

# W A T E R F A L L

ISSUE 7 2020



## THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF WATERFALL

**AD OUTPOST:  
REIMAGINING  
THE FUTURE**

**JUSTICE LEAGUE™  
VIRTUAL RUN SERIES**

**WATERFALL CITY  
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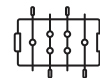
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A message from

# WATERFALL

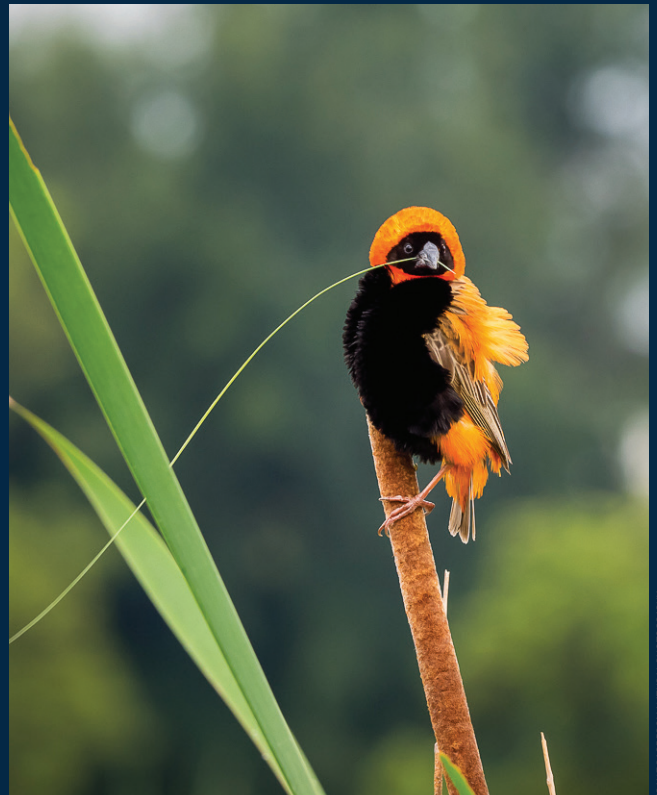
**O**ne unexpected, but welcome side-effect of the lockdown period, where many of us are spending much more time at home, must be a new appreciation for our lovely surroundings. And so, it is fitting that this month's magazine features a photo spread showcasing the Natural Beauty of Waterfall.

As you all know, this development was purposely designed to encourage outdoor living, with parks and green areas, 37km of walking and running trails on the residential estates, as well as safe cycle routes and pedestrian walkways in the heart of the central business district. The greenbelts, indigenous parkland and riverbanks are rich with birds and wildlife, and to celebrate that, we have curated a stunning collection of nature photos for you to enjoy, which can be found on pages 16 to 21.

It seems that wildlife all over the globe has been enjoying the lockdown. In another very interesting read, Kevin Gow of the Waterfall Environmental Committee, shares some insights around the impact that the restrictions on our movement has had on the animals living in our estates. He notes that marsh owls, scrub hares, jackals and impressively large Nile Monitors are positively thriving!

With some lockdown restrictions being eased, particularly the limitations on exercise, avid runners and walkers will be keen to read up on the feature from Mall of Africa this month – which is all about South Africa's first Justice League™ Virtual Run Series. Interested participants are invited to dress up as superheroes and join in. The idea is for supporters to leave their homes at the same time on the same day as their specifically identified superhero, and run or walk a chosen distance to raise money for children's charities. It sounds like huge fun, so do read the article, and find out how you can join in.

News from the corporate side of the development this month is that Waterfall City welcomes ContinuitySA, a provider of business continuity management services. Waterfall's Corporate Campus offers ContinuitySA a robust location, as it expands to meet the rising demand for its disaster recovery facilities.



FRANZ RABE FROM NATURAL PHOTOGRAPHY

On the financial front, an article by PSG Wealth offers some sound advice on keeping calm in a crisis. Investors often follow the rush to sell when markets start to tumble, and when fear and panic guide your decisions, it is easy to lose sight of the bigger picture. The piece makes for an insightful read.

We also have an article from Dinesh Diar, the CEO of Ad Outpost located right here in Waterfall, sharing some lessons in resilience and endurance during this time. Dinesh has needed to create a fresh strategy to reimagine the future, to ensure his company survives, not only the lockdown, but also the economic recovery that lies ahead.

Finally, our regular Netcare article looks at the *Curse of the Vikings*. That intriguing name describes a condition with Scandinavian origins dating from the 16th Century. Do have a read to uncover the mystery!

Until next time, keep well and stay safe,  
Waterfall Management



# AGENTS OF THE YEAR YOUR WATERFALL TEAM



Pictured from left to right: Linda Erasmus CEO Fine & Country Sub-Saharan Africa, Ikram Gabr of Fine & Country Midrand, Elizabeth McKenzie Director of Fine & Country Midrand, Tanya Mohr of Fine & Country Midrand and Rudi Botha CEO of the BetterLife Group

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# WATERFALL CITY WELCOMES CONTINUITYSA TO ITS CORPORATE CAMPUS



## Enterprise Business Continuity and Resilience Specialist chooses Waterfall for new Premises

**C**ontinuitySA, Africa's leading provider of business continuity management services, has chosen Waterfall's Corporate Campus as the location for its newest premises. The firm, which focuses on enhancing business resilience in an age of escalating threats, is expanding to accommodate greater demand for disaster recovery and work area recovery facilities.

In the current environment, responsible companies are placing increasing emphasis on the need for resilient business continuity plans and capabilities. Core to this is ensuring that their disaster recovery competency is supported by robust infrastructure. Waterfall Corporate Campus has been developed to

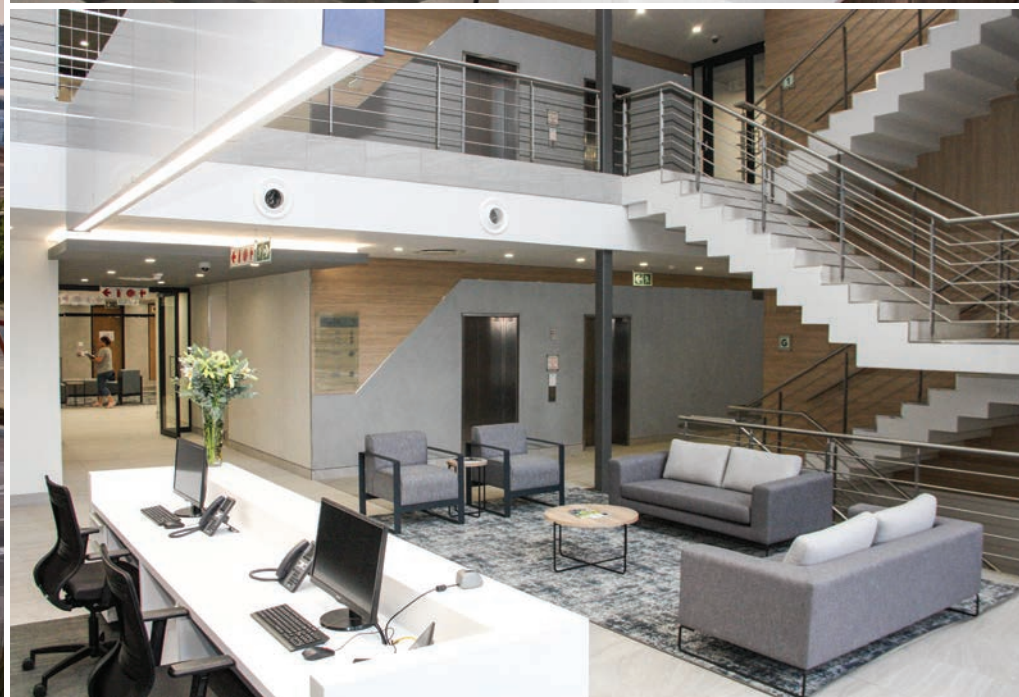
support this, offering best-in-class dedicated networking capacity as well as direct power supply that is environmentally conscious. With ContinuitySA's client base becoming increasingly aware of the need to provide alternative work areas for occasions when their primary sites are inaccessible – whether the reason be fire, flood or industrial action – the ability to offer their clients attractive, efficient, off-site working space in an on-site location is critical.

