

541 200 visitors

Since 1974 when the Visitors Centre opened its doors, each and every visitor has been counted. On 20 June 2019, a group of PhD students from the University of Cape Town, accompanied by several fellow PhD students from the United Kingdom, brought the total number of visitors to an impressive 541 200!

Another interesting statistic measured, is the change in people's perceptions of Eskom, and nuclear specifically. The main objective of the Visitors Centre is focused on changing perceptions. After every visit all persons, 18 years and over, are requested to complete an Assessment Form. One of the questions reflects their opinion of Eskom before and after their visit. The target is to obtain a 40% improvement. Koeberg Visitors Centre has maintained this percentage over the years and often exceeds it. Currently the centre's swing percentage averages around 46%.

Eskom has five Visitors Centres across the country. The others are located at Palmiet, Drakensberg, Lethabo and Ingula Power Stations. Collectively the five centres receive an average of 40 000 visitors per year. It is the best platform for members of the public to interact with Eskom staff and to obtain reliable information.

Do not disturb



A pair of Spotted Eagle Owls have made their nest in a pot at the entrance to the Bulk Stores Offices. Unfortunately the nest could not be moved. The area is barricaded to prevent disturbance. Conservation staff are monitoring the nest and parents.



The Spotted Eagle Owl (*Bubo africanus*), is the smallest of the eagle owls. It eats mainly insects and rodents. They are well adapted to urban areas and are thus frequently spotted near or in developed areas. They use a wide range of nesting sites including the ground, trees and buildings.

Please adhere to the following:

- Do not disturb the birds
- Do not touch the owls or owlets
- Do not make use of flash photography as it can cause permanent damage to their eyes, leading to their deaths





Creature feature

Cape Sand Frog

(*Tomopterna delalandii*)

This cute little critter is also known as Delalande's Sand Frog. It is named after the French naturalist, Pierre-Antoine Delalande, who collected specimens during three visits to South Africa in the early nineteenth century. The Cape Sand Frog is a robust-bodied species with toad-like appearance and gait. It is endemic to western and southern South Africa and occurs in the low-lying areas of Namaqualand, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, and as far east as Cape St Francis.

The frogs reach a maximum length of 45mm. Their chubby bodies are covered with white markings and scattered dark patches. Their call is a high-pitched metallic, but melodious, ku-ku-ku-ku sound that lasts for several seconds.

The species occur in fynbos heath-land and succulent karoo-shrubland. It can also live in agricultural land. Breeding takes place in both temporary and semi-permanent water bodies found in pans, vleis and dams in flat, sandy areas. It is an abundant species that occurs in several protected areas. It can be locally threatened by habitat loss caused by the spread of alien vegetation and agricultural and urban expansion



Good intentions

In 1857 authorities introduced the Australian Port Jackson (*Acacia saligna*) and Rooikrans (*Acacia cyclops*) as a supposedly great solution to the problem of unstable and shifting sand dunes on the Cape flats. These plants seemed to be ideal being drought adapted, abundant seeders and without any natural enemies.

However, soon after their introduction they proved to be a much bigger problem than moving sand dunes. The trees invaded large areas and out-competed indigenous vegetation. In an effort to curb their spread, expensive control programmes have been adopted, where eradication techniques such as foliar spraying of herbicides are used. These methods are not only costly, but also labour intensive.



Conservation student, Amanda Mtshixa, doing research on the impact of invasive alien species

It is further suspected to have a negative impact on the recovery of indigenous vegetation. Amanda Mtshixa, a conservation student at Koeberg, is undertaking research on the impact of foliar spraying and the effect of herbicides on indigenous vegetation.

Her research will investigate the impact of invasive species clearing methods on the endangered Sand-fynbos habitat within the Koeberg Nature Reserve.

