



JUNE 2026

Dear BBC Members

Our AGM is on Saturday 25 July. Please remember to RSVP.

Our BBC Constitution requires that we have a quorum of "the lessor of 30 or one third of all paid-up members, either present or represented by proxy." You can RSVP via WhatsApp 079 7530166 or email bettybayconservancy@gmail.com.



Please join us as we look back on the past year of the BBC. We look forward to seeing you there.

We extend a warm welcome to our newest BBC members:

Peter Norton, Christa Croukamp, Evelyn du Toit and Jonathan Beattie. Thank you so much for joining and supporting the BBC.

Best wishes from the BBC Team.

Carol, Ann, Barbara, Galia, Tony, Pete, Herman, Jan and Johan – who is on an exciting cycling adventure in Namibia.

Thanks to the people who contributed articles. Compiled by Carol Clark. Proofread by Patrick Boltzler.

BBC 4th SATURDAY: 27 JUNE

WINTER BIRDING: Presented by Keith Hamilton

Thanks to Keith Hamilton for his fascinating talk on winter birding, presented with his beautiful bird photographs. Contrary to what you may think, Keith pointed out that winter is a good time for birding as the fynbos is in flower and the proteas, ericas and aloes attract nectar and insect feeders, the weather can be better, there is good light for photography, you can sleep in and there are fewer snakes around.

He gave us a breakdown of the 'who is in town in winter' of the 287 bird species in the Kogelberg. The 'resident' birds top the chart at 167 of these 287 species, with Palearctic migrants, Intra-African migrants, vagrants (those who have 'lost their way' and don't usually come here), visitors and pelagic visitors making up the other species. Vagrants include birds such as the Grey Wagtail and the African Crane.

His stunning photographs featured owls, a variety of sunbirds, the rock thrush, coastal birds and many others.



Malachite Sunbird



Southern Double-collared Sunbird



He also showed us good places in Betty's Bay to view birds, and good spots to view some of the pelagic birds from land.



These photos of his slides obviously don't do justice to his pictures – so treat yourself to a copy of his book **'Birds of the Kogelberg'** which is available at the BotSoc bookshop in the Harold Porter Garden.

Carol Clark

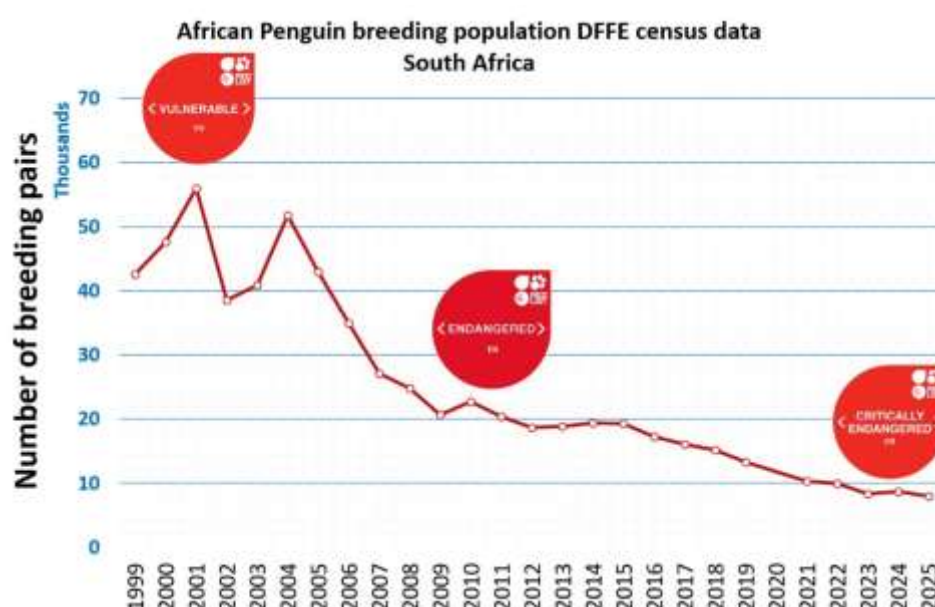
STONY POINT NATURE RESERVE

Caracal predation and the fence

I missed the 9 June Community Engagement due to illness, but on 9 July, I heard a shortened form of the SANCCOB and CapeNature presentations at the Protected Area Advisory Committee (PAAC) for Stony Point Nature Reserve and MPA.