Waterfall is committed to creating safe, sustainable spaces for its residents and visitors, and Corporate Campus has been developed according to the very best in urban design and sustainability principles. The Campus offers green design elements

such as pedestrian walkways and shading, cantilevered roofs; unique architectural features in each of the buildings; as well as centrally located communal amenities such as conference facilities, a restaurant and braai area. ContinuitySA's office is currently targeting a 4-Star Green Star rating by the Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA).

Situated on the corner of Waterfall Drive and Lethabo Close, Corporate Campus is a secure, 35 000m<sup>2</sup> premium-grade office park. The completed development will comprise seven buildings in total, and several prominent companies such as Accenture, Isuzu Motors South Africa, Decision Inc. and SASSETA have already made this their home.





Its proximity to the Mall of Africa, and other amenities within Waterfall City such as the Netcare Hospital, Curro School, other A-grade office developments, as well as a balanced range of residential developments, makes it ideal for firms that prioritise employee work-life balance.

For ContinuitySA, a company with more than three decades of experience in business continuity services across the continent, Waterfall's Corporate Campus offers a robust location from which it can help clients build resilience into their operations, providing executives, directors, suppliers, clients and regulators with peace of mind. Waterfall is delighted that Corporate Campus offers ContinuitySA that same proposition too.



Our Business is  
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# CALLING ALL SUPER HEROES!

Come join the Justice League™ Virtual Run Series! *A first in South Africa*



**G**rab your Super Hero Kit (we'll explain later) and sidekicks and get ready for the first ever Justice League™ Virtual Run Series in South Africa - where you join as Superman, Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Batman and/or The Flash.

The team at Mall of Africa is encouraging the Waterfall community to join the Justice League™ for an out-of-this-world experience brought to you by the producers of The Color Run SA, in conjunction with Warner Bros. Consumer Products and DC Comics.

Superman will be the hero of the first virtual run in July, followed monthly thereafter by Wonder Woman, Aquaman, Batman and, finally, The Flash. The idea is for Super Hero supporters

to leave their residences on the same day and at the same time as each Super Hero, running, walking, jogging, cycling or even pushing prams, while respecting social distancing protocols, of course. All this will be in aid of the selected beneficiaries and to help the people of South Africa who need it most: our children. You can choose between a 2,5km, 5km, 7,5km and 10km run/walk.

Just imagine being part of a never before experienced Virtual Run Series, where more than 100 000 active people take to the streets wearing their Justice League™ Super Hero T-shirts, walking and running for one unifying cause!

So, don't miss out on this opportunity to be part of these unique Virtual Runs/Walks, all while giving back.

The organisers are partnering with institutions which provide relief and make financial contributions to beneficiaries such as Headstart Kids. The Headstart Kids programme provides special nutritional food packs to children (6 months - 5 years) from low-income families.

Entries are now open, so secure your Super Hero Kit for all 5 Virtual Runs today and get ready to join the Justice League™ Virtual Run Series on these dates!

**19 July 2020 – Superman Run**  
**9 August 2020 – Wonder Woman Run**  
**6 September 2020 – Aquaman Run**  
**4 October 2020 – Batman Run**  
**8 November 2020 – The Flash Run**



**How to enter:**

Fly to our website  
[www.justiceleagueseries.co.za](http://www.justiceleagueseries.co.za) and  
 give the 'ENTER HERE' button a  
 KAPOW! You will unlock your Super  
 Hero access from this page.

Do not miss the first event, the  
 Superman Run. This first event  
 will be capped at 20 000 entries  
 nationwide, so be sure to enter

early to avoid being left behind.

However, what good is doing good  
 without a few goodies? Entry into  
 the Justice League™ Virtual Run  
 Series gets you equipped with the  
 following essential armour: As part  
 of your entry, each Super Hero  
 participating will receive a Super  
 Hero Kit.\*\* These kits are themed per

individual Virtual Run/Walk and the  
 really exciting part - enter all five of  
 the Virtual Runs/Walks simultaneously  
 (with your first run entry) and you  
 will receive a Super 10% discount  
 on your entry fee as well as a special  
 personalised certificate confirming  
 your participation in the series.



For more information on being part of the very  
 first Justice League™ Virtual Run Series, and for  
 full details on all entry packages and options,  
 please visit: [www.justiceleagueseries.co.za](http://www.justiceleagueseries.co.za).

Following these Virtual Run/Walk events, South Africans will  
 get the opportunity to participate in the actual 'venue-based  
 mass group' Justice League™ Super Hero Runs that will  
 take place in the major South African cities at a later stage,  
 following lockdown. Mall of Africa at Waterfall Park is the  
 official Gauteng venue for the Justice League™ Super Hero  
 Runs. More information will follow over the coming months,

however, until then, join the action by entering the Virtual  
 Run Series and get yourself ready for the mission ahead!

To keep up to date with all the excitement, competitions  
 and much more, follow the below social media platforms:

- Facebook: @JLRunSeries
- Instagram: @JLRunSeries
- Twitter: @JLRunSeries
- TikTok: @JLRunSeries
- YouTube: JLRunSeries

For any other queries please email: [hello@SupermanRun.co.za](mailto:hello@SupermanRun.co.za).



\*\*Entry Pack contents branded per respective Super Hero.



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# REIMAGINING THE FUTURE

We have what it takes to recover and rebuild from this Black Swan event.

With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to present us with unprecedented challenges and changes, Dinesh Diar, CEO of Ad Outpost, shares his company's experience and lesson in resilience and endurance, as markets claw back to recover and rebuild.



**T**he past few months have certainly been the most challenging time in the history of Ad Outpost's 22-years of operations. It is interesting how the COVID-19 pandemic has given us time to pause and reflect on how a virus has the power to bring us economically and socially almost to our knees. The power of this virus is further brought into sharp focus when we learn that it is having this effect on a global scale – where even longstanding powerhouse economies like the USA and UK have not been spared.

It is against this backdrop that I had the challenge of engineering a strategy that would ensure that we, as a company, not only survive

the lockdown, but also the tough and turbulent road leading to economic recovery for the country.

Key to this strategy remains ensuring the well-being of all my staff, and the sustainability of our business to be able to endure this. But, with a fast-dwindling revenue stream, particularly in the early days of the national response to the pandemic, this has not always been an easy task.

Early on, I started off by explaining to my team that what we are experiencing is a Black Swan event. 'Black Swan' is a market-accepted metaphor for an event that comes as a surprise, which has a major effect, and is inappropriately rationalised. It is during times like these, that people need some explanation, some context to make sense of what is happening, and so, this was my starting point.

Like many businesses across industries, we adopted a strategy of survival, immediately. Essentially, if we could break even and meet our most crucial obligations during this period, it would result in us coming through this challenging time ready to rebuild and fight another day. Critical to this were extreme austerity measures that saw us cutting all unnecessary spending. Thankfully, we were able to do this successfully and effectively, which came as a huge relief to shareholders and staff. And as the country moves into the lower lockdown Alert Levels, we have switched to a strategy of recovery.

Being an out of home media company, it stands to reason that the majority of our audiences disappeared under lockdown Alert Level 5. However, as the country headed into Alert Level 3 in June, and with lower lockdown levels in sight, we have seen a significant increase in traffic and economic activity, which translates to a receptive audience for us. The domino effect of this has been almost immediate. Marketing briefs from major brands are already starting to be posted. This is positive news;

### ***Data is the new oil that will illuminate more data-driven, customer-centric marketing campaigns.***

it is a barometer of how businesses are gradually returning to 'normal'.

Indeed, we also must be cognisant of the fact that, in reality, we will be entering a 'new normal' going forward.

In communicating this to my team, I relied on a Latin phrase, *Sine Quo Non*. It simply means: *The essential, crucial, or indispensable ingredient without which something would be impossible*. I used this phrase to explain that, during this period, we as individuals, and as a company, need to focus on what the critical factors are, so that we can survive this time and change, without compromising each other. This would mean following protocol on physical distancing, constant use of sanitisers and the wearing of cloth face masks as a non-negotiable, otherwise our recovery strategy will be compromised.

I also used this Black Swan event to remind my team that this was a great opportunity for all of us to reflect on our personal lives, and perhaps press the reset button. Think about living more simply, think about how we each can become more positive, conscious, and proactive in the new world we are entering. Let us continue to embrace new ideas and ways of how we operate. As an example, remote working should become more of a new normal. The benefits of that are huge. Less traffic, less pollution, more savings, all of this without compromising work output.

