It is hard to believe that we already find ourselves at the end of the second quarter into our 2014/15 financial year. One only has to look at our achievements, especially, the growth in guests to parks, to be ensured that we had a great start. Now we should just create and keep that momentum. Attendance at the recent Indaba and presenting at key meetings, such as the Cape Film Commission workshop, will go a long way in getting us there.

We are happy to see that we will be continuing our good relationship with our responsible department, Department of Environmental Affairs, through the re-appointment of Minister Edna Molewa. Who can forget her presence and great words at the Farleigh Furniture Factory during SANParks week in 2011? We hope to once again receive her this year, during the 50th anniversary celebrations for Tsitsikamma.

Tsitsikamma is hard at work to showcase the achievements over these last 50 years, actually a short period in conservation terms. To that end the restaurant has had a revamp and is now managed by Cattle Baron. Do take your families to go and experience an excellent meal overlooking Africa’s oldest Marine Protected Area. Plans are afoot for a total revamp of the restaurant precinct, an upgrade of the oceanettes and creating better traffic flow amongst others.

Our People and Conservation department has been connecting to society via exposure of careers in the Conservation and Tourism sector. 400 young minds were opened up via the Kids in Parks programme, this time hosted by Wilderness. We are proud to announce that Total SA donated R 500 000 towards the establishment of a community nursery in Knysna, via SANParks CSI programme.

Integration between Conservation Services and Operations are improving on a daily basis, the successful burning of candlewood, the first time in 20 years, being a case in point. Close cooperation during the planning for Tsistikamma’s 50th celebrations being another case in point. With the Garden Route forming an integral part to the World Heritage of the Cape Floristic Kingdom, it was great to have been represented by Maretha Alant and Johan Baard at the Annual Biodiversity Forum. We plan to expose the management of fynbos at the upcoming Fynbos Forum, this year hosted in Knysna.

Saying goodbye is never easy, but at the same time we can celebrate the achievements of our colleagues who are moving up the corporate ladder. We wish Andre Riley, Mzwandile Mjadu and Liezel Mavata the best in their new positions. We thank them for the loyalty and team spirit they displayed during their tenure with us. However at the same time we welcome Johan de Klerk and Walter Mzimba and of course our young and vibrant interns into our dynamic team.

We continue to celebrate the endless effort of our rangers in sharing our desired conservation outcome with our stakeholders. Rangers such as Pieter Roman with his passion for law enforcement sets a high example for us all.

Happy planning and implementing! Keep that flag flying high :). Please remember to nominate your outstanding colleagues via the electronic nomination form on the intranet for the Regional Awards!

Jill Bunding-Venter

General Manager: Garden Route National Park
Global news ..

World travel trends by a global consultancy group, Resonance, predicts a global growth in the number of travellers in 2014/2015. This is attributed to a ‘global growth in GDP (Gross Domestic Product) by 3.8% in 2014.’ This economic growth will be mostly driven by BRICS, at least between 2015 and 2017.’ China is expected to lead the pack in the number of ‘outbound tourists’ travelling this year alone.

Nature based tourism, which is perceived as one of a few ways travellers can benefit from the conservation of biodiversity, is also becoming popular. Professor Andrew Balmford from the University of Cambridge says this type of tourism is often ‘poorly quantified’. He says ‘findings show that since the 1990s, while visitor numbers have been falling slightly in the US and Japan, these results are exceptional: In three-quarters of the 20 countries analyzed, visitation to nature reserves is increasing - in some countries by as much as 7 or 8 per cent per year. In Africa, Europe, Asia and Latin America the increases were on average positive and the United Kingdom saw an average 3 per cent annual increase. It is believed that the previous results for the US and Japan arose because the growth in nature-based tourism is linked with wealth, with visit rates increasing fastest in the poorest countries (such as Ghana, Madagascar and India), and growing more slowly in richer ones, eventually falling below zero in the richest nations.’ (source, online: http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/new-research-shows-a-global-trend-in-nature-based-tourism).

News from Southern Africa...

Crackdown on illegal collection of protected goods in Knysna

Writes Shamley Titus

SANParks rangers are hard at work to nip illegal environmental activities in the bud. This has resulted in 3 major busts this year where dockets were opened. One such case started with a call from a resident in Knoetzie. She reported that two suspicious looking people carrying large bags were walking up the Noetzie road. The South African Police Services was contacted and the two men were stopped and searched. Upon inspection it was reported that the pair were in possession of Rooiwortel that is believed to be harvested from the nearby coastline. Rooiwortel is an Afrikaans word for Bulbine natalensis or ‘red root’. It is an aloe-like plant common to many areas of SA. It is reputable for treating intestinal disorders and can act as a blood cleanser.

