435 6078 (Mon-Fri, 8:00-16:00)

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## International Year of Biodiversity

### Biodiversity is Beautiful

Give a thought to the aesthetic and recreational value of biodiversity and its value for tourism.



How CITES Works – Part 2, (<http://www.cites.org>)

### Appendix-I specimens

1. An import permit issued by the Management Authority of the State of import is required. This may be issued only if the specimen is not to be used for primarily commercial purposes and if the import will be for purposes that are not detrimental to the survival of the species. In the case of a live animal or plant, the Scientific Authority must be satisfied that the proposed recipient is suitably equipped to house and care for it.
2. An export permit or re-export certificate issued by the Management Authority of the State of export or re-export is also required.

An export permit may be issued only if the specimen was legally obtained; the trade will not be detrimental to the survival of the species; and an import permit has already been issued.

A re-export certificate may be issued only if the specimen was imported in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and, in the case of a live animal or plant, if an import permit has been issued.

In the case of a live animal or plant, it must be prepared and shipped to minimize any risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment.

(Sourced by Samantha Schröder, Conservation Services)

AGULHAS NATIONAL PARK HONORARY RANGERS



South African NATIONAL PARKS

**Venue:** Bredasdorp Golf Club  
**Date:** Friday 26 November 2010  
**Time:** 18:00 for 18:30  
**Dress:** Smart Casual  
**Cost:** R100 per person (3-course dinner)  
 For reservations & more information contact:  
 Len le Roux 072 228 3995 / [Inleroux@gmail.com](mailto:Inleroux@gmail.com)

### Nuwejaars Wetland Special Management Area (SMA) The hippos are here!

The evening of 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2010 was another big moment for the SMA with the arrival of five hippopotami to wallow in the Waskraalvlei on the Agulhas Plain.

Hippos (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) have not been seen in the Southern Overberg for 230 years. The name hippopotamus derives from Ancient Greek, meaning “river horse”. The new group comprises one bull, three cows, and one calf.

The hippo, third largest land animal, after the elephant and the white rhinoceros, is a large, mostly herbivorous mammal.

Hippos inhabit rivers and lakes, spend most of the day wallowing in water or mud, but emerge at dusk to graze on grass.



For more information contact: Rory Allardice 082 929 9904

### DID YOU KNOW....

That Agulhas National Park is the only place in the world where one will find the Agulhas Long-billed Lark *Certhilauda brevirostris* and the Orange-breasted Sunbird *Nectarinia violacia*?

### Southern Tip Icon initiative

SANParks, Cape Agulhas Municipality and Western Cape Tourism met in early September to discuss the Southern Tip Icon structure. The [four competition winners](#) were asked to come up with a concept proposal towards the end of October. Money is sourced and re-allocated to fund this project.

### EVENTS

October	
Oct	National Marine Month
Oct	ANP Kids in Parks Programme
4 - 8	National Weed Buster Day
12, 13, 14	Coastal Walk & Coastal Birding
22	Rocky Shore Hike with Prof G. Maneveldt
November	
5 - 7	Sasol Agulhas Birding Weekend
26	Agulhas Honorary Ranger Wine Auction
27	Birding Big Day
December	
1	Aids Awareness Day

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