

FoZR Newsletter

FoZR is an apolitical, community-based, non-profit organisation that aims to assist the nature reserve authorities to protect the much-threatened flora and fauna that make this corner of the Cape Flats their home.



Upcoming Events

TBC Please check the FoZR Facebook page and website for any upcoming events.



Zeekoevlei

(Photo: J van Eeden, 2017)

Want to become a FoZR Member?

Visit the website: www.zeekoevlei.co.za or follow the link below:

<http://www.zeekoevlei.co.za/fozr-membership-form/>

Why Did the Toad Cross the Road?

By Corey Thorp

The Western Leopard Toad is currently dealing with many problems that threaten their survival. Urbanisation, agricultural expansion and habitat fragmentation are a few examples of these threats they face. However one of the biggest threats to their population is road deaths. During their breeding season, the Western Leopard Toad needs to move to a favourable breeding site, and in many instances they have to travel across roadways to reach these sites. As they are crossing these roads, many are being killed by passing vehicles. This has most likely been one of the major factors that has led to the decline in their population numbers over the past number of years.

Currently considered endangered by the IUCN (IUCN 2017), there is a great need for the conservation of this species. Many private organisations (such as Toad Nuts), citizen scientists and institutions have been working hard to assist these toads in reaching their breeding sites and have successfully managed to reduce deaths on the roads. However, the work required to keep these animals off the roads is dangerous and requires a lot of volunteers and time, which is not always possible. Therefore, something needs to be done in order to make the conservation of this species easier.



Underpass Experiment

(Photo: J van Eeden, 2017)

This issue has therefore led to the rise of a new project, and that is the construction of toad underpasses. We want to create an alternative route for these toads to move through in order to keep them safe from harm. Therefore the aim of this project is to design and construct an underpass (underground tunnel) for the Western Leopard Toad to pass through. Through research and trial experiments, we plan to identify the most efficient, cost effective and logistically plausible underpass design that would be simple to implement and construct.

What's been done?

There has already been a workshop with researchers and key role players who provided insight into the underpass design. Here we discussed key features of an underpass design that would need to be tested before it is implemented and built under the roads.

There has been a experimental trial which has shown some promise and given valuable information on how these toads would respond to a particular underpass design.

There are still a few more trials that will be happening in the near future which will hopefully fill in the missing pieces of the underpass puzzle.

What we want to achieve



This project will hopefully reduce road mortality and lead to many more underpasses being constructed in order to preserve and protect this species.

Underpass Experiment

(Photo: C. Thorp, 2017)

New Tool for the Gantouw Project

From Petro Botha

A sophisticated software programme / smart phone application called “Gantouwtrek”, is currently being developed for the Gantouw Project. The company, Penguin Protocols is responsible for developing the application, and is also sponsoring the app for the Gantouw Project.

The app will enable the Gantouw team to record data immediately onto a handheld device in the field, where data will then be immediately sent to a computer for access and analysis at a later time. This will ensure time efficiency (saving time on capturing data once it is collected); it will also ensure compliance (a plant list with photos will be available in the field to ensure the correct plant species is recorded). Weather data, and GPS points can also be collected using the app. Furthermore; any unknown plant species can be photographed with GPS points, and sent in for identification. This app will ensure that information is available immediately for ongoing monitoring and decision-making.

Personifying the Eland

From the Gantouw Intern: Sinovuyo Yokwe

- Gibbs: Big, Calm, Sweet, and Loving
- Uniqua: Tame, and Attention-loving.
- Little P: Young, Shy, Observant, a real Introvert.
- Bernie: Diva, Dominant, and Pretty.
- Mike: Dominant, Glutton, likes his own space.



Sinovuyo with the Eland (Photo: S. Yokwe, 2017)

FoZR Committee

Chair – Dee Cranswick

Treasurer – Tracy Gibbs

Secretary – Nicky Stock

Fundraising – Tom Schwerdtfeger

Activities – Neil Major

Reserve Liaison – Liz Day

New to FoZR: Colleen McDowell



Critically endangered
Kedestes barberae bunta,
currently only found in the
False Bay Nature Reserve.
(Image: Ismat Adams, 2016)

Contacts

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False Bay Nature Reserve Office: 021 400 3437

Reserve's emergency response number: 083 499 1717