Leading on from this, I have also challenged my team to reimagine

the future. These are times where we are experiencing waves of challenges, however, with the right lens or perspective, we can see the opportunities in the waves. These opportunities will only surface if we adapt our mindset to want to do things differently.

Ad Outpost is primarily an analog company. This crisis has expedited our thinking on the exploration and incorporation of the digital aspect of our business. Online marketing has been growing at a steady rate, however, during this lockdown period, there has been an exponential growth in the world of digital marketing. This is a direct result of people spending more time online during the lockdown phases, which has boosted work-from-home, ecommerce and e-learning, as just a few examples. The idea of the Internet of Things (IoT) will further drive this impetus for us to migrate to a digital world. A consequence of all of this is data and the analytics of it. We, as marketers, can now achieve a more strategic and targeted approach to our audience. Indeed, data is the new oil that will illuminate more data-driven, customer-centric marketing campaigns.

There will always be a space for the analog billboard, however, in this reimagined future I talk about, I see us becoming a more hybrid company, a company that will be able to cater both for the analog and digital media worlds.

As my final thoughts, this period has been a humbling experience for all of us at Ad Outpost. It has reminded us how fragile we are and encouraged us to become more conscious of our actions, the consequences to the environment, and to each other. It has shown how we all need to take more responsibility, accountability, and ownership. And most of all, it has reminded us that we each have an obligation in our roles as active citizens to be the change we want to see in this reimagined future.





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# ACTING RATIONALLY IN IRRATIONAL MARKETS

By Henko Roos, Head of Manager Research at PSG Wealth

“Your success in investing will depend in part on your character and guts, and in part on your ability to realise at the height of ebullience and the depth of despair alike, that this too shall pass.” – Jack Bogle



Investors face extraordinary times as the COVID-19 pandemic has put the brakes on global economic growth, leading to a rapid increase in market volatility. The uncertainty created by this event has caused a significant decrease in investor sentiment, resulting in large drawdowns in financial markets across the world, through most asset classes.

We know that major behavioural biases emerge during a market crisis. Herd behaviour, otherwise known as the ‘bandwagon effect’, is a good example. This is when most people decide to buy or sell similar assets during a crisis.

According to behavioural expert, Alexis Bienvenu, this behaviour is partly rational: it is based on the fact that the first to sell an asset gets a better price. As a consequence, everyone intends to be the first to sell during a correction, as if they were racing against each other. If trying to be the first to sell is rational, there still comes a point when rationality risks being overshadowed by an irrational bias. When fear and panic come into play, investors forget about the long-term and fair prices and only focus on selling.

Allowing this fear and panic to drive decisions is a sure-fire way to underperform the market. As Warren Buffet rightly says: “The stock market is a device to transfer money from the impatient to the patient.”

## KEEP PERSPECTIVE AND THINK OF THE BIGGER PICTURE

History has taught us that bear markets and market downturns are inevitable. In fact, market pullbacks, corrections and bear markets happen more often than most investors expect – and they are typically followed by strong recoveries.

Recent research by Fidelity Investments shows that during the past 35-years, the US stock market has experienced an average drop of 14%, from high to low, during each calendar year. Still, this index enjoyed a positive annual return in more than 80% of the calendar years over this period. With downturns occurring so frequently, investors need to keep perspective and focus on the bigger picture.

Make sure your portfolio and investments are structured to suit your risk appetite and investment horizon. This, combined with realistic investment goals, can drastically reduce short-term panic and uncertainty during market setbacks. Also, be wary of being too conservative. Conservative strategies may not provide the desired growth potential you need to achieve your goals in the long-term.

Data reflects that investors who held on to their assets through a global financial crisis, for example, were ultimately rewarded. But hindsight is 20/20 and while we are in the midst of a unique event such as COVID-19, it is difficult to identify when sentiment will improve and when the current market downturn will fully recover.

It is one thing to acknowledge the dangers of your emotions to your investment portfolio; it is altogether another challenge to keep your emotions in check and not act on your fears as you see your portfolio value decreasing. The best thing you can do if you feel panic rising is turn to objective facts and knowledge. Read up on previous crises and how they panned out for investors over time. Better yet, turn to your financial adviser, who should be able to provide objective insights and guidance to safeguard your investments.



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# WATERFALL'S WILDLIFE IS THRIVING

Photography by Kevin Gow, Sue Gow and Elias Van Dyk

Lockdown has affected all of us, to a greater or lesser degree. Social media abounds with videos of wild animals roaming the streets of our cities. But have you ever wondered what impact the restrictions on our movement and activity has had on the animals on our estates?



*Nile Monitors* (KG)

**W**e recently spoke to a member of the Environmental Committee, Kevin Gow, to find out about the influence of lockdown on the wildlife within the Waterfall development.

According to Kevin, the lockdown period where humans were housebound, has meant that the animals had a bit more space to enjoy. For example, during the more stringent lockdown levels, the animals could forage more freely, and some of them could even breed more effectively. "Marsh owls actually nest on the ground in the long grass at this time of year. If a breeding pair of owls is disturbed, they may decide to

relocate - and the opportunity for the species to breed in these last remaining protected moist grassland habitats could be lost. Perhaps the time of lockdown has taught us to be even more careful in this regard," he says.

During winter, many animals take refuge in the long grass and down burrows, some hibernating, many in a state of torpor, so the wildlife seems much quieter and is less frequently spotted. That said, you may see species like scrub hares coming closer to gardens for better foraging. The jackals are also still active, and there are a couple of large 1,8 metre-long Nile Monitors on the move, looking for a mate, as this is their breeding season.



*Marsh Owl* (KG)





*Highveld Baboon Spider (EvD)*



*Baby Leopard Tortoise (KG)*



*Greater Flamingos at the estate dam in Waterfall Village (SG)*

“Recently, there have been plenty of photos of the Nile Monitors shared on the residents’ wildlife messaging group, along with a few photos of our local tortoises digging holes to lay their eggs. In fact, someone was lucky enough to snap a picture of a baby tortoise, which is great evidence that they are establishing themselves well here,” he adds.

A resident sighting of particular interest during the lockdown period, supported by photographic evidence,

was of a Greater Painted Snipe, a very unusual record for our area and a first for the Waterfall development.

Something else that is interesting to note is that the Highveld Baboon Spider seems to be doing well here. They are endangered and are saddled with a significant problem in that, when their burrow is destroyed, they are unable to rebuild it. They lose that ability as they mature. So, if their home is crushed, they will simply die. Happily, they are being spotted and photographed within the development quite often these days.

While our resident wildlife is thriving, it is important to remember that we all need to play our part in caring for them and their environment. Kevin shared a few tips with us to help preserve our ecosystem as we move forward.

Firstly, do not release exotic animals into the environment. This would include things like peacocks, parakeets, mallard ducks, and even exotic species of hedgehogs (not to be confused with our very special South African hedgehog). There are two reasons for this. Some species, like the exotic hedgehogs, may not survive the environment they are put into, while others threaten existing South African species. “Mallards interbreed with our native yellow-billed ducks, while birds like parakeets may take over the nesting areas used by native birds,” he explains.

Secondly, domestic animals can have a massive impact on a wildlife system like that of Waterfall. Luckily, dogs are easy to handle if you stick to the rules of having them on a leash when outside. Cats are not as simple, unfortunately. Cats still have a powerful hunting instinct and have been known to bring home rodents, lizards, and birds, no matter how well-fed these felines are. Ideally, cats should be kept indoors as much as possible or at the very least at night, during their most active hunting hours. You can further limit their hunting by adding a bell to their collars. Do your best to keep your domestic animals and pets away from any of the surrounding wild areas.

Finally, we need to keep our beautiful Waterfall environment clean. Even the tiniest scrap of plastic can mean the death of some animals in the habitat.

The Waterfall ecosystem is here for residents to enjoy, and Kevin takes great pleasure in encouraging the next generation of budding conservationists. “We have the perfect outdoor environment for our children to explore, to discover all of the fascinating creatures inhabiting our endemic greenbelts,” he says.

While we, along with the animals, are taking a break during lockdown, we must always remain vigilant in helping to protect this wonderful environment that we get to call home.



# THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF WATERFALL

Photographs by Franz Rabe of Natural Photography

Those living and working within Waterfall are fortunate enough to enjoy a multi award-winning urban development that is secure, easily accessible from major highways, has a world-class fibre optic and wireless communication network, as well as on-site alternative energy provision. The real beauty, however, lies in the fact that Waterfall is also still in tune with nature.

