

Update...

October 2020

A quick *Update* to report on the past financial year's activity and status as well as some recent development including a "verification and validation" program that we have been invited to participate in.

FINANCIALS

The year ended with a small operating surplus of R19k for the year as against a budgeted loss of R63k. This was due mainly to the fact that the Covid-19 pandemic curtailed much of our planned activity for the year, notably "road repairs" and "alien" vegetation control. Added to which the alien re-growth has not been as prolific as had been anticipated, which was a welcome bonus. 88% of expenditure (R145k) was for routine maintenance of trails and fire breaks, as well as alien vegetation eradication. The balance (R10k) was for accounting/auditing, insurance and bank charges.

TRAILS, ROADS and FIRE BREAKS

All our WALKING TRAILS are currently in good condition, with some new steps and cross-beams installed to manage erosion due to increased activity.

The SOUTH ROAD into the reserve has also had a bit of work done with concrete strips laid to improve traction and comfort for 4x4 access, as well as to aid in diverting storm water and stemming erosion.



Walkers are encouraged to be aware of an increase in "ticks" in certain areas, particularly on the lower regions of the zig-zag short-cut from the Leopard trail back down to the 3-Dams road. I would advise against walking dogs in that area for the moment.

Fallen trees continue to be a menace, both on the fire breaks and in the forest. Unfortunately this is to be expected for a long time to come as the fire-damaged trees eventually topple over. Our errant neighbours'

refusal to comply with their alien eradication and fire prevention responsibilities doesn't help either.

Some of you will have noticed the welcome return of this unusual little plant on a couple of our trails. It seemed to have disappeared after the fire. The watsonias are also coming into bloom along with various restias and heather.

A walk in the reserve is really rewarding at the moment.

Our new WILDLIFE sighting program has gained traction

with more residents sharing their pics. The monthly report can now also be viewed on the WB website

BOUNDARY SURVEY

You may have noticed white markers (electric conduit with a strip of plastic waving in the wind) along our perimeter. These are pegs marking the boundary of the reserve. Please don't remove them, they have an important part to play in our on-going battle with neighbouring properties that should have cut fire breaks abutting our own. It will also assist in identifying the exact fence line should the proposed security fence project be implemented.

VERIFICATION & VALIDATION PROGRAM

Some months back we were visited by a representative from Cape Nature to establish whether the WBPNRT (reserve) was eligible to be included in the above initiative.

Having surveyed the reserve, we were enthusiastically embraced to be part of the program and we are well on the way to formalising the documentation with the Provincial Minister for Environmental Affairs. The

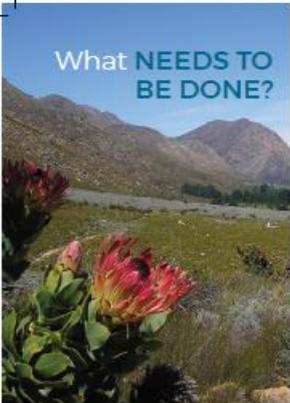


Hyobanche sanguinea is indigenous to South Africa, occurring from southern Namibia to Eastern Cape. It is a parasitic plant. Common name Red broomrape.

appended broadsheet refers. We believe it will stand us in good stead in the future with particular relevance to legal assistance in our on-going battle with non-compliant neighbours, as well as any other potential

threats to our environment, such as illegal land occupation. It could also assist us in our quest to be registered as a non-taxable entity.

What NEEDS TO BE DONE?



OWNERS OF PRIVATE NATURE RESERVES ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN A VOLUNTARY VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION PROCESS.

The conservation agencies recognise the need to re-engage with and support older private nature reserves, acknowledging that many have received limited attention in the past.