Here are some of the points and my thoughts:

- **The drastic decline in the number of breeding pairs of the African Penguin**



Lisa Nupen of SANCCOB presented this graph. It shows the steady decline in the number of breeding pairs since 1999, and the corresponding change in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species <https://www.iucnredlist.org/>.

The African Penguin dropped to Vulnerable in 2002, Endangered in 2010 and to Critically Endangered in 2024. The next level of listing is Extinct in the Wild (EW) i.e. meaning it only lives in captivity, and then Extinct (EX) when there are no living individuals left.

- **The organisations working to protect the penguins**

SANCCOB, supported by organisations such as BirdLife South Africa, CapeNature and many dedicated volunteers, is working tirelessly to support the African Penguin. They incubate eggs that need to be rescued from colonies, hand-rear chicks, rescue sick or injured juveniles and adults, give veterinary care and perform surgeries to save birds, and release penguins that are able to return to the wild. They also collect data, conduct research, prepare for disasters, support SANCCOB Sea Rangers at colonies, source funding, educate the public, train volunteers, network with other organisations, and more.

Alongside BirdLife SA, they fought for fishing closures around penguin colonies to improve food availability. They understand the specific marine and land threats to the African Penguin at the different colonies. Their Seabird Rangers, CapeNature staff and the SANCCOB centre see the grim consequences of all the injuries and predator kills. SANCCOB remains committed to securing a future for the African Penguin.

- **The stats for the land predation at Stony Point**

These show a marked increase in caracal predation in 2025 and 2026. In 2026, up to 8 July, caracals have killed about 60 adult penguins. A lot of this is surplus killing i.e. the caracal doesn't just kill what it wants to eat, it kills and leaves the carcasses.

- **For a critically endangered species, each bird is vital**

The death of one adult means the loss of a breeding pair and the loss of their current eggs or chicks for this breeding season, as a solo adult can't raise the eggs or chicks alone. Beyond that, it also means this 'pair' isn't able to breed in future years and, therefore, the loss of their potential eggs and chicks in all future seasons. It is also the loss of all their eggs and chicks as future breeding adults and all their potential offspring. Together, these are far-reaching consequences for a species with possible extinction in the wild, hanging over their heads in less than ten years.



Sixty dead adults in the last six months is a devastating loss for the Stony Point population. If this predation carries on, the population at Stony Point faces an even more serious crisis.

- **Land-based colonies like at Stony Point and Boulders face both marine and terrestrial threats**

Penguins used to live on islands and burrow in guano for their nests. They aren't adapted to land predators, and do not have much defence against them, so they are very vulnerable.

At sea, these predators include seals and sharks that prey on the penguins, fishing stress with low food availability, oil spills, increased marine traffic and noise pollution, and marine pollution.

On land, the threats include mongooses, caracals, kelp gulls, humans, dogs, cars, the loss of breeding habitat, climatic events and others.

- **Human stress**

People are a stressor for penguins, especially with the insatiable drive of those who want "close-up selfies" to post on their social media accounts to boost their egos with lots of "likes"! The "cute" birds may not look stressed, but their internal stress responses rise. Remember, they used to live on islands without daily invasions of curious human visitors.

- **Access times and entrance fees**

Many people seem to view Stony Point as a freebie place to come and go as they like. People enter at all times in the mornings and evenings, due to faulty gates, when the reserve should be closed to visitors. Tour companies include Stony Point in the cost of their packages, but their clients can visit the reserve without paying entrance fees if they don't go on the boardwalk. The same goes for 'kombi tours' and private individuals.

SANParks and other CapeNature Reserves charge entrance fees. This is one way of raising revenue to cover conservation and other reserve costs. Because of the faulty gates and the current pay-point,

Stony Point has lost revenue that would normally contribute to CapeNature's management of its reserves.