**B**esides having been designed as a safe, walkable, bikeable city with parks and green areas within the CBD, much care has been taken to preserve the 300 hectares of greenbelt and 80 hectares of indigenous parkland on the property – along with the rich resident bird and wildlife. When it comes to landscaping, Waterfall has embraced the Highveld's indigenous, water-wise plants and trees, cleverly integrating these with everything you would expect from a modern city: shopping centres, schools, office parks and commercial buildings, hotels, a hospital and 10 residential estates.

It is no secret that the Highveld climate is one of the best in the world, and so Waterfall has made the most of this to facilitate outdoor living. With 37km of hiking and biking trails along the Jukskei river that meanders across the property, many fishing dams, play parks and even a 20km mountain bike track, residents get to enjoy a superb quality of life that takes away concerns for safety and replaces it with a sense of well-being – all within the heart of Johannesburg. Benches, viewing decks and bird hides are also located at several intervals along the river, allowing residents to stop and take a breath while they admire the tranquillity of their surroundings.

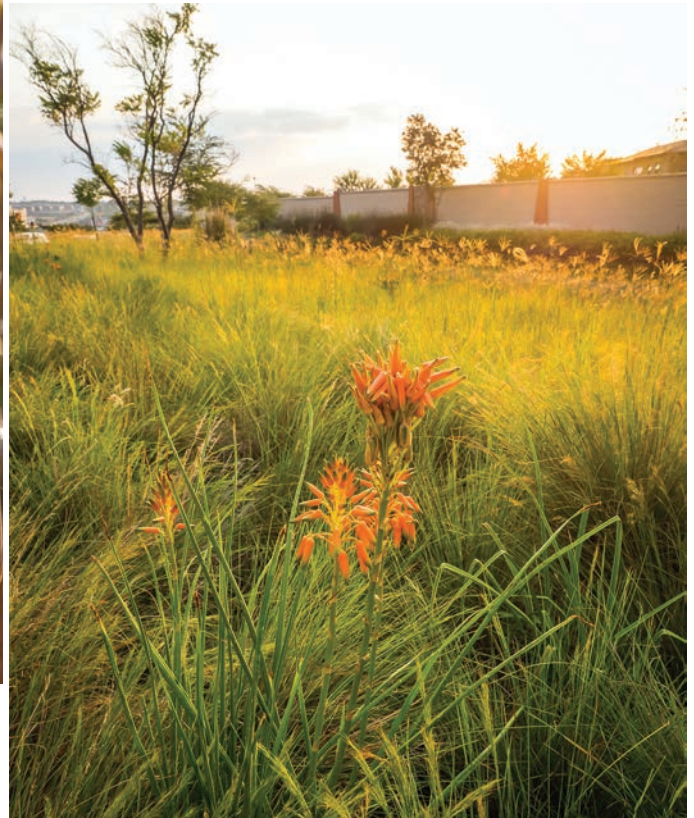
Why don't you do just that, right now? Sit back, relax and enjoy the natural beauty of Waterfall, showcased across the next few pages.







*300 hectares of greenbelt and  
245 bird species*















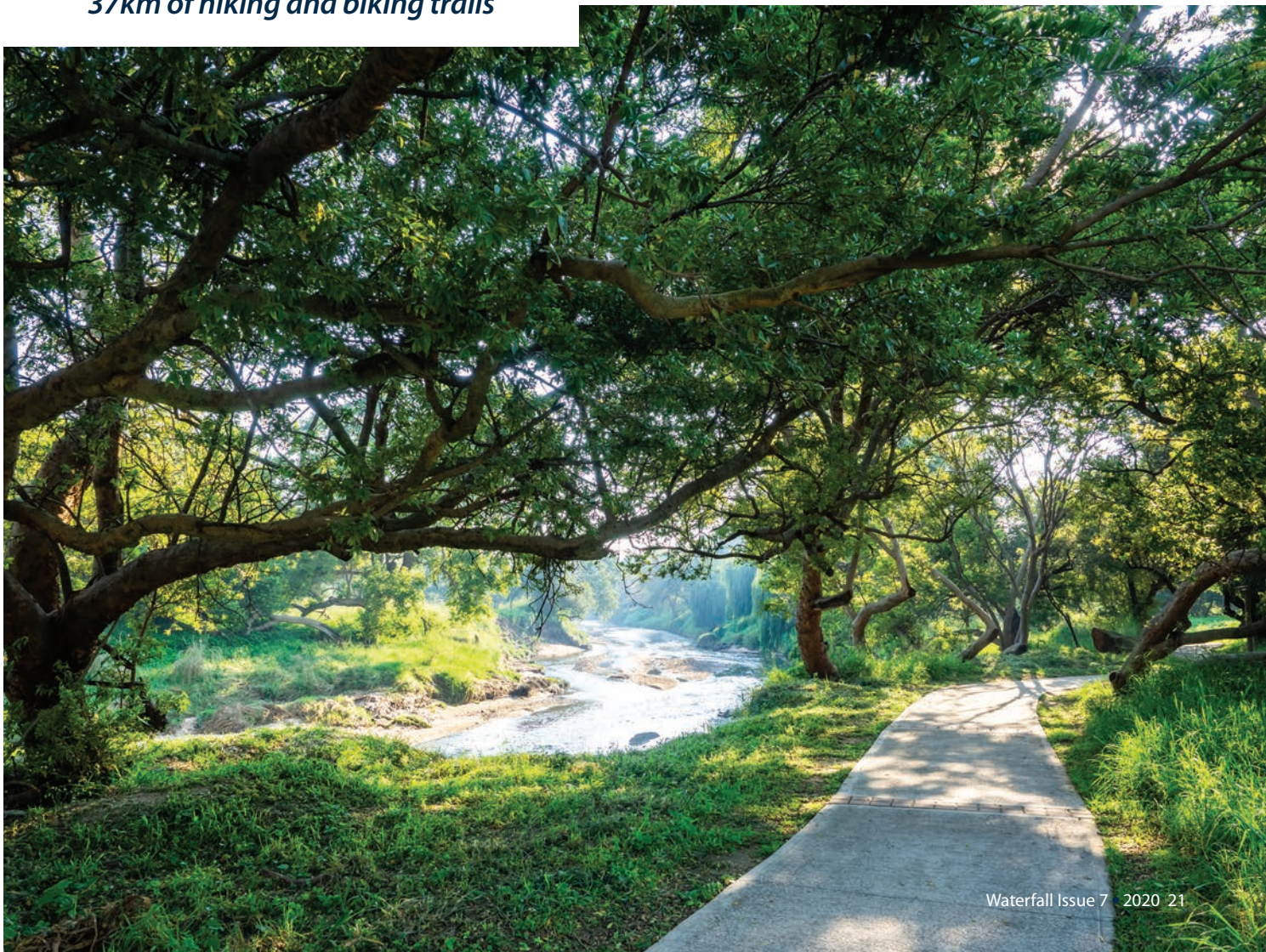
*country living in the city*







*37km of hiking and biking trails*





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Netcare Waterfall  
City Hospital



# CURSE OF THE VIKINGS?

## Dupuytren's Disease and Contracture: What you need to know

**D**upuytren's disease (or Viking Hand, as it is commonly known) is a condition which has stemmed from Scandinavian origins dating back to the early 16th century. Folklore also incriminates the kinsmen of clan MacCrimmons in Scotland as to its origins. It is a benign condition (non-cancerous) wherein the normal palmar tissues (sheath) thicken to form nodules and cords which eventually cause the fingers to adopt a flexed position.

### WHAT CAUSES IT?

Dupuytren's disease has a strong genetic inheritance especially among European-descent males. It is currently believed that a change in the cells that make up the palm fascia causes a different type of collagen to be produced that leads to the nodules and cords.

### Risk Factors and Associations:

- Genetic (European descent)
- Males > Females
- 40 to 70-year-olds usually
- HIV
- Alcohol
- Diabetes mellitus
- Lederhosen Disease (when the cords affect the feet).

### Clinical Symptoms and Signs:

- Little and ring fingers commonly affected
- Nodes/Nodules in palm
- Cords in palm
- Inability to fully extend at finger joints
- Usually painless.

### TREATMENT Conservative

This is usually indicated when the joint contractures are not severe and treatment entails the following:

- Hand Therapy exercises (usually stretching and massaging);
- Splinting of the hand by a therapist (in the early stages of contracture);
- Steroid injections (into nodules mostly).

