



Springerbaai



Martin Ras

A beautiful visitor

At this time of year, one of the marine creatures that frequent visit our shores was found leisurely resting on our beach in December.

A juvenile Elephant Seal bull was spotted along our coastline. Initially observed at Oyster Bay in November 2023, it later relocated to the bay near the club house at Pinnacle Point in mid-December 2023. After moulting on these beaches for a while, it then moved to 2nd Beach in Dana Bay and Springerbaai towards the end of December 2023.

Given its one-eyed blindness, it was dubbed Colombo, reminiscent of the TV detective character from years past.

Letter from our Chairperson

Good day Springerbaai Owners

After a busy season, the Management and Staff of Springerbaai has been off to a great start with an exciting year lying ahead of us. The Trustees who were elected has also started with many initiatives early in the year.

Thank you all who either attended the AGM or has sent your proxies to constitute an excellent meeting. After the outcome of the votes were analysed, the initiatives that were approved by the Homeowners have been planned for the year.

Mareo Bekker has again assisted us in providing information that we could consider for Springerbaai as far as risks are concerned. There are obviously many risks in our modern day and age, but as Springerbaai, we need to be cognisant of the fact that there is still a huge shortage of energy, especially electricity. We are taking this into consideration at the Gate House future planning to come off the grid. Second risk to be aware of is unemployment which has a direct effect on an increase in crime, and we are again looking how we can be proactive in this regard. Lastly, and as already highlighted before, there is a huge strain on water availability and quality.

We are planning to appoint a "Fire Consultant" to do a risk assessment on the estate. Although this has been done a few years ago, we believe it could be of value to get a new perspective on the risks involved. Preventing fires on the estate, as well as preventing fires from outside threatening the estate, is our focus in the first part of the year. Charl will be draughting a Master Plan on risks for the estate.

Please see Ruben's update on the camera installation as approved at the AGM. We would like to thank the owners, Mr & Mrs Lilley, for contributing an amount towards the overview cameras /gate system. Due to loadshedding, Homeowners have been battling to open the gate at times as cell phone signals seem to be a challenge. We have approached Telkom, MTN as well as Vodacom for the erection of a cell phone tower on the estate, but this seems to be far off.

A revised gate opening system will be communicated soon to address signal issues and enhance secure access for tenants renting houses within the estate. Additionally, this updated system will aid Springerbaai management in effectively overseeing contractors and service providers. Ruben has also given an update on game and game counts in his section of the newsletter.

Furthermore, Wim and his Team will be beatifying the Bird hide dam. Charl is well away with the plan to get water to the Blue Crane dam. Also see Charl's section on an update on the resurfacing of the roads.

Jan is now running the BAC with some new houses planned over and above the current stands in build and a few additions. There will again be a few changes to the architectural guidelines as Jan has made a huge effort in making sure the guidelines are clearer.

We wish to inform homeowners with pools that the Mosselbay Municipality is arranging an inspection to ensure that pool enclosures are installed and according to safety regulations. Merely having a pool cover is inadequate.

Concha was re-elected as Vice Chairperson. She will keep her focus on the policies and procedures and will communicate any changes for approval. Amongst the documents currently under review is the Recruitment and Staff Policy as the Fire Readiness document.

The Newsletter is also under Concha, and all agree that the newsletters are great. If you would like to make any contribution as far as the estate goes in the newsletter, you are welcome to contact Concha.

Kind regards and best wishes
Wynand Pretorius

Environment



The incalculable value of wildlife

People everywhere rely on wildlife and biodiversity-based resources to meet our needs - from food, to fuel, medicines, housing, and clothing. For us to enjoy the benefits and the beauty that nature brings us and our planet, people have been working together to make sure ecosystems are able to thrive and plant and animal species are able to exist for future generations. So, let's celebrate wildlife and the important conservation work being done around the world!

World Wildlife Day is an opportunity to **celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora** and to raise awareness of the multitude of benefits that their conservation provides to people.

At the same time, the Day reminds us of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime and human-induced reduction of species, which have wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts.

Ecologically Friendly traps

Two common nuisance creatures found on the estate are Rodents and Starlings. Rodents frequently seek refuge within homes and often stumble upon our food stores, much to their delight. They are notorious for gnawing on electrical wires, posing a significant risk of electrical faults and potential fire or shock hazards. Starlings, on the other hand, often carry lice with them when constructing nests and have been observed pulling out sections of thatch, leading to roof leaks.