The plan is to fix the gates at Stony Point. These will close when the reserve closes at 4:30 p.m. in winter and a later time in summer. Most 'day' reserves are closed 'after hours' when the staff leave. The penguins should have time out from human interference by visitors.

- **Should there be a social venue open at night in the midst of a conservation area for a critically endangered species?**

I will leave that for you to consider.

- **Proposed change in visitor flow and a new pay-point**

The pay-point will be moved from its current site on the boardwalk. Its new site will be to the right of the restaurant – near the ramp from the small car park near the CapeNature office. Visitors will be directed via railings.

Visitors won't pay to visit the restaurant. They will only pay to go into the penguin area – on the left of the coastal area, or right, onto the boardwalk.

- **Wild Card**

Visitors and residents can use a Wild Card at the pay-point.



Wild Card Clusters	Cost of Categories		
	Individual	Couple	Family Any 2 adults and up to 5 kids under 18
24 CapeNature reserves in Western Cape.	R805	R1 315	R 1 575
If you visit Stony Point daily with this Wild Card, this equates to an equivalent daily charge of only:	R2,21	R3,60	R4,32

- **The Fence**

The growing use of fencing in the village is fragmenting what were once open corridors for wildlife. In recent years, so many new homeowners have fenced their properties, dividing the village's natural spaces into 'blocks' that inhibit wildlife movement. However, many homeowners have dogs and these pets need to be 'fenced in.'

Most reserves are fenced.

The installation of a predator-deterrent fence has been motivated by the increased and devastating caracal predation over the past 18 months. The fence is a black, 2.1 m Clearview structure with a 50 cm overhang at 45 degrees, and with a cement base dug underground to prevent predators from digging under the fence.

- **There are many concerns and questions:**

1. **Why has caracal predation increased?** What factors have changed? Are there more caracals in the area? How many caracals are doing the killing? Is there time to wait and do research to find this out – while losing so many breeding adults to predation?
2. **What is currently being done to stop the predation?** There are camera traps to monitor the caracal activity, baited traps to try to catch and then relocate the caracals and staff presence at night. Penguin-Pals patrols will also be implemented.
3. **What will happen to the penguins who are currently breeding outside the designated colony area when the fence is installed?**
The intention is to bring these birds back into the colony before it is fenced. Being ‘naïve’ about land predators, humans and cars, the penguins are at risk outside the colony area.
4. **If they chose to nest outside the colony for a reason, will they try to go back to those sites?**
This is a big concern of many residents. The fence does not have ‘penguin gaps’ for any penguin outside to get back into the colony (should they have made it out) before the gates open in the morning. Gaps like this would be an open invitation for caracals to get through.
5. **Will this cause increased stress for penguins who may try to go back to ‘their spot’ outside?**
There is currently no clear answer to this, and it will need to be monitored and responded to with adaptive management.
6. **Will the construction disturb and stress the penguins?**
To mitigate this, the initial phase has been planned for October - December at a time when the penguins’ movement is less, as they are moulting. Construction workers will be educated and working hours per day will be limited to times when the penguins are less active on land.

I understand that the organisations are desperately working to protect the African Penguin at Stony Point - to try to give them a chance to recover their breeding success and save the population. Each colony has a slightly different group of factors that threaten the penguins. At Stony Point in the past 18 months, caracal predation has increased and become a major factor threatening the survival of the colony. The predator-deterrent fence is seen as a means of mitigating the predation of a critically endangered species in crisis.

If nothing is done – what will happen at Stony Point if predation of this number of adult penguins continues or increases during the next crucial nine years as the clock ticks towards their potential predicted extinction in the wild in 2035?

Positive observations since the fishing closures are that the penguins are in better physical condition – but the sad situation is the caracals are now killing “better-fed” penguins. Having won one battle, there is now another to fight in the survival of this crucial species.