### Alternative Therapies

- Collagenase injection (enzyme to break down cords), though this is not popular in South Africa;
- Radiotherapy (in early stages), though this is also not popular in South Africa.

### Surgery

Surgery is required when contractures affect activities of daily living and reduce dexterity.

When it comes to surgery, the following options are available:

- Z Plasty and Fasciectomy (a preferred option) – where the skin is lengthened, and the cords are removed;
- Needle Fasciotomy - where a needle is used to puncture cords via the skin and manipulated until it ruptures;
- Dermofasciectomy - in older patients with fragile skin, the cord and skin are removed together and a skin graft is used.

Dr Ashley Naidoo is a specialist Hand and Upper Limb Surgeon at Netcare Waterfall City Hospital and the co-founder of the Gauteng Orthopaedic Institute. The Gauteng Orthopaedic

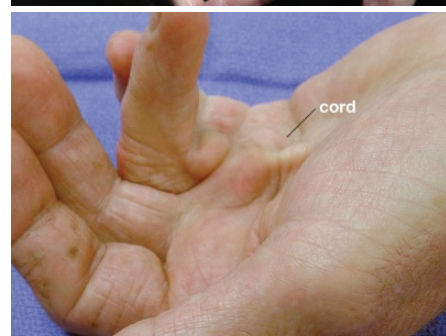
W A T E R F A L L



By Dr Ashley Naidoo, a specialist Hand and Upper Limb Surgeon at Netcare Waterfall City Hospital and the co-founder of the Gauteng Orthopaedic Institute



WWW.DUPUYTREN.SG



WWW.PHYSIO-PEDIA.COM

Cords in palm, Inability to fully extend at finger joints



HTTPS://DUPUYTENS-SOCIETY.ORG.UK

Hand Therapy exercises



WWW.NHS.MEDICAL.NET

Institute and Tanya Coats Occupational Therapy have collaborated to offer a specialised Hand and Upper Limb Unit at Netcare Waterfall City Hospital. Call 011 304 7756 to book an appointment.

# 'MZANSI TOURISM CHAMPIONS' WEBSITE UNITES A SECTOR IN NEED

By Linsey Schluter

The travel and tourism sector is one of the hardest hit by the global uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdowns imposed in many countries. Although the industry, through the Tourism Business Council of South Africa (TBCSA), is lobbying hard for the return of local and international travel (perhaps as early as September), the outlook remains grim.

**T**he TBCSA predicts that 600 000 tourism jobs could be lost this year alone, which would be a devastating reality for anyone working in the sector. But in true South African spirit, people are pulling together – and nowhere is this more evident than in the launch of *Mzansi Tourism Champions*, an online platform dedicated to championing the needs of those working in the tourism field.

Heinie Bosman, one of the founders, says that *Mzansi Tourism Champions* is a collaborative

effort across sectors, which hopes to bring immediate support or relief to immediate problems.

"The website matches people in need with people who can help. It's very much a platform of 'asks' and 'answers'. We hope that, by building a network of people who can offer skills, advice and monetary donations, we'll all be able to weather the storm."

A 'strong collective' is at the heart of *Mzansi Tourism Champions*. Any individuals in the industry, from agents

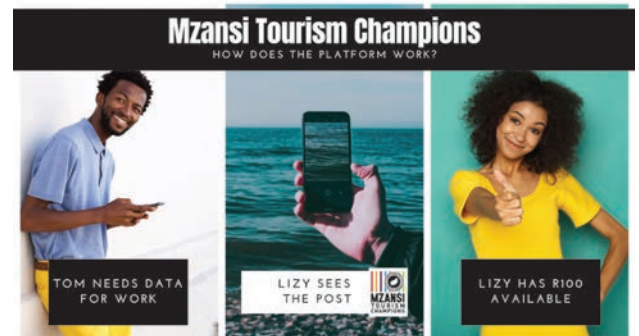
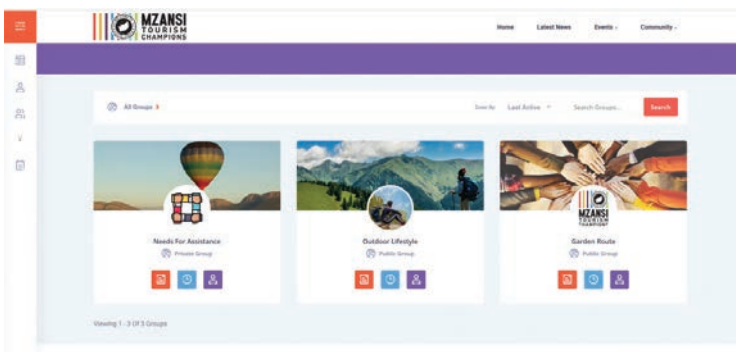
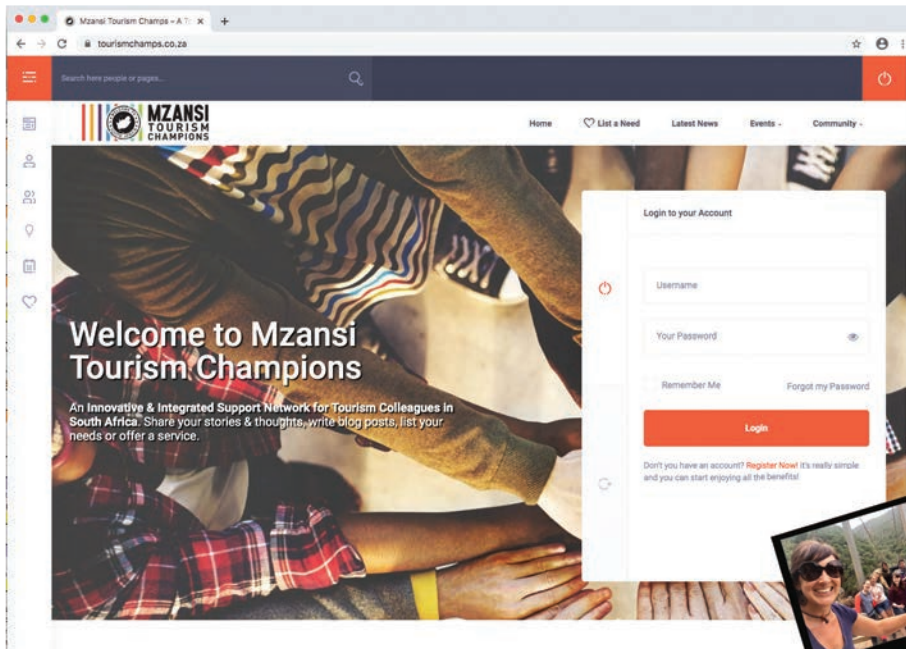


and operators, to freelance guides and business owners, can register on the website and set up a profile. Once they have a profile, they can either ask for help, or offer assistance.

"Through an honest, supportive and constructive platform, we aim to unify current efforts," says Bosman. "We want to bring various parties together to facilitate the distribution of donations, especially to those who are struggling to access relief funds and schemes."

The platform is not focused solely on financial support. According to Bosman, *Mzansi Tourism Champions* will act as a marketplace for a number of different services, from free legal advice to design and copywriting skills.





“Essentially, the website aims to put two people together. For example, if Tom needs data for his work, he can post this request. Lizzy sees the post and has R100 available. She messages Tom directly in order to get his details and buy him some data.”

In many ways, it is a simple, straightforward way for people in the tourism industry to support someone in need. But it is so much more. There are ‘Think Tank’ discussions on how to improve the industry, and how to innovate for the future, as well as collaborative discussions on how to solve pressing industry issues and dilemmas.

“We really hope that the industry will connect to share their wisdom, lessons and experiences over this time,” says Bosman. “We’re confident that this platform will offer the support needed – and that people will pay it forward.”

*Mzansi Tourism Champions* also allows members (or champions) the opportunity to raise the profile of their own business, service or offering. One can write a blog about one’s travel adventures, share photographs and celebrate all that South Africa offers.

For Bosman, *Mzansi Tourism Champions* is a community, a network and a safe space for the industry to come together: “Any collaboration is welcome, and we’re hoping that the website and social media channels will grow significantly over the next few weeks. While the need is great, so are the number of people with the skills, energy and will to help.”