‘82 pieces of Rooiwortel were confiscated from the first suspect and 77 pieces from another’ according to Shamley Titus, a marine ranger in Knysna. This is a total of 159 pieces. ‘A docket was opened by the SANParks Staff, Peter Roman, Mark Phillips, and Jerome Maart and Shamley Titus’ says Titus.

The two accused, one being a second offender was arrested, and was detained at the Knysna Police station. Both were charged for the illegal removal of forest produce under the National Forest Act of 1998 and the Environmental Protected Areas Act of 2004.
More news

50 reasons to visit Tsitsikamma

Tsitsikamma was declared a National Park back in 1964, subsequent to a Conference held in Seattle which encouraged a move to protect marine areas as well as terrestrial (forestry and land). The marine area was protected by the old National Parks Act until the 1980s when it emerged the area qualified as a Marine Protected Area (MPA) under the Marine Living Resources Act (1998).

The word ‘Tsitsikamma’ means ‘the place of many waters’.

Its MPA is split into the De Vasselot Section Controlled Zone and the Tsitsikamma MPA (No-Take Zone). A total of 202 species of fish, sharks and rays from 84 families have been recorded in the Tsitsikamma MPA alone. Fifteen of these species can be found on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) red data list as either vulnerable or near threatened whilst many other fish species protected by the MPA are classified as over-exploited or collapsed in South Africa.

***Send us your 50 reasons to visit the Tsitsikamma section of the Garden Route National Park and win a day’s guest pass to the Park. Email: clementine.mbatani@sanparks.org

Hope Spot comes to town

International Hope Spots are areas that are significant enough to conserve in the ocean. Some of these areas are already protected, while others still need protection. About 12% of the land around the world is now under some form of protection (as national parks, world heritage sites, monuments, etc.) while less than three percent of the ocean is protected in any way.

SA Hope Spots include areas with rich and diverse species such as Aliwal Shaol in KZN, Algoa Bay, Plettenberg Bay, Knysna and the Cape Whale Coast (Hermanus) area, according to the Sustainable Seas Trust.

This year the focus is on Knysna and Plettenberg Bay. A launch with Dr Sylvia Earle, the founder of the initiative is scheduled to visit Knysna in December 2014. In the meantime, work to introduce the initiative and create the necessary awareness about the concept was launched in Knysna on the 27th May 2014. Our staff in the Garden Route National Park are contributing significantly to make this initiative a success. Watch this space for a rehearsal of partners working together to save the ocean starting during the Oyster Festival in July.
‘Fish for tomorrow’

‘After World War 2, there was much optimism that fisheries could feed the world. But at the beginning of the 21st century, we are not sure.’ Hawthorne Daniel and Francis Minot.

Global fish reserves have dwindled at least 2 to three times over the last 5-10 years, according to Callum Roberts of the University of York, in the United Kingdom. A joint report dating as far back as 2008, by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Bank confirmed that ‘half of the world’s fishing fleet could be scrapped with no change in catch.’ In addition the report pointed to Africa’s declining fish species and identified various threats associated with this action.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are geographically defined spaces with an objective to conserve habitat and its related ecosystems. They are reputable for sustaining fisheries following numerous studies conducted on this topic. They are protected under the Marine Living Resources Act of 1998. The Tsitsikamma MPA is 66 km long, covering some 340 km. Of the fourteen (14) commonly caught marine line fish species endemic to South Africa, nine (9) can be found in Tsitsikamma. These include Dageraad, Red Stumpnose, Red Steenbras, Seventy-Four and Dusky Cob.

MPAs affirm the possibility of a larger catch in ‘take zones’. Their healthy fish populations ensure the possibility of repletion of laying more eggs. If fish is provided the habitat it needs to grow, research indicates older fish lay the most eggs. ‘The poenskop, for example, only becomes a sexually mature male after approximately 18 years, and has a potential life span of 45 years’ according to Buxton & Clarke. ‘The late maturity and long life span of reef fish species makes this species vulnerable to overexploitation, as fishing rapidly depletes the abundance of old individuals, which have much higher egg or sperm production than young ones.’ This implies that MPAs may well be the factory producing fish for adjacent waters and beyond, thus supporting local fisheries and tourism.

The Tsitsikamma MPA in particular has resulted in a booming tourism sector for the Park and neighbouring holiday makers in Tsitsikamma and surrounds. Research by Susan Oberholzer, from the University of the North-West confirmed the total impact of the Tsitsikamma National Park on the local economy resulted in total spending of ‘R45 359 784, an output effect of R50 002 793, and finally an income effect of R21 723 510’ back in 2010.