- **How does this affect us as Betty's Bay residents in 2026?**

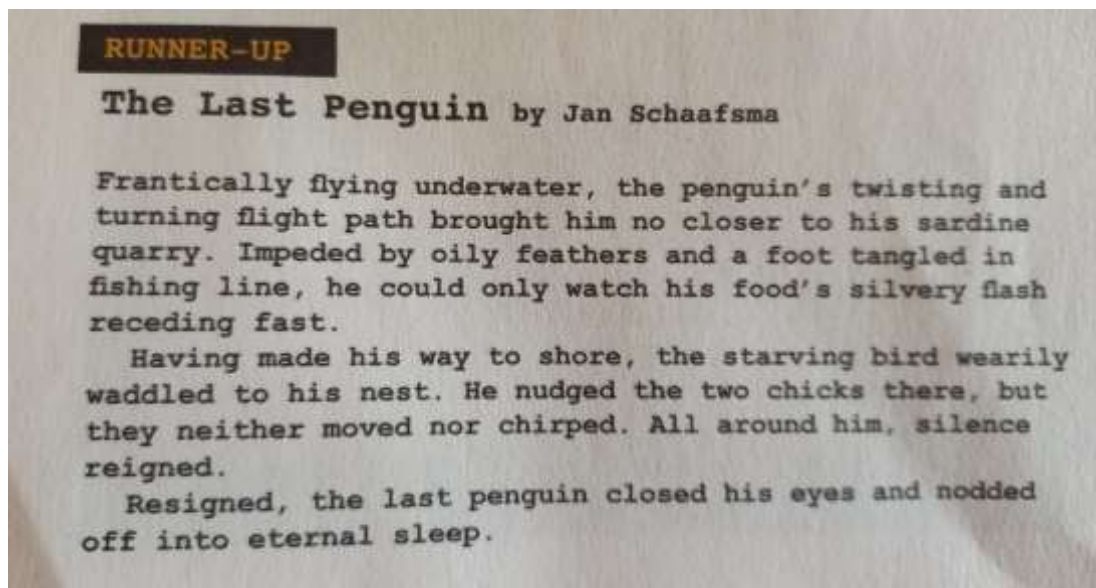
- ❖ Stony Point is a conservation area for a now critically endangered species.
- ❖ I think it's time to change our thinking and behaviour to match their crisis state. We need to help to support this colony and the organisations that manage and support it. That's an aim of the BBC Penguin-Pals, initiated in 2024.
- ❖ We need to embrace a role as custodians of our neighbours in crisis.

- **The vision of a Betty's Bay community project**

Supporting the organisation and the Stony Point colony could be a significant Betty's Bay community project. The village is full of people with an amazing variety of skills, as well as time availability. If you would like to be involved in the BBC Penguin-Pals in some way, please email bettybayconservancy@gmail.com or WhatsApp 079 753 0166.

The last Penguin: Credit to The Current Times and Jan Schaafsma

You might have read this on page 9 of 'The Current Times' as a runner-up to their Long Short Story Competition.



May it never come to this at Stony Point!

As a village, let us join our good attitudes, willing hands, skills and time to support our neighbours in crises.

Carol Clark

Lights at Night



Ode to the Starry-Night My Neighbour's ☹️☹️⚠️!! Light

Starry, starry wonderful starry night
Oh how beautiful, how bright
Wait, oh wait, oh dear wait
It's my neighbour's ☹️☹️⚠️!! light
That has blinded my night sight
How I wish upon star
That I could see so far
To see the night light shine
Instead, I have to whine:
It's my neighbour's ☹️☹️⚠️!! light
That makes the dark night white

Is that light a star from afar?
Is it a meteorite?
No, not even a car
It's my neighbour's ☹️☹️⚠️!! light
Blinding me in the night.

Lying on my bed dreaming of the moon
I can see the man! I can see the cow jump!
Alas, instead,
It's my neighbour's ☹️☹️⚠️!! light
Protecting his shed from an imaginary goon

Awake, awake, Great Grandma yells
Frantically ringing on her bedside bells!
Danger is near! The bombers are here!
Fear not Gran!
It's my neighbour's ☹️☹️⚠️!! light
Pretending to be a roving searchlight!

The ode is written in jest, but for many people, the "It's my neighbour's ☹️☹️⚠️!!light" is real and very intrusive and inconsiderate.