The first phase of the project is complete, and Bosman extends a special ‘thank you’ to Shanaaz Taliep from SAYTC and Tim Louw from Atlantic Point Hostel, who were instrumental in getting it off

the ground. “It has been a magical combination,” says Bosman. “In the words of Tim Louw, ‘while our borders remain closed, our hearts remain open.’”

For more information visit [www.tourismchamps.co.za](http://www.tourismchamps.co.za), call Heinie Bosman on +27 61 107 7625 or email [hello@tourismchampions.org](mailto:hello@tourismchampions.org)





# THE REAL DEAL ABOUT SPEKBOOM

There's this versatile little miracle plant called Spekboom, perhaps you've heard of it?

**W**ith all the concerns around 'global climate change', this seemingly humble succulent, found predominantly in the Eastern Cape and in the Karoo, seems like the God-given answer to the planet's environmental problems. But there's so much more to this incredible plant it's no wonder we are hearing such a lot about it lately and why it has become extremely trendy to plant one, hashtag it, 'share' and 'like' all that is Spekboom.

## Why the name 'Spekboom'?

Its scientific name is *Portulacaria afra* but it is affectionately known as 'Spekboom' which is literally translated from Afrikaans as 'Bacon Tree'. Other names include 'Dwarf Jade', 'Pork Bush' and 'Elephant

Bush' mostly because wild game, especially elephants, love to feed on Spekboom leaves and this shrub forms an integral part of their diet.

## Edible, Nutritious, with Medicinal Benefits

However, this plant is not just for elephants - sucking on the leaf of a Spekboom can quench your thirst, treat exhaustion, and alleviate heatstroke - something to remember if you ever happen to find yourself lost in the bush. Its delicious citrus flavour makes for a fresh and exciting addition to salads, stews and roasts, there are even cake recipes to try out! Juiced leaves can be used as an effective antiseptic to soothe anything from mouth infections, sore throats, pimples, rashes, stings and sunburn. What's more, rumour has it that

breastfeeding mothers in Mozambique (apparently) eat Spekboom leaves to increase their milk supply.

## Water-wise and Eco-friendly

Suitable for all seasons and weather conditions, Spekboom has a photosynthetic mechanism which allows it to adapt to both rainforest-like settings and drought-stricken, arid environments, making it suitable for almost any garden. It is very resilient, as it only needs as little as 250 - 350mm of water per year to thrive. The pretty, pink Spekboom flowers that appear late winter to early spring are nectar-rich and attract endangered bees, which is highly beneficial for a healthy, balanced ecosystem, thus stimulating biodiversity.

## Easy to grow

Spekboom is easily propagated, which is great news for budget gardeners. Simply cut or break off a segment of a Spekboom, let it dry out for one or two days and then

*A water-wise plant that's ideal for low maintenance gardens.*



*Easily propagated, great news for budget gardeners.*



#### More interesting facts:

- Spekboom plants are said to be able to live around 200 years and can grow up to five metres tall.
- The taste of the leaves can change depending on the time of day as the sun rises and sets.
- The creators of The Great Labyrinth of Africa in Klapmuts aim to create a Spekboom plantation so large that it can be seen from outer space.
- A man with the name Abraham Enzo van Vuuren, an environmental activist who cycles all over the country to raise environmental awareness, carries a baby Spekboom in a vial around his neck.
- Spekboom plants are very easy-to-grow plants. They enjoy plenty of sunlight and can thrive equally as a bonsai tree, in a pretty pot, or in the ground as a hedge.
- With all its amazing medicinal properties, one wonders if there shouldn't be some research into the Spekboom plant in the global challenge of finding a cure or a therapy for the COVID-19 virus! Some food for thought.

Source: Garden & Home, with input from Michelle Burger



*A powerful tool in the fight against climate change and the move towards a zero-carbon world.*

stick it in the ground. Give it a little water\* every few days and you'll soon have a new Spekboom plant of your own. (\*Make sure you don't give it too much water or it will rot.)

#### The REAL deal about Spekboom

All items listed here are fantastic reasons to love this plant, but the main reason why the Spekboom is heralded as South Africa's miracle plant, enjoying unprecedented plant popularity in the press and on social media, is its ability to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and improve the quality

of the air we breathe at an astonishing rate. It has been established that this superior succulent can absorb between four to ten tonnes of carbon per hectare to make plant tissue and produce oxygen, even after the sun sets. The plant stores solar energy to perform photosynthesis at night, making a Spekboom thicket ten times more effective at carbon fixing per hectare than a tropical rainforest! Excess carbon in the atmosphere is responsible for global warming, so the more carbon we can remove from the air and return to the ground, the better. If you put this into perspective, it is truly amazing.





*Greater One-horned Rhinoceros (DS)*

By Ron Searle, Photography by Merl & Marty Arnot, David Shackelford, Pallav Pranjali, Rockjumper Birding Tours and Ron Searle

As part of the ancient landmass of Gondwanaland, the Indian sub-continent possesses an impressive variety of wild mammals similar to much of those that have evolved in Africa.

**B**hutan, a kingdom and birding hotspot, is located in the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas. To its south, it shares a border with Assam, a state of NE India. I had booked a 20-day tour of Bhutan and there was the offer of a 5-day pre-tour option to explore the wildlife and birds of the National Parks of Kaziranga and Nameri in Assam – to a birder, of course, this was irresistible.

It is perhaps surprising that, in India, with its human population of 1.3 billion, much of its wildlife survives in various National Parks (NP) proclaimed specifically to conserve it.

In Assam, (formerly an independent country), the Kaziranga NP (covering

430km<sup>2</sup>) was established as a forest reserve in 1908, a wildlife sanctuary in 1950, and awarded World Heritage Site status by UNSECO in 1985. The Brahmaputra River forms the northern boundary of the reserve. Its extensive floodplain, surrounded by small pockets of lowland evergreen forest, stands of moist broadleaf woodland and expansive areas of grassland, attracts an impressive list of birds and mammals, the latter including two thirds of the world's population of the Greater One-horned Rhinoceros, Asian Elephant, Bengal Tiger, Leopard, Asian Wild Buffalo, rare Swamp Deer, Hog Deer, Sloth Bear, Hoolock Gibbon (primate), Wild Boar and Ganges River Dolphins.

The Nameri NP (covering 200km<sup>2</sup>),

also located in Assam, is 35km from the nearest city, Tezpur, and is en route to Bhutan. It hosts a vast number (for its size) of Asian Elephants, has a bird list of 374 species and is refuge for the endangered White-winged Duck, the only small remnant population of this species in India (very sparsely distributed also in Bangladesh and SE Asia). The Nameri NP has about 94% forest coverage – it has unfortunately become an area of illegal logging and continuous human/animal conflict. 3 000 head of forest-encroaching cattle now graze in the reserve, resulting in the inevitable conflict between the elephants and the cattle owners. In 2001 alone, 18 farmer deaths caused by elephants occurred. The future of this NP is accordingly threatened and therefore rather uncertain.

### **KAZIRANGA NP**

My adventure commenced with an early afternoon flight from OR Tambo Airport to Kolkata in India via Dubai and then a connecting flight to Guwahati in Assam. I arrived the following day at noon and was met at the airport by a very friendly





Asian Wild Buffalo (DS)



Asian Elephants (DS)

and obliging agent, Inram Ali, who was to be my guide for the entire 25-day trip. I was immediately transferred to my hotel, the Brahmaputra Ashok, which overlooks the mighty river of the same name. A snooze followed by a dinner and light refreshment readied me for the meeting that evening with the rest of our tour group of 7. Just before the meeting I was very surprised to find, at the hotel entrance, an unconscious Yellow Bittern which had flown into a glass window of the hotel, stunning itself. Not seriously injured, it quickly recovered and was on its way again. A good omen for the birding?

Soon after breakfast the next morning, we were on our way to the Kaziranga NP, travelling through very populated rural areas in a stifling atmosphere of smoke and dust (no rain for 5 months), the cloudless sky white rather than the usual blue. Our minibus journey of 5 hours was interrupted by only one stop at a smouldering rubbish dump where we were delighted to find no less than about 30 Greater Adjutants, an endangered stork species very similar in appearance

to the Maribou of Africa. During the final half hour of the trip the scenery changed to that of less populated forested areas. On entering the NP, we spotted 4 Great One-horned rhinos and an enormous Asian Wild Buffalo.