We are fortunate to have Radical Raptors in our vicinity, offering environmentally conscious solutions for removing these troublesome animals from our homes. They offer highly efficient traps for capturing rats, with a staggering record of 76 rats caught in two traps in a single night. Additionally, they have introduced new starling traps to address the issue. These traps are available for purchase online at <https://ecotrap.co.za/> or by calling 082 819 0073.



Rainfall comparisons 2022 to 2024

Water is life, without water (and rainfall), neither us nor any living organism on Earth would survive.

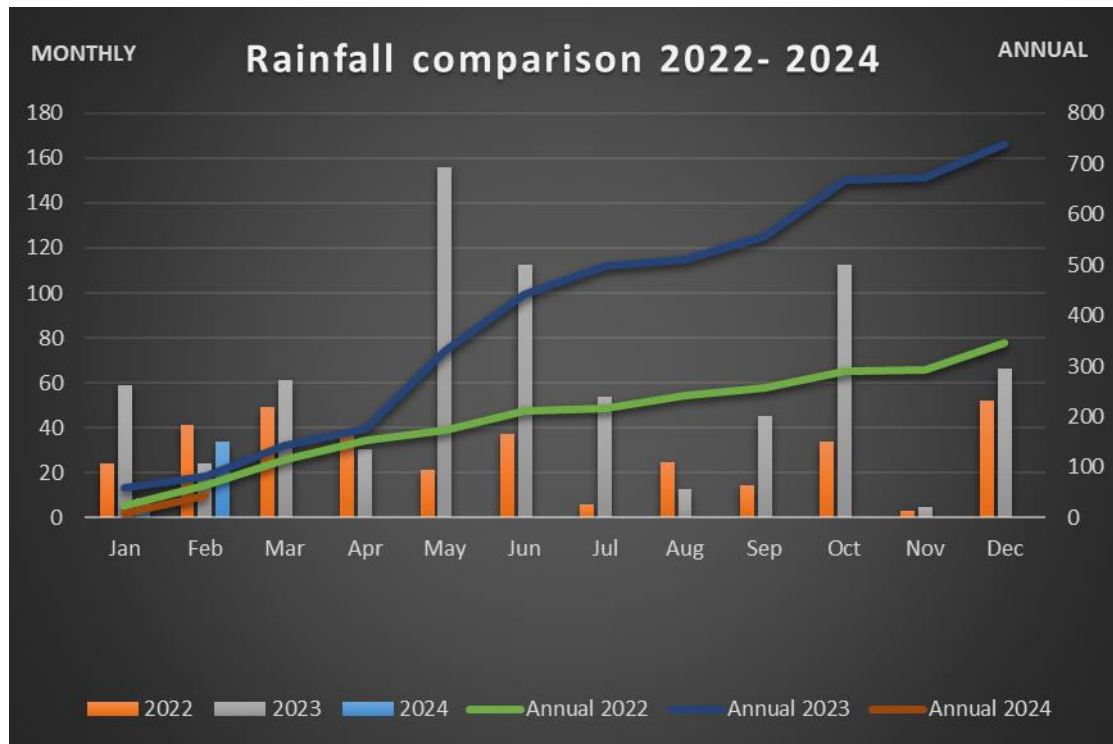
Why is it important to keep track of rainfall data at Springerbaai?

We monitor rainfall to anticipate dry and wet conditions in the veld, aiding in the planning of various projects like Suurvy removal, controlled burns, and veld rehabilitation through planting nursery plants. Maintaining yearly records enhances management's grasp of long-term rain cycles, facilitating decisions on the optimal number of game to sustain on the veld (carrying capacity).

In 2022, our rainfall amounted to 346mm, a decrease from 656mm in 2021. However, in 2023, there was a significant surge in rainfall, totalling 739mm.

By the end of February, we've recorded just 43mm of rainfall, partly due to the unusually hot and dry weather in January and February.

Here's a comparative breakdown of rainfall figures from 2022 to 2024.



Suurvy

As outlined in a recent newsletter and discussed during the last AGM, we've opted to discontinue the gropping method for Suurvy removal for the foreseeable future. Instead, we're employing the cost-effective herbicide Triclon to control undesired vegetation, including Suurvy. We prioritize managing the regrowth from last year's Suurvy removal and extending our efforts to other areas to effectively tackle the issue.

Our attention is further directed towards rehabilitating areas impacted by Suurvy removal. We strategically utilize topsoil from construction sites to establish additional bush areas in the veld. Planting a variety of vegetation on this topsoil serves to prevent erosion, offer suitable habitats for wildlife, and diversify grasslands.

Rooikrantz

The team is getting ready to shift the Rooikrantz belt away from homes towards the beach. While Rooikrantz serves to safeguard dunes, it also presents a fire risk. Wood resulting from this removal will be available for purchase from the office during winter.