Most houses with intrusive outside lights on the outside, have their lights shining directly onto other houses, into their windows, and into the roads. They are not directed lights that point down onto their own properties, but rather flat bulkhead lights that blast out light in every direction.

Some houses have lights so bright that they light up the walls of neighbours' houses 200m away.

And destroy the enjoyment of the dark skies for neighbours.



Most of these bright-light users claim it is for security. This is pseudo security. These lights, and internal lights left on, are a magnet for the few thieves around. The lights show them that no one is home and create shadows for them to hide in. They also blind people if they look out of their windows.

If you have external lights, I invite you to go out at night or in the early morning.

Have a look at the effect your lights have on your neighbours and drivers on the roads.

Invite your neighbour to test your security - ask them to sneak up to your house and leave a post-it sticker on a window, door, anywhere, and see if you spot them!



If security is really a concern, then look into proper security for the area e.g. beams, security company response, 24-hour monitored cameras or even a guard standing outside.

Besides the inconsiderate effects on your neighbours, there are also environmental effects.

Creatures of the night have eyes designed to function in the dark. To understand what you are doing to them, invite your neighbour over in the evening and while outside, get them to shine their bright LED light in your eyes the whole time.

Please check the light pollution that your home creates. Be considerate to neighbours and kind to the wildlife; turn those  lights off that disturb them. Replace them with shielded lights, down lights, motions sensors. Look after your neighbour and they will look after you!

For more information about suitable lights, read the BBC light pollution leaflet: <https://bettysbayconservancy.co.za/biosphere-living-lighting/>

William Davids

Honouring the Biosphere: A Call for Responsible Baboon Management

In an article published in the *Argus* on 10 July, titled *Don't Fall for the Big 'Us-and-Them'*, Rudi Buys explores how polarising narratives are used to divide communities, particularly in political contexts. He warns of the destructive consequences when groups are encouraged to see one another as adversaries, often leading to hostility, fear, and even violence.

This pattern is sadly visible in Betty's Bay, where discussions around baboon management have become increasingly fraught. A small but vocal group has adopted an 'Us-and-Them' stance that frames the baboons — and those advocating for their protection — as obstacles rather than part of the natural heritage of this biosphere. The result is a climate of tension in which misinformation, personal attacks, and calls for harmful action against these animals have begun to overshadow constructive, evidence-based management.

The EMS Foundation has recently initiated High Court proceedings against both CapeNature and the Overstrand Municipality after efforts to resolve concerns about weapon-based baboon management through formal correspondence did not yield the assurances sought. In its letter of demand, the Foundation requested that no weapons be used in managing the Betty's Bay troop, emphasising that these animals form an important part of the Kogelberg Biosphere and should be protected in accordance with South Africa's constitutional values, environmental legislation and humane conservation principles.

On 9 June, the Overstrand Municipality confirmed that it was reviewing aspects of the current management approach — a step welcomed by the EMS Foundation. However, the suspension of weapon-based interventions has not yet been implemented during this review period.

According to senior researcher Megan Carr, this left the Foundation with no option but to seek relief through the courts. Importantly, Dr Dean O'Neill, the



Overstrand Municipal Manager, has called for a comprehensive review, grounded in biodiversity considerations, conservation science, public safety and animal welfare. The revised draft of the Strategic Baboon Management Plan (SBMP) is expected to be submitted to an independent panel of wildlife and conservation experts for specialist assessment by August.

Against this backdrop, the question that now faces Betty's Bay is not simply how baboons should be managed, but how we understand our role within a protected biosphere. The current debate has revealed a deeper tension between development pressures and the responsibility that comes with living in an ecologically sensitive area. For some, the presence of baboons is seen as an inconvenience; for others, it is a reminder of the natural heritage that defines this place. The challenge before us is to move beyond entrenched positions and consider what it truly means to share a landscape with wildlife that has inhabited it for generations.