Further research by Jane Turpie, Barrie Clark, Ken Hutchings in consultation from SANParks, Cape Nature, WWF and the Cape Action for People (CAPE) found MPAs along the Garden Route including Tsitsikamma, Robberg in Plettenberg Bay and Goukamma in Knysna, had an economic value derived from recreational and commercial fisheries to the tune of R33 million per annum. This was back in 2006. What these researchers termed ‘non-use value of the MPA’ was estimated at even more, R421 million for the current system, accounts for overall costs and benefits of conservation.
Wilderness hosts 2014 Kids in Parks

The Wilderness section of the Garden Route National Park (GRNP) hosted 500 learners from rural and peri-urban areas for the Kids in Parks Programme from the 25th February 2014.

The Kids in Parks Programme is funded by the Department of Environmental Affairs and is implemented by South African National Parks. Pick n Pay act as main sponsors for the transportation for the programme. ‘The Aim of the Kids in Parks Programme is to provide learners with the opportunity of experiencing the National Park on their doorstep while also providing an opportunity to continue their learning in a natural environment which speaks to their subject content’ says P&C officer for Wilderness, Muneer Moses. Other reasons why the Programme is so significant include:

- The Programme inspires learners and participants towards considering the environment as an interrelated and interdependent system of which they are part, by interpreting the natural and cultural heritage through various activities, displays and information resources.
- Staff are trained and educated as well as community guides, honorary rangers, volunteers, community leaders, teachers and other educators. Training is to enable them to conduct EIE activities and develop information resources to visitors and neighbouring communities.
- It supports educators by evaluating and developing and/or providing information resources, materials, equipment and facilities for environmental interpretation and education for both pre and post-camp in-class activities.

Learners from Hibernia and Rosemoor Primary were among those included at this year’s Kids in Parks Programme.
Connecting to Society...

Career Expo guides learners to think about their future

writes Muneer Moses

A Career Roadshow hosted by SANParks has convinced learners that ‘the future is indeed in their own hands.’ During the week of the 7th to the 11th of April, Career Exhibitions were held at different schools in the George surrounds to provide the learners with information about different career paths, to ensure they make life changing choices. The Wilderness Section’s People & Conservation and the Conservation Departments joined hands to spread the word about the diversity of career possibilities within South African National Parks (SANParks).

1821 learners from nine schools attended the Career Exhibitions. Information stalls were setup by other Organizations to give the learners a broader scope of different types of career paths. The Education Department’s Psychologist gave a presentation on all the different categories of jobs in the SA market. The learners were then introduced to all exhibiting organizations. Each representative had to share as much information as possible with learners on their organization, its activities, mission and vision and job opportunities.

Nelson Tyhali (Marine Ranger), Nkosiyabo Lento (Environmental Monitor), William Jaftha (Environmental Monitor) represented the Conservation Department and informed the learners of their daily jobs, what skills a person needs for the job and where they can go to further their studies. Nkosiyabo (known as Lento) enjoyed the interaction with the learners and said that he feels blessed working as a ranger in Wilderness.

Knysna section receives donation from Total SA

KNYSNA: Plans for the Khayalethu Medicinal Plant Nursery Project will come to fruition during the 2014/15 financial year with SANParks’ CSI department successfully securing funds for the long awaited medicinal plant nursery project. TOTAL SA has awarded the project with a sum of R500 000 in order to get it up and running in the local community. The medicinal plant nursery will be housed within the Khayalethu community in the Knysna Section and will be one of the first community medicinal plant nurseries run cooperatively by SANParks and members of the NRUGS (Natural Resource User Groups). The aim of the nursery is to propagate medicinal plants which the NRUGS group and other affiliated members can make use of sustainably in order to lesson pressure on local coastal fynbos species, many of which are usually targeted for medicinal plant use. Melaney Barrath
The burning of Fynbos at Candlewood Farm in the Buffer Zone Knysna on Tuesday, the 08th April was successful.

SANParks Environmental Planner for the Garden Route National Park, Maretha Alant says the success can be attributed to a partnership with the local Fire Protection Association, the Knysna fire brigade, Working on Fire teams and the land owner John Stanwix.

‘Fynbos at Candlewood was last burnt 20 years ago ‘says John Stanwix. He says the five (5) hectare island of fynbos is rich in biodiversity. ‘In the mid 1990s, this area was overgrown, we burnt it in 1992, and that resulted in a revival of fynbos plants and flowers.’

Of the world’s six floral kingdoms, fynbos is the smallest yet richest per unit of area. A major threat to fynbos in the Southern Cape Region remains the spread of invasive alien species, such as wattle and acacia.