Fire management

Using the rocket stove, we plan to burn the heap of branches behind the construction site once we obtain approval from the fire department.

Our team will oversee the maintenance of fire breaks and equipment, with allocated funds from the budget earmarked for crucial upkeep of fire unit trailers. Throughout March, we'll prioritize maintaining fire breaks to ensure their effectiveness.

Additionally, we're coordinating a comprehensive fire equipment assessment involving key stakeholders such as the Fire Department, Fire Protection Association, Fransmanshoek Conservancy, and neighbouring estates within our bay area. This collaborative endeavour will entail inspecting all fire equipment across estates, offering recommendations for enhancement, and potentially acquiring additional resources to bolster fire safety measures.

Subsequent to this assessment, we'll arrange a compulsory fire readiness day for all permanent homeowners. Furthermore, we're currently in the process of securing quotations from a fire specialist to evaluate our estate and provide guidance on optimal wildfire protection strategies.

Nursery

The nursery plays a crucial role in sustaining the Gouritz Valley Bushveld & Dune thicket habitat and restoring areas affected by construction projects. We continue to provide plants to members for home rehabilitation, fostering both environmental preservation and beautification of personal spaces.

With that said...they have a March special:



Special

Crassula Tetragona/ Kerkei

@ R15 per plant

(Whilst stock last)

Please support our onsite team...

Features

- Medicinal plant
- Endemic to our area
- Drought resistant
- Flowers in Summer/Autumn

An evergreen shrub with narrow, needle-like foliage, forming a tidy bush up to 1 m tall. It boasts lance-shaped leaves and blooms creamy white flowers turning orange in late spring and summer.

Recycling of Topsoil from Building sites

To enhance the privacy of owners in the Melkhouthoek row from Erf 130-133, a berm has been constructed, with irrigation connected. We extend our gratitude to Mareo and Siya's team for their assistance in shaping the berm and planting the aloes.

The next step will be the planting of nursery plants towards late March or early April 2024, once the intense heat of February has diminished. Permanent residents will receive invitations to join in the planting activities.



Additionally, topsoil removed from a current construction site has been placed near the bird hide for shaping and planting of another berm. Our plan involves strategically placing topsoil from properties on an ongoing basis to rehabilitate grazing areas.

Beach

Every Friday, our team diligently conducts weekly patrols along the boardwalks, ensuring they remain clean and free of litter. This involves thorough clean-up efforts and the regular emptying of rubbish bins to maintain the pristine condition of these areas for visitors and wildlife alike.

Monday, March 4th marks Community Clean-up Day, a dedicated occasion for our Springerbaai community to come together and actively participate in cleaning and beautifying our surroundings. It's an opportunity to demonstrate our collective commitment to environmental stewardship.

Through our (un)coordinated efforts, we can make a meaningful impact by removing litter, tidying up public spaces, and fostering a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone to enjoy.



Getting to know our birds: Oystercatcher



Test yourself: 4 things you may not know about the Oystercatcher.

#1: Despite its name, the Black Oystercatcher does NOT eat oysters.
Instead, they eat mussels, crustaceans, worms and limpets. Really, anything but oysters.

#2: They breed only along the coastline of South Africa and Namibia.
Although you may find the odd non-breeding birds along the Mozambique and Angolan coastline.

#3: Birds pair for life.
Well, you may know that already. That means they can spend up to 20 years together.

#4: Head to the beach now, and chances are you'll find breeding pairs.
They breed between October and April, laying well camouflaged eggs.