The recent kind of rhetoric witnessed has no place in a community situated within a protected biosphere. Living in Betty's Bay is a privilege, and with that comes a responsibility to conserve and preserve the natural environment of which we are part. It is difficult to reconcile the idea of living in a biosphere with calls for the eradication of the very wildlife that defines it. Recently, a few members of our community used highly inflammatory language on social media, calling for harm to the local baboon troop. Such statements highlight how far the conversation has drifted from evidence-based management and respectful coexistence, and how urgently we need to return to principles of stewardship and shared responsibility.



Living in a biosphere carries obligations that cannot be set aside when they become inconvenient. The baboons are not intruders; they are part of the ecology of this region, forming an integral part of its history long before any of us arrived. As the review of the Strategic Baboon Management Plan proceeds, we have an opportunity to reset the conversation — to move away from polarisation and towards science, ethics and long-term conservation. The question before us is simple: do we honour the principles of the biosphere, or do we abandon them? Our answer will define the legacy we leave in Betty's Bay, for both the community and the wildlife that shares this landscape.

Patrick Boltler

Photos: Pete Oxford

We know how to mourn other humans – but what about ecological grief?

Megan Mayhew Bergman Fri 10 Jul 2026 12.00 BST

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/jul/10/ecological-grief?CMP>

As so much of the world is changing and habitat, ecosystems, areas as we knew and loved, and species are transformed and lost – we may not know how to express and deal with the feeling we experience. It's like a grief that we keep silent.

Though this article is set in America, we know too well the local destruction of habitat and ecosystems in our area and in the Biosphere. Development destroys wetland habitat, indigenous vegetation, wildlife corridors, safe spaces and food sources. Fireflies and other wildlife are lost due to bright outdoor lights, wildlife is hit on our roads, poisons kill vegetation and creatures small and large. Our neighbours, the African Penguin, face potential extinction in less than ten years' time.

Here are a few quotes from Megan's article:

"Scientists who spend years studying endangered species inevitably form attachments to them. So do many of us, whether to an endangered tree, a stretch of crumbling coastline, or summer nights once filled with fireflies."

Yet our culture has almost no language or rituals for this kind of grief.

Just outside Manchester, Vermont, there's a heron rookery I've driven past for nearly two decades. Each year, the elegant great blue herons and their nests dotted the skeletal marsh trees. The birds stood guard over their young through sleet and torrential rain, their stoic devotion a marker of Vermont's tenuous spring.



Then, gradually, there were fewer herons. This spring, there was only one. I passed her on my way to dentist appointments and while driving my children to soccer games. The trees and marsh remain. But the once-visible community of herons does not.

This heron raises her young alone.

No one held a memorial service. There was no public acknowledgment that something beloved or integral to the landscape had diminished. Yet each time I pass the rookery, I feel an ache that does not seem entirely polite to share. It feels like a contradiction at the center of modern life: we experience profound environmental loss and largely pretend nothing is happening."

"As a culture, we know what to do when a person dies. We gather, tell stories and hold sacred space. We make room for sadness. But what do we do when a species disappears from a landscape? What do we do when a coastline changes beyond recognition, when a forest is felled for wood pellets and lumber, or when a rookery we love becomes an empty, ghostly landscape of broken trees and still water, with nothing but the sound of the highway to drown out the chorus of the "frogs?"

"The word "grief" can feel excessive. Yet what else should we call the feeling that arises when a beloved place, species or ecosystem is altered before our eyes?"

"We know how to mourn grandparents, spouses, friends, and neighbors, but we do not know how to mourn disappearing species, damaged rivers, altered coastlines, democratic institutions, or the healthy futures we expected to inherit."

"People do not simply need scientific information in an era of such rapid environmental degradation. They also need more formal places to share their feelings: monuments, ceremonies, obituaries, even legislation. Our current practices do not match the magnitude of our losses, and I believe we've underestimated how much environmental degradation will continue to affect us emotionally, physically and spiritually."

In Betty's Bay and the Biosphere, do we want to sit back and lose the?

- Wetlands to infill by tons of builders' rubble when appropriate building methods avoid this
- Areas drained by pipes as the water is 'inconvenient' on erfs
- Biodiversity and habitat to bulldozed erfs
- Porous surfaces to concrete driveways and gardens
- Indigenous vegetation to grassed erfs (green deserts)

- Dark skies to light pollution from houses
- Wildlife to roadkill, poisons, dogs and cats
- Wildlife corridors and movements to solid walls and fences all around erf's
- African Penguins to threats such as predation, loss of their food sources, stress from uninformed visitors.