An excellent lunch at the Diphla River Lodge, our overnight hotel, was followed by an afternoon birding/ game viewing jeep ride during which Asian Elephant, Hog and Swamp Deer, Rhesus Macaque (a primate) and Wild Boar were observed. Birding was equally successful with a list in excess of 100 species adding to a most enjoyable day.

We rose early (4.00am) the next morning for an elephant-back ride primarily to search for the very rare and critically endangered Bengal Florican (member of the 27-species-strong bustard family and featured in the *100 Birds to See Before You Die* book by D Chandler and D Couzens). Our group of 7 was split into 3 for what turned out to be a most uncomfortable (for the backside) experience. Our one-hour ride was unsuccessful in flushing a Florican but



Greater Adjutants at local rubbish dump (MA)

afforded further spectacular views of the rhinos, including several mothers with calves providing an intimate encounter with one of the world's great but endangered mammals. The rest of the day was spent birding the central and western part of the Park with a 2-hour break for lunch back at the Diphla River Lodge. 26 new (lifer) bird species, the highest number for the entire trip, were recorded over this period. The buffet dinner, comprised largely of various curried dishes around a bamboo fire, was good, but it inevitably resulted in upset stomachs for a few group members.

The next morning, we departed for the Panbari forest located within the Park boundaries for some forest birding. The trip produced an additional 8 lifers, bringing my tally for the Kaziranga NP to 34 lifers, including Red Junglefowl, (ancestor of our domesticated 'chicken') and Bar-headed Goose, which also features in the *100 Birds to See Before You Die*. The latter qualifies for inclusion in the book by virtue of its ability to migrate 1 600km over the highest part of the Himalayas, survive 320km per hour wind speeds, fly at an altitude of over 10 000m (2/3 less oxygen than that at sea level), and endure intense cold. Needless to say, this bird freak has evolved with certain physiological features which enable it, using its specialised haemoglobin, to extract from 'thin air' more oxygen than any other bird species, and sustain vigorous flapping flight which in turn produces sufficient heat to prevent its feathers from becoming encrusted with ice.





*An elephant crossing the Kaziranga Wetland (RS)*



*Bengal Florican (RJ)*



*Bar-headed Geese (RJ)*



*Ibisbill (DS)*

## NAMERI NP

After lunch we bade farewell to our friendly hosts at the Lodge and commenced our 3-hour journey to the Nameri NP for a 2-night stay at the Eco Camp in the forest. Shortly after arriving, we were very lucky to encounter a small family of 3 Hoolock's Gibbons, an endangered primate species. The adult male and female, along with an immature male, provided excellent views as they sat motionless in the trees, staring at us as intently as we stared back at them.

Our late afternoon arrival at Eco Camp (large tents with adjoining ablutions) enabled a short walk to the river Jia Bhareli for a sighting of a pair of very handsome Hodgson's Redstarts (lifer) followed by a dinner of tasty curried vegetables. We then turned in, with the intriguing calls of a Brown Hawk Owl lulling us to sleep.

## THE QUEST FOR THE WHITE-WINGED DUCK

One of the 5 rarest duck species in the world and critically endangered, this

forest duck (numbering probably less than 500 individuals) is only found in the Assam province of India and certain fragmented areas of SE Asia. After an early breakfast, we drove down to the Jia Bhareli River for a canoe crossing into the Nameri NP and commenced a circuit of the forest ponds in search of this shy and secretive duck. Our walk was not without interest in the other birdlife and so we continually interrupted our quest with sightings of new birds as and when they presented themselves. After walking perhaps about 8km, the heat became unbearable for many of our group and we terminated the morning's proceedings at about 11.00am without a sighting of the duck and made our way back to Camp. After a refreshing shower and lunch we resumed our quest at about 2.00pm but without one couple who decided to raft the river – this is apparently the best rafting in India – and search for the highly sought-after Ibisbill, (another qualifier for the *100 Birds to See Before you Die*) – and a second couple who decided to take the afternoon off,

leaving our group leader, tour guide Inram, a Park guide, one other tour participant and myself (5 of us).

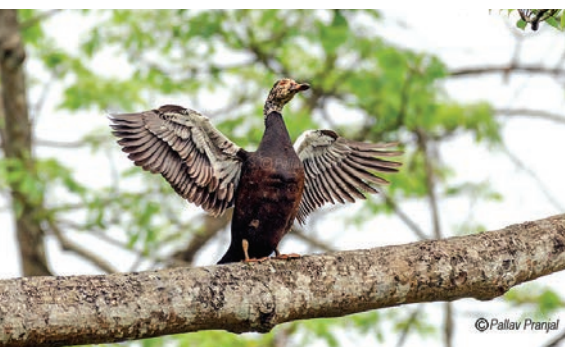
We not only repeated the morning circuit but enlarged it to include a loop incorporating a fast-flowing forest stream (10km). It was on this stream that a pair of the ducks suddenly flushed and before you could say "Jack Robinson" had disappeared upstream into the forest. I was the only one of our small group to have been scanning in the opposite direction and missed the birds completely, leaving me totally devastated.

Following the ducks upstream through the forest was hopeless. The forest floor was covered in dry leaves which crackled underfoot warning any shy ducks of our presence and giving them plenty of time to hide. We consequently abandoned this approach and continued our circuit of the ponds. Late afternoon with a setting sun we finally reached the last of the ponds (for the third time) and quickly satisfied ourselves that no ducks were present





Eco Camp Nameri (RS)



White-winged wood duck (PP)

and were accordingly about to give up when the Parks guide excitedly indicated that a pair of ducks were hidden in the long grass in the pond foreground. We crawled on hands and knees closer and there, sure enough, was a pair of this very large Muscovy-like duck. Hooray!! They immediately flushed and we absorbed every detail of the very conspicuous white wing-panels as they turned for a fly-by providing our tour leader with an opportunity for a photograph. Mission accomplished! After dinner our group leader used playback to entice the Brown Hawk Owl into our presence, a fitting finale to a great and successful day.

## OTHER BIRD SPECIES RECORDED AT KAZIRANGA:

Swamp Francolin, Spot-bellied Pelican, Grey-headed Fish Eagle, Pied Harrier, Pompadour and Thick-billed Green Pigeon, Green Imperial Pigeon, Blossom-headed Parakeet, Asian Drongo-Cuckoo, Blue-bearded and Chestnut-headed Bee-eaters, Wreathed Hornbill, Blue-eared Barbet, Ashy Woodswallow, Large Cuckooshrike, Grey-chinned



Tata Trucks (RS)

Minivet, Brown and Grey-backed Shrikes, Bengal Bushlark, Yellow-bellied Prinia, Dark-necked Tailorbird, Black-crested and White-throated Bulbul, Striated Grassbird, Tickell's Leaf Warbler, Rufous-capped, Chestnut-capped and Striated Babbler, Chestnut-tailed Starling, Taiga Flycatcher, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, Streaked Weaver.

## AND FOR NAMERI:

Pale-capped Pigeon, Barred Cuckoo-Dove, Banded Bay Cuckoo, Silver-backed Needletail, Greater Yellownappe, Black-winged Cuckooshrike, Maroon Oriole, Sultan Tit, Puff-throated Babbler, Spot-winged Starling, Pale-chinned Blue Flycatcher, Plain Flowerpecker, Vernal Hanging Parrot, Black-breasted Thrush.

Our Assam wildlife tour finally ended with a 7-hour bus journey from Nameri NP west towards Guwahati and then north to the Bhutan border. En route we collected the 8th member of our group, an American doctor, and then travelled through typical, vibrant Indian countryside and villages brimming with rickshaws, bicycles, water-buffalo carts, and garishly-coloured and ornately decorated Tata trucks – amid the rural odours of spices and farmyard animals, and the continuous honking of motor vehicle horns. The poor roads, subsistence farms, haystacks, tiny shops with their entrepreneur owners, and the skinny men and well-groomed, well-dressed womenfolk made the trip all the more memorable.





*Kyalami Schools Group (NPC) is reimagining education! Led by the Group Head of Academics and Innovation - Mark Naidoo, along with his dedicated team of deputies, Tammy Odendaal, Kim Deirino and Denise McKee (Kyalami Preparatory), Bobby Bain, Debbie Kromm and Debbie Waldron (Beaulieu Preparatory) and Jorge Ruiz-Mesa (Beaulieu College), they have worked to modify the academic offering to our community of schools.*

*Here is a snapshot of the considerations and actions that our amazing academic staff have been unpacking as they move to online teaching.*

## THE EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE IS CHANGING!

Are brick and mortar schools a thing of the past? Will online learning become the new norm? Teaching and learning is fundamentally a social activity – can this be replicated with an online learning approach? Recent media articles and interviews voice their opinions on the above questions, a number of which are given by technology experts and the corporate sector; I wonder if teachers will have their say.

