

It's all about science April Fool

Visitors Centre staff recently participated in a Science Teacher's Day at Ithemba LABS. The programme invited science educators to engage on the topics of experimental work in the classroom and popularisation of science subjects by working with science engagement entities.



The programme provided time for stakeholders to present to the teachers about ways they could add value to science teaching and to engage with them.



Lorette Sauermann and Fifi Meyer at the Visitors Centre exhibition



Haemanthus pubescens pubescens

The bright red flowers are only produced towards the end of the fire season - March to April, and leaves only appear in the cooler, wetter months when fires are unlikely to occur. Seeds germinate on the soil surface at the start of the cool, wet season. The plants produce a few white or pink fruits, each with a single, large seed.



There are several common names for the plant, including April Fool, Paintbrush Lily and Veldskoенblaar. They are found on the sandy plains from southern Namibia to Cape Town.

Koeberg's salt vlei

While hiking or cycling through Koeberg Nature Reserve one might pass seasonal wetlands. One in particular is quite unique as it is characterised by very high saline levels. In summer months, when water levels are low, crystalized salt particles are everywhere - as can be seen in the photos.

High salt levels are due to different geological and soil conditions in this part of the reserve. The high saline levels pose a distinctive challenge for plants and animals and not all organisms can survive in this habitat. However, it is highly productive environment - home to many amphibians, invertebrates, fish and waterbirds (known as waders).

Due to the close proximity of this salt wetland to Edusec, Eskom were required to rehabilitate the wetland area following the construction of the

Operating Training Facility (OTF). Wetlands are considered the most biologically diverse of all ecosystems and should, at all times, be preserved.

Salt crystal from the salt vlei



During Winter



During Summer

Going up

Koeberg Nature Reserve is home to a number of medium to large game species, with the Cape Eland one of the most magnificent. To keep Cape Eland (*Tragelaphus oryx oryx*) on the property, certain requirements have to be met.

CapeNature is the provincial governing body stipulating these requirements and in 2015 they changed the required fence height from 1,8m to 2,4m. This year is the deadline to have the fence height up to standard.

Over the past few years the conservation team of Koeberg Nature Reserve has been replacing the old fencing, especially sections damaged by the 2016 fire.

In other sections new wire strands were added to the top of newly planted posts in order to raise the height from two to 2,4m.

The boundary fence of the reserve is a crucial aspect of property management and therefore a lot of time has, and will be, invested to inspect and maintain the quality and standard of our perimeter.

The raising of the boundary fences around the reserve is due to be completed by May this year.

The Conservation Team hard at work at improving and fixing Koeberg's 17km of fencing