In 2026, this number has decreased more.

Carol Clark

WILDLIFE

In Honour of Our Bokkie: A Reminder for Responsible Dog Ownership in Betty's Bay

Living in Betty's Bay, one is blessed each day with wonderful sightings of our resident wildlife and birds, surrounded by gorgeous seascapes and mountains. On a morning walk through the Harold Porter Botanical Garden, you may come across our 23-strong baboon troop going about their business, youngsters chattering and clambering in the leafy trees, elders keeping watch. Their interactions are cuteness personified.

On walks, jogs, and bicycle rides, you are surely captivated by the sight of sunbirds in every colour of the rainbow, Cape sugarbirds, chats, turtle doves, prinias, spurfowl, guineafowl, oystercatchers, and penguins — just a few of the birds that call this place home. Mongooses streak across the road, while tortoises and chameleons move at a slower pace. The chorus of frogs rises from every corner of Betty's Bay, accompanied by the melodious calls of more than 240 different bird species.

And then there are our resident grysbokkies — those graceful, shy antelope who often stand their ground just long enough for you to take in their beauty before they move delicately into the fynbos. It is impossible not to feel a sense of tenderness toward these gentle creatures.



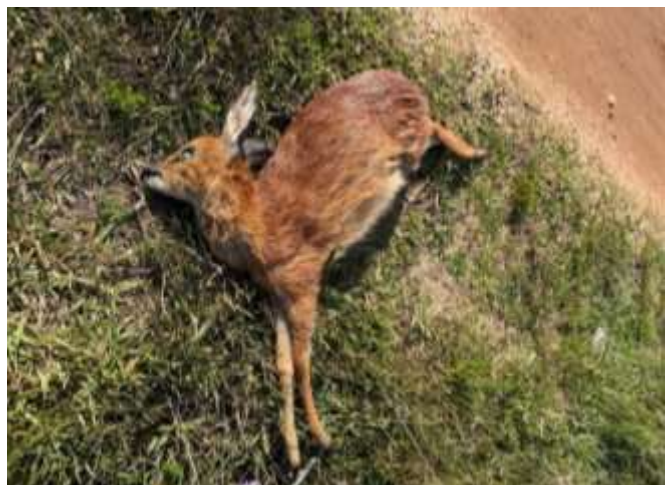
Photos: Graeme McGregor



Wayne Jackson

That is why the news on 27 June struck so heartbreakingly. Wayne Jackson reported that a bokkie had been killed by dogs. The little antelope was found on the property next to Crassula Hall. Wayne made it clear that he was not taking the incident lightly, and we are grateful to him for sounding the alarm: dogs must be kept inside their owners' properties and must not roam off-leash at night.

In the days that followed, several videos surfaced showing dogs being walked off-leash. This prompted renewed awareness of the bylaw, which clearly states that dogs must be on a leash when being walked. The bylaws were shared across WhatsApp groups, accompanied by appeals for residents to be part of the solution — to help build a considerate, wildlife-respecting community.



Since the incident, many residents have noticed a marked improvement: more dogs are being walked on-leash, and fewer are seen roaming freely. In this sense, our bokkie's death was not in vain. It has brought about greater awareness, greater responsibility, and a renewed commitment to protecting the wildlife that makes Betty's Bay the amazing place it is.

Patrick Boltler

SPEEDING ON THE R44

🚗Twenty-five wild animals killed on the road in first five months in 2026. 🚗

Since the start of 2026, the Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue and Training Centre has recorded 25 roadkill incidents in the Kogelberg Biosphere on roads including the R44 and R43.

These incidents include:

🦔 4 porcupines

🦊 3 grysboks

🦉 3 spotted eagle owls

🐾 3 caracals

🐢 2 tortoises

And several other species that call the biosphere home.