African
Oystercatcher
showing off its chick

Infrastructure

Walking Trails

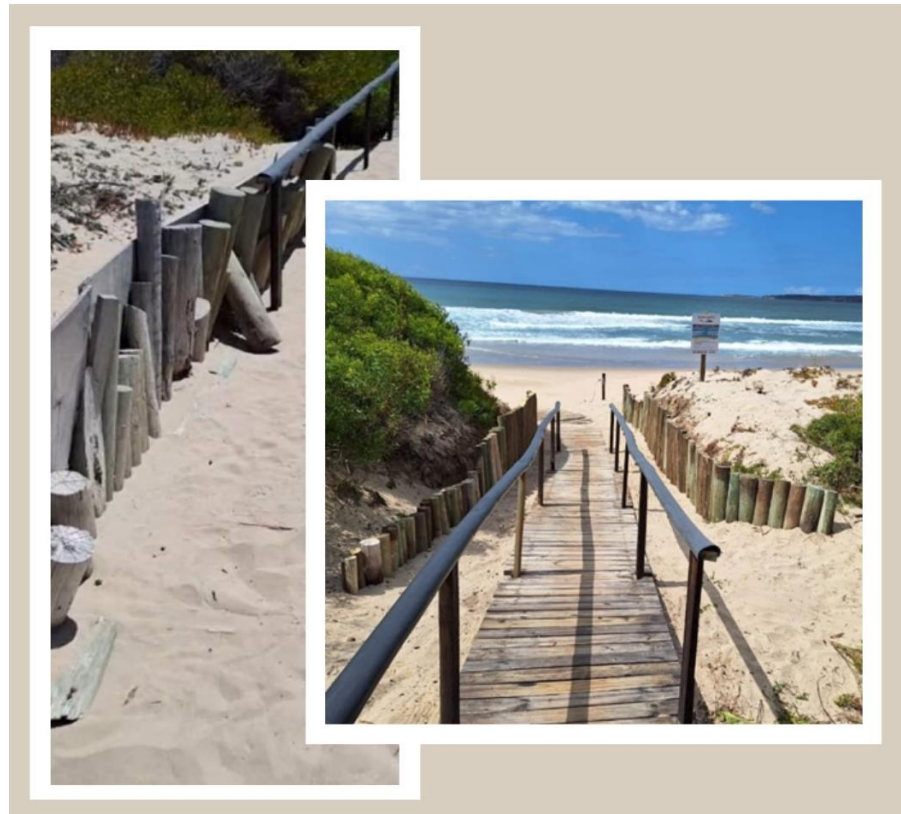


Ongoing efforts are in progress to regularly inspect and maintain the roads, focusing on weed control and overall upkeep.

A system of ongoing upkeep is implemented to ensure that the walking trails remain safe, accessible, and enjoyable to all. Our upkeep includes:

- Regular trimming of vegetation along the trails to prevent overgrowth and ensure clear passage for walkers.
- Repairing any erosion, rutting, or other damage to the surface
- Ensuring clear signage and markings to guide visitors.
- Managing water flow and drainage
- Inspecting and repairing boardwalks, stairs or other structures to ensure they are safe and sturdy.

The boardwalk poles were straightened and replaced.



A rope has been set up to assist members walking up the steeper gradient at the main deck access point. Substantial progress has been made in alleviating the damage to the beach access and overall appearance caused by the September 2023 storm, with noticeable replenishment of the sand lost during the event.



Replacement of the western fence 2km section will be taking place in the second quarter of 2024.

Roads

In line with our standard maintenance schedule, we have scheduled two road scraping operations for the year. The first is anticipated to take place in either April or May, contingent upon our assessment of conditions, which will be influenced by the extent of ongoing construction activities.

Preparation work has been completed on the remaining targeted tarred sections in anticipation of the chip-and-spray layer, which is currently being applied.



Preparation work with exposed areas being filled



Sealing with bitumen mixture to enhance subsequent bonding with chip-and spray layer



Water

As you may recall from the AGM, a method was explained to try and limit water losses at the back portion of the bird hide dam. This organic material will penetrate the clay layer of the dam and expand to seal the bottom. The picture towards the right schematically demonstrates the mechanics behind it. We have commenced with preparation for this exercise in removing any plants from the dam which will hinder the working of this polymer.



Red arrow indicates back side of the pond to be sealed.



Removing plant growth inside the targeted area.

Other: Replacement of signage

We will be conducting a thorough assessment of the condition of all the boards throughout the estate to ensure their safety and functionality.

The replacement process will commence in the next few weeks, prioritizing those boards that are in the most urgent need of attention.



The replacement of the following board will take precedence.

Game

Despite the dry weather encountered in the initial two months of the year, the game animals at Springerbaai have thrived. This can be attributed in part to the abundant rainfall experienced throughout much of 2023. The substantial rainfall ensured that the veld was in excellent condition before the customary dry spell of January and February. A game count was conducted in mid-February, and the findings are outlined below:

- 32 Adult Bontebok
- 10 Bontebok lambs from this season (September to December lambing period)
- 11 Zebras
- 5 Grey Rhebok
- 170 Springbok

The wildlife tallies we undertake exclusively focus on the animals we've introduced to the Estate. We do not include natural antelope species like bushbuck, duikers, and grey rhebok found at Springerbaai in our counts.

Upon reviewing these figures, it becomes apparent that we must decrease the population of Springbok. This is mainly because they breed very effectively, with the average female producing three lambs in a two-year cycle under favourable conditions. However, there is positive news as well: we are witnessing the emergence of excellent genetics, and it's gratifying to observe the Springbok Ram herd developing into robust, healthy individuals.