Our schools have been fortunate enough to transition to an online learning model given our access to existing technology infrastructure, the agility of staff and availability of pupil devices. The rapid response by our management teams has also helped us in preparing for the inevitable changes that will take place, post Covid-19.

However, we are acutely aware of the inequalities in South African education as we note that the majority of pupils in government schools do not have access to infrastructure, data and connectivity to support distance learning. In many of these schools, education has ceased for the past few weeks, driving apart the education gap.

### NEW CHALLENGES

Schools thrive when pupils, parents and staff actively contribute to the learning experience that does not simply focus on academic prowess. Kyalami Schools Group has a holistic approach to education; the emotional, social and physical well-being of our pupils and staff are of paramount importance. While we have modified our programs to offer holistic development, it has become a challenge given the Covid-19 situation. Social interaction and play, especially for younger children in the pre-primary phase, is a necessary part of their development.

Teachers also depend on a social cues to guide their pedagogy. Subsequently, questioning techniques, facilitating a meaningful discussion and debating opinions become complicated in an online learning environment. However, adapting to these environments and learning to navigate an online meeting has propelled the pupils forward, teaching them an important skill they will need in the fourth industrial revolution.

Parents who have to manage the availability of devices and ensure uninterrupted connectivity, while their employers have expectations of them, adds a tangible level of stress to many households. Therefore, we have adopted an asynchronous approach to allow for flexibility, especially where more than one child needs to access a device per household. We remain committed as a Group to finding ways to improve the situation, within our means.

### THE BENEFITS

In some ways the move to remote teaching and learning has yielded positive outcomes for education, with the understanding that the experience is pronounced in independent schools. We are witnessing an accelerated development of more resilient pupils. Better time management, active self-discipline, an increase in independent thinking and the use of multiple technologies have become a norm in the current approach to learning. Teachers are finding new ways to engage their pupils and at times, pupils experience a greater level of personal attention through one-to-one interactions. Teacher creativity, peer collaboration and peer review of learning material, critical thinking and the ability to communicate succinctly via online mediums have strengthened our 21st century skills.

### WHY CONSIDER ONE OF THE KYALAMI SCHOOLS?

Teachers across our campuses accepted the challenge, albeit at short notice, to present their subject content remotely, in a professional manner. They have also become more innovative in their delivery and continue to find ways to sharpen their online skills. As a community of schools, our ability to work closely as a team and leverage our collective expertise has aided staff to feel secure during these challenging times. Online teaching and learning demands a range of teaching modalities; our staff continue to explore these modalities and determine to remain adaptable. We also maintain the view that technology remains an enabler – great teachers know how to leverage technology to reach a predetermined objective.

As a Group, it has always been our values of Integrity, Consistency, Accountability, Respect and Excellence which have driven our commitment to our pupils and parents. Our values determine who we really are. Access to the Kyalami Schools staff and management is seamless, which is important for constructive engagement. The staff go the extra mile (I know this sounds cliché) so that each child is nurtured and feels part of the greater community. There is an innate generosity which our teachers express to pupils in their care and our service to parents and pupils remains our core focus.

### IS THERE A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL?

When all is said and done, our values as a community will determine how we respond to a completely new approach to learning. We control our response, irrespective of the circumstances imposed on us. How we respond now will certainly have lasting effects on how we reform education in South Africa. The education system has been reset, not by choice. I see this as an opportunity to reimagine education – if we are completely honest, it's about time!

**#REIMAGINING EDUCATION**





The measure of success isn't always in awards and trophies, sometimes the measure of success is most noticeable in the efforts of humanity, community and caring. We salute the success of our staff, children and parents who have bravely accepted the challenge to keep working during the Covid-19 lockdown. Thank you for your inspiration and for helping us reimagine education in the Kyalami Schools Group.

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Senior Maintenance Manager	Jaco Beukes	072 052 0375	jaco@waterfallcountry.co.za	Maintenance
Maintenance Manager	Arno Botha	083 307 4685	arno@waterfallcountry.co.za	Maintenance
Environmental Manager	Ruan Spies	083 307 4783	ruan@waterfallcountry.co.za	Environmental and Landscape Management
Aesthetics and Building Control Manager	Aveer Singh	083 307 4713	aveer@waterfallcountry.co.za	Building Control and Aesthetics
Communications and Administration Manager	Cindy Selowe	010 591 4671 083 307 4718	cindy@waterfallcountry.co.za	- General enquiries; - Communications and Admin
Receptionist	Lely Mabaso	010 591 4950	lely@waterfallcountry.co.za	Biometric Enrolment
Clubhouse Manager	Maxon Mpawu	073 130 9197	maxon@waterfallcountry.co.za	Clubhouse
Estate Security Manager HOD	Clint Olivier	083 307 4780	clint@waterfallcountry.co.za	Physical Security
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# ARE WOMEN REALLY FROM VENUS?

By James Clarke

**T**here are now as many as 60 female heads of government in the world. In 1960, there was but one: Sirima Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka (then Ceylon).

As more and more women are heading governments and filling more and more cabinet posts, one is tempted to ask - will it make international relationships more tolerant? Will there be less war talk? Are women really gentler?

In the 1990s, Dr John Gray, an American relationship counsellor, wrote *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* inferring that women do have gentler natures. Somebody then cited an incident where English department students at California State University were asked to pair off. One had to write the opening lines of a short story; the partner then added the next few lines. Then back to the first person who continued the story, and so on.

Lisa paired up with Dave.

**Lisa:** At first, Laurie couldn't decide which kind of tea she wanted. The camomile, which used to be her favourite for lazy evenings, now reminded her too much of Carl, who once said in happier times that he liked camomile. But she felt she must keep her mind off Carl. His possessiveness was suffocating, and if she thought about him too much her asthma started acting up again. So camomile was out of the question.

**Dave:** Meanwhile, Advance Sergeant Carl Harris, leader of the attack squadron

now in orbit over Skylon 4, had more important things to think about than the neuroses of an air-headed asthmatic bimbo named Laurie with whom he had spent one forgettable night a year ago. "A.S. Harris to Geostation 17," he said into his transgalactic communicator. "Polar orbit established. No sign of resistance so far . . ." but before he could sign off, a bluish particle beam flashed out of nowhere and blasted a hole through his ship's cargo bay. The jolt from the direct hit sent him flying out of his seat and across the cockpit.

**Lisa:** He died almost immediately, but not before he felt one last pang of regret for psychologically brutalising the one woman who had ever had feelings for him. Soon afterwards, Earth stopped its pointless hostilities towards the peaceful farmers of Skylon 4. "Congress Passes Law Permanently Abolishing War," Laurie read in her newspaper one morning. The news simultaneously excited her and bored her. She stared out the window, dreaming of her carefree youth - with no newspapers to read, no television to distract her from her sense of innocent wonder at all the

beautiful things around her. "Why must one lose one's innocence to become a woman?" she pondered wistfully.

**Dave:** Little did she know, but she had less than 10 seconds to live. Thousands of miles above the city, the Anu'udrian mothership launched the first of its lithium fusion missiles. The dim-witted wimpy peaceniks who pushed the Unilateral Aerospace Disarmament Treaty through Congress had left Earth a defenceless target for the hostile alien empires who were determined to destroy the human race. Within two hours after the passage of the treaty the Anu'udrian ships were on course for Earth, carrying enough firepower to pulverise the entire planet. With no one to stop them, they swiftly initiated their diabolical plan. The lithium fusion missile entered the atmosphere unimpeded. The President, in his submarine headquarters on the ocean floor off Guam, felt the inconceivably massive explosion which vaporised Laurie and 85 million other Americans. The President slammed his fist on the conference table: "We can't allow this! I'm going to veto that treaty! Let's blow 'em out of the sky!"

**Lisa:** This is absurd. I refuse to continue this mockery of literature. My writing partner is a violent, chauvinistic, semi-literate adolescent.

**Dave:** Yeah? Well, you're a self-centred, tedious neurotic whose attempts at writing are the literary equivalent of Valium.

**Lisa:** Idiot!

**Dave:** Air-head!

(*Quod erat demonstrandum.*)  
But I bet they dated afterwards.



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