Since 2023, it is at 58 deaths, but this is not the full picture. These are only the stats collected by the Rescue Centre – many incidents are never reported, and some injured wildlife are never found.



Rocketing roadkill records

We continue to record roadkill incidents on our biosphere roads. And the stats since the start of the year are very concerning: 25 animals killed between January and May. These are just the incidents we know about. It includes four porcupine, three grysbok, three caracal and three spotted eagle owls.

We continue to encourage drivers to slow down and take extra care, especially when driving at night.

As development, tourism and traffic increase across the biosphere, so does the risk to the wildlife.

Wildlife death on the roads is one of the less visible conservation challenges facing our biosphere – but one where every driver can help to make a difference to reduce these tragic deaths.

Slow down, keep alert, and take extra care when driving at dawn and dusk.

Michelle Watson, Kogelberg Biosphere Wildlife Rescue and Training Centre

And more - another heartbreaking incident on 7 July

Yet another grysbokkie was knocked down and killed on Clarence Drive, within the 100 km zone, just before the Disa Circle turnoff. The adult male bokkie had sustained a broken leg. Hopefully, he died on impact and was not injured and just left to suffer.

This is particularly sad as only a few days ago Wayne Jackson posted a beautiful picture of a bokkie, pleading to the public to drive carefully and to watch out for our wildlife.



According to Michele Watson from the Kogelberg Wildlife Rescue Centre, three bokkies have succumbed on the R44 and R43 within the last four weeks. These are only the deaths we know about!

This section of the road from Pringle Bay to Betty's Bay central shops is treacherous.

There is an urgent need for speed reduction and signage to create awareness that traffic needs to "slow down" as there is "wildlife crossing." I am aware of the public outcry, which led to the Speed Reduction Petition initiated by the Steering Committee. This is currently following the legal process, but this process really needs to move faster.

We are constantly reminded that Clarence Drive is a provincial road. We expect the Overstrand Municipality to be more proactive and supportive of our endeavour to reduce the speed and to increase traffic calming through Betty's Bay. We live in a UNESCO-recognised biosphere area with unique flora and fauna. Surely, this must account for our conservation status, which needs better protection.

Lenore Watermeyer

AFTER THE OVERSTRAND ECO-INDABA ...

The inaugural meeting of the Overstrand Environmental Alliance: 27 June 2026

Ten of the 23 organisations that attended the Eco Indaba in March 2026 were represented at the inaugural meeting. Various reasons were given why more didn't attend, such as 'not enough time before the invite was sent out' and possible public march disruption on the day.

Six organisations present became full members of the Alliance, namely Coastal Rewilding, Betty's Bay Conservancy (BBC), Kogelberg Villages Environmental Trust (KVET), Rooiels Conservancy, Betty's Bay Baboon Action Group (BBBAG), and the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa. Each of these will have representation on the *first council*, with two additional members and a coordinator elected at their first meeting. Their main work is to *organise the AGM in early September*.





Photo credit: Bernadette Crewe-Brown

The rest of the 23 organisations need to be contacted and invited to become members. The council members need to be *represented from across the region*, in order to fairly include the important concerns that might not affect e.g. the Kogelberg groups directly yet be of importance to everyone.

I liked the fact that the Alliance intends to be inclusive, and with a council of eight, plus a coordinator. The council will respect all concerns presented by the member organisations and by individuals, across the greater Overstrand region.

I enjoyed the vigorous discussion over the constitution contents, going over each clause, which was in language that was easy to understand.

Only '*suggestions of concerns*' were made, and it was emphasised that each concern raised would be thoroughly discussed and assessed by the full council. Rules as to whether a concern is strategically carried out, depends on a 75% threshold on members. Some suggestions were poaching of resources, plastic pollution, baboon and penguin management, and nuclear issues.

How members conduct themselves to the public and authorities is important, in order to present the correct facts and have an approach that is appealing rather than abrasive.

Overall, the knowledge base of people in that meeting was impressive with a multitude of skills, and insights into a host of wide topics that can meaningfully contribute to the betterment of the natural environment in the greater Overstrand region.

I wish the Alliance well in their interactions with each other and any government authority as well.

Barbara Jenman