This project aims to support landowners of private nature reserves who are willing to comply with the Regulations for Protected Areas in South Africa, as set out under the 2003 Protected Areas Act, focusing on the following four elements:

Landowner RIGHTS

This process does NOT impose any further restrictions other than those to which you have already committed as a private nature reserve, or those within the Protected Areas Act, and include the following rights and obligations of landowners of private nature reserves –

- a) the right to their property which is protected under section 25 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa;
- b) the right to the lawful use of existing private property;
- c) the right to a safe, undisturbed and quiet enjoyment of the property, which may not be restricted, deprived, unless such rights threaten the values under which the site was declared as a private nature reserve;
- d) the obligation not to undertake actions which will compromise the integrity of the private nature reserve, and such actions must be in accordance to a management plan;
- e) the obligation to ensure that reasonable measures are taken to prevent environmental degradation from occurring;
- f) the obligation to ensure that any developmental activity be subject to the relevant policies, legislation and in accordance with the management plan;
- g) the responsibility for the maintenance of developmental activities on their property in the long term; and
- h) the obligation to cooperate with the relevant organ of state in an open and transparent manner.

1	Appointing a management authority for the private nature reserve.	This is the person or organisation responsible for the management of the protected area, and will in all likelihood be the landowners.
2	Development of a protected area management plan.	This will be developed in full consultation with the landowner and management team, to ensure it incorporates the realities of your individual management situation and resourcing allowances.
3	Securing the long-term conservation land use of the private nature reserve, through the endorsement of the title deeds with the nature reserve status.	This will allow it to remain as a private nature reserve in perpetuity, and for the landowners to access the relevant benefits of being a compliant declared protected area.
4	Drafting of an annual management report.	This will be submitted to CapeNature by the end of March each year, highlighting progress in achieving your biodiversity aims.

Important RESOURCES

<https://www.capenature.co.za/>
https://www.environment.gov.za/sites/default/files/legislations/nema_amendment_act57.pdf
https://www.environment.gov.za/sites/default/files/gzsetted_notices/nempa_protectedareas_normsstandards_p39878_gon382.pdf
<https://cer.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2004/11/Inclusion-of-Private-Nature-Reserves-in-Register-of-Protected-Areas.pdf>



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THIS PROJECT IS BEING FUNDED BY THE TABLE MOUNTAIN FUND, IMPLEMENTED BY CAPENATURE AND ITS PARTNERS.

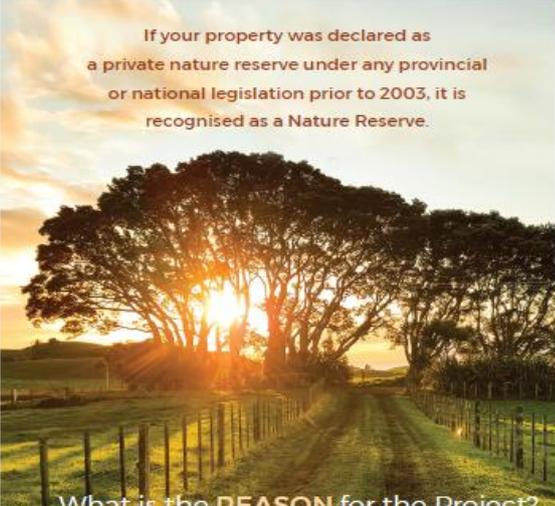






THE PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE Verification and Validation Project

If your property was declared as a private nature reserve under any provincial or national legislation prior to 2003, it is recognised as a Nature Reserve.



What is the REASON for the Project?

The revision of the protected area legislation in 2003 provides for a more formal management framework in order to strengthen the contribution of private nature reserves to conservation.

In support of this legislation, the Department of Environmental Affairs published norms and standards for the inclusion of private nature reserves in the national Protected Area Register.

What is the LEGAL STATUS of Private Nature Reserves?

Private nature reserves are protected areas which have been established under both national and provincial legislation prior to the operation of the National Environmental Management Protected Areas Act of 2003 and are recognised as nature reserves in terms of section 12 and 23 of the Act.

The transfer of ownership of a property declared as a private nature reserve, by way of sale or other form, does not affect or change their status. Private nature reserve status can only be withdrawn by way of an application brought by the owner of the property to the Provincial Minister of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning.

What are the BENEFITS?

Private nature reserve status recognises the importance of the biodiversity on your land. For this reason, this project will provide assistance to all landowners of private nature reserves in the development of management plans and to facilitate any legal processes required.

Private nature reserves may also be eligible for reduced rates and tax incentives.

The objective is to ensure that all areas which are formally recognized as private nature reserves actively contribute to conservation and are recognized for the important role they play.