Left: Young Bontebok lamb grazing near the bird hide. *Right:* The elusive Grey Rhebok females.

Architectural & Building

The BAC for 2024 comprises Talitha, Charl, Elsemarie, Sias, and Jan. We extend a special gratitude to Elsemarie for her willingness to contribute to the BAC. Our initial meetings for 2024 occurred on January 11th and February 23rd. Meetings are convened monthly.

As of the end of 2023, 82 houses have been completed, with 6 currently under construction, and 29 empty stands awaiting development. Some owners possess multiple properties which may remain undeveloped for the foreseeable future.

The Building Approval Committee (BAC) is currently assessing two new plans to ensure they meet both aesthetic standards and municipal regulations. Additionally, a third new construction plan has been recently approved by the municipality, with construction set to commence shortly.

Property owners are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the updated Building and Aesthetics regulations distributed on December 5th, 2023. Those with swimming pools should also review the latest municipal regulations regarding pool fencing.

The Building and Aesthetics regulations are once more under review to enhance clarity and set boundaries that preserve the architectural and natural integrity of the estate. Upon completion, members will receive the finalized regulations.

New Construction

Ongoing Building Projects include stands 106, 112, 125, 127, 132, and 136.

Renovations are currently underway for houses 38 and 64.

One new construction to commence shortly.

NEW PLANS

2 new plans are being reviewed by the BAC and one has been submitted for approval to the municipality.

Herewith a summary for the Estate:

Houses completed	82
New houses under Construction	6
Vacant Stands	29
Total	117

Following the vote at the Annual General Meeting regarding the inquiry into the cost of an additional 20m², the initiative has commenced. An initial meeting has been arranged with the Mossel Bay Municipality Planning Department to gather information on the initial steps.

The Municipality advised engaging a town planner and environmental consultant to assess the estate and provide quotations for the process. Furthermore, they recommended allocating the proposed additional 20 m² to a specific area, for example a carport or garage.

Security

After the vote against having security guards stationed onsite, a decision was made to reevaluate our budget and adopt alternative measures to maintain maximum security.

Henceforth, the following measures will be enacted over the forthcoming months:

Cameras

The implementation of overview cameras is progressing well, with efforts underway to reinforce Wi-Fi connectivity at the gate and its vicinity.

Progress on the Witteklip cameras has halted temporarily, awaiting approval from the national government for the area's Community Policing Forum (CPF). We are actively collaborating with local farming community structures to provide assistance.

(Ruben will schedule a meeting with national authorities in Cape Town during his visit to address any outstanding issues.)

Gate

A new system and strategy will be put into action to address the current challenges experienced at the gate.

Further details will be shared once the new system is installed and operational. It's important to mention that the old system will continue to operate alongside the new one until everyone is familiar with the changes and any initial issues are resolved.

Additionally, the gate's administrative staff will receive supplementary security training (Grade C, excluding weapons training) to enhance their comprehension of gate management and security protocols.

Please remain vigilant and attentive to detect any suspicious activities or behaviors that could compromise the safety and security of our surroundings.

Human Resources

After a bustling 2023, several staff members have chosen to take early leave at the beginning of this year.

Matomane has successfully obtained his motorcycle learner's permit and is currently focused on acquiring his driver's license for code 08.

We're pleased to announce that our issues with the Department of Labour regarding the registration and payment of Workman's Compensation have been resolved. Thanks go to Poy Opperman and Talitha for their dedicated efforts over the past two years in diligently pursuing this matter.

Furthermore, we're excited to share that the decision to grant a service bonus after 20 years of employment has been ratified. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Talitha for reaching this significant milestone. With 22 years of dedicated service at Springerbaai, Talitha has consistently delivered exceptional work. Her unwavering commitment and exceptional quality have made her an invaluable asset to our team. Talitha has consistently gone above and beyond, often resolving issues outside of regular hours. A heartfelt congratulations to Talitha on her remarkable 20 years of service.

Finances

The budget and annual financial statement were approved at the AGM as well as the reappointment of Chris Bredekamp as auditor. Major expenses early in the year would be to resurface the tar sections of the road and smoothing the dirt sections.

Levies have been coming in and we would like to thank the Homeowners for paying their levies on time. Water Accounts will also be dispersed soon.

Management and Trustees have been made aware to stick to the budget as we must ensure costs are contained within budget.

Short Snippets



TRUSTEE MEETINGS

14 May

20 July

21 September – budget

9 November – Annual Report

20 December - AGM

BAC MEETINGS

Last Friday of Every month

Did you know...

Ants weigh more than humans.

The combined weight of ants on the planet is higher than all human beings. The world has over 7 billion people, and 100 trillion ants.