



From far and wide

May 2018 was a particularly interesting month at Koeberg's Visitors Centre. Visitors came from all over the globe: China, Japan, Germany and France! The Centre received 14 groups, totaling 586 visitors. A large portion (372) was from the education sector and the balance from various government departments and industries.

The most interesting group received is undoubtedly the group from the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA). They visited Koeberg on 9 May.

A very special group visited from the SANDF War College in Pretoria. They were very impressed with Koeberg and ended their visit by presenting the station with a special plaque.



Above: Glodene Smith from the Visitors Centre, and Lewis Phidza receiving a plaque from Brigadier General Siseko

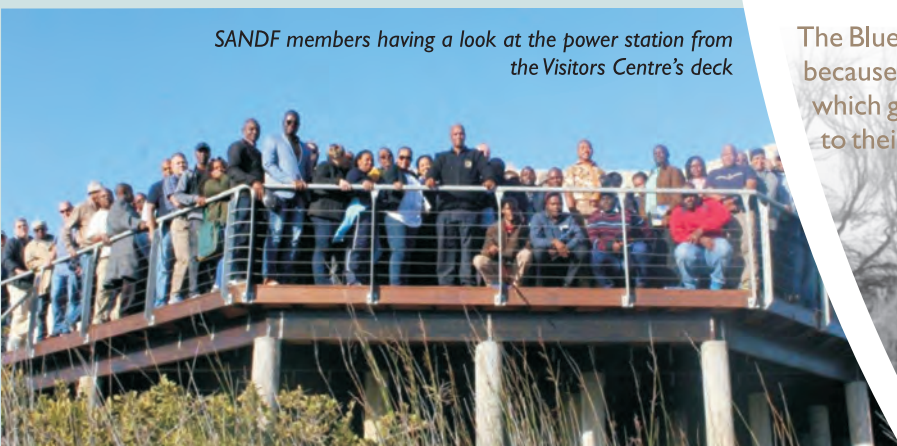


SANDF War College members from Pretoria



SAPS Milnerton Cluster on the Visitors Centre's deck after their visit to the plant

SANDF members having a look at the power station from the Visitors Centre's deck



Things that go 'gnu' in the night

Not many people are aware that Koeberg Nature Reserve has a small herd of eight Blue Wildebeest.

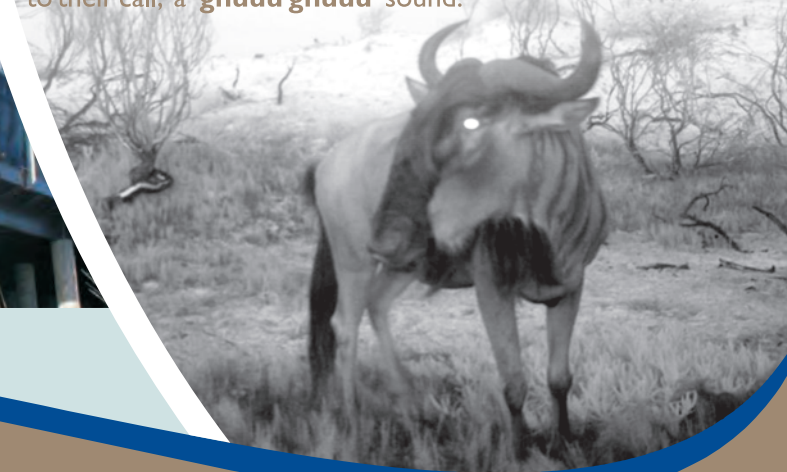


Koeberg's secretive Blue Wildebeest herd caught on camera

They are not endemic to the area and requires a special game management plan. The current population will be maintained until they die off naturally and the only bull in the small herd is sterile. They can sometimes be seen in the northern parts of the nature reserve.

Wildebeest spend half of their time resting and ruminating. The rest of their time is spent grazing and walking. Less than two percent of their time is spent on social interaction.

The Blue Wildebeest is also often called the Brindled Gnu, this is because of the dark bands over their shoulders and flanks which give them a brindled appearance. The 'Gnu' term refers to their call, a 'gnuuu gnuuu' sound.



Controlling alien plants

During the 19th century thousands of plant species were transferred from one continent to another. These species are now known as invasive alien plants (IAPs) and have to be controlled. Management authorities of protected areas are required, in terms of NEMBA (National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act) and the Alien and Invasive Species Regulations, to manage IAPs.

Koeberg is controlling several of these species: Manatoka (*Myoporum tenuifolium*), Port Jackson (*Acacia saligna*), Rooikrans (*Acacia cyclops*) and Brazilian pepper (*Schinus molle*).

Mechanical clearing of aliens



Invasive plants have a negative effect on our biodiversity and water resources. They use much more water than our indigenous species which

lead to reduced river flow and reduced underground reserves. IAPs grow and spread much faster than our indigenous species and out-compete the indigenous species. The increased biomass leads to higher intensity veld fires. Hotter fires damage the soil, which can result in the formation of water-repellent layers in the soil. This in turn leads to increased erosion during the rainy season.

2000 hectares cleared already

IAPs are the single biggest threat to plant and animal biodiversity within the Koeberg Nature Reserve. IAPs use seven percent of our water resources and they intensify flooding and fires. They cause erosion and poor water quality and can lead to local extinctions of indigenous plants and animals.

Chemical treatment of aliens



Koeberg has cleared around 2 000 hectares (of 3 000). Two methods are used: Mechanical and chemical. Mechanical removal is done by hand and tools, followed by herbicide application. Chemical treatment is done by spraying herbicide which affects the alien plants only. Once the site is completely cleared, the maintenance phase will commence. Koeberg's strategy is to reach maintenance phase by **2030** over the full property.

By S Ntoyapi



Animals and road safety

Within the past few weeks there were several incidents where our precious wildlife were killed on our roads. One such incident required a veterinarian to euthanase a springbok due to the severity of its injuries, which included three broken legs. The increase in animal fatalities within Koeberg Nuclear Power Station and parts of the reserve, sadly is proof that drivers have become reckless and are not respecting road rules in the reserve. If weather conditions are not good or while driving at night, please **reduce speed** and be more vigilant.



Here are a few tips when driving on our roads:

Always stick to the speed limits! Speed limits within Koeberg Nature Reserve are:

Tar roads from entrance gates to ACP I: 50km/h
Roads inside ACP I and road to KTC: 35km/h
All gravel roads: 35km/h

- **Follow the rules** of the road, respect warning signs and signals. There is a reason why they are there.
- If you see one animal expect there to be more and **reduce speed**.
- **Avoid distractions** such as your cell phone and radio. If your full attention is on the road you're more likely to spot an animal.
- If an animal is in your path, **brake firmly** and do not swerve. Rather wait for the animal to cross the road before driving off.
- If you hit an animal **report** the incident to Central Alarm Station (CAS **x4600**) immediately.
- **Be vigilant** at all times, anticipate potential risks before they become threats and expect the unexpected
- Keep your **head lights** on



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