While scientific debates continue about when to burn or not to burn, locals are thrilled and expecting to see a full show of colour come Spring. Plant diversity in the area include the Erica species and Proteas.

Fire is very important in the lifecycle of fynbos. Certain plants, including some proteas, do not germinate if the veld is not burned at least 20 – 30 years and the species become moribund.

\textit{Fynbos} is a fire-adapted vegetation that requires regular \textit{burning} for its persistence. In the absence of fire, \textit{fynbos} is gradually replaced by thicket species. (fynboshub)

\textbf{Before the fire}

\textbf{The fynbos region is one of the world’s six floral kingdoms.}
How long have you been working for SANParks?, What did you do before you were a ranger?

I have worked for SANParks for the last 15 years. I started off as a general worker in Wilderness. I was appointed as a field ranger in 2002 and relocated to Harkerville. I moved back to the Knysna Marine section in 2012.

What is the best part about your job?
Enforcing the law that will ultimately conserve and protect nature.

What is the worst part about your job?
Sometimes the reality of basics hits home. When I suddenly run out of a budget and cannot travel, that hinders efforts to do what I love. I’m glad we have a good relationship with SAPS and other law enforcement agencies.

Tell us about your team.
The Team I work with are highly trained, motivated no-nonsense people who are highly motivated.

What do you like most about your Section?
It is beautiful, and I do everything possible to keep it that way.

Who is your role model? And Why?
Shamley Titus – we have come a long way and have been friends for a long time, we even worked together at Goukamma Nature Reserve. Shamley is helpful and has assisted me in many things along the way. He is someone that I can rely on, and has always been there for me.

What do you do during your spare time?
Occasionally I play competitive football at home, or else I love watching movies and spending time with my family.

Diarize important dates for the environment

- World Environment Week: 2 – 6 June 2014
  This year’s theme is ‘raise your voice not your sea level’! World Environment Day is on the 05th June every year.
- Mandela Day: 18 July 2014
- Arbor Week: 1 – 5 September
- SANParks Week: 8 – 12 September 2014
- Heritage Day: 24 September 2014
Buffer zones are areas surrounding the Garden Route National Park (GRNP) that could be potentially significant for biodiversity conservation. A Camera Trap Assessment sponsored by WWF-TMF and SANParks found blue duiker (at one site) Honey badger (at 6 sites) and leopard (at 4 sites) on private land. Blue duiker is a Red data Book species while Honey badger and leopard are South African TOP species (Threatened and Protected species). Other species captured in the Knysna Buffer Zone is caracal, bushpig, bushbuck, genet, Cape grysbok, Cape grey mongoose, porcupine, Vervet monkeys and baboons.

‘The objective of the Project is to undertake a camera trap assessment of mammal species less than 1 kilogram on private land linking up to the Goudveld and the Knysna estuary’ says Maretha Alant, Environmental Planner for the Garden Route National Park. Alant says Private land around the Park serves as a corridor for animals to move in and out of the Park. This information will be used to make planning decisions, for environmental assessments (EIAs) and others.

GRNP staff invited to present at the Annual Biodiversity Planning Forum 2014

Johan Baard and Maretha Alant joined the who’s who of biodiversity circles when they were invited to speak at SANBI’s annual Biodiversity Forum for 2014. The forum was held in the Eastern Cape’s Mpekweni Beach Resort from the 13–15th May 2014. Their presentation was on the Landscape –scale ecological functioning of Knysna’s Buffer Zone in the GRNP. This was one of a few presentations mapping the ecological infrastructure to inform policy and decision making. According to Malusi Nxumalo, this 11th Biodiversity Planning Forum was attended by more than 200 people and 46 interns from various organs of State. He also adds that ‘the forum began in 2004 to provide an opportunity for individuals, organizations (Government and non-Government) to form an integral part of spatial biodiversity planning and meet once a year to share more information on projects.’
Unlocking the economic potential of the film industry in Eden

The George Municipality and the Cape Film Commission held a workshop in March 2014 attended by Municipalities with the area, Government Departments, local private sector industry, film makers. SANParks was invited to take part as well. Len du Plessis, Planning Manager for the GRNP gave a presentation with all the relevant details. The hectares in the Park, different views of the Park’s seascapes and landscapes. He then presented the application process film makers would need to go through to obtain a permit. The audience was captivated by the beauty of the Park.

The Homtini MTN race was a 2-day affair starting on the 26th April. Organised by Garden Route Events, the event had a 10km fun ride for kids while adults went on 30km and 60km rides. So says event organizer, Louise Wilson, ‘the winners of the male category, also called the Elephants, were Kobus Barnard, with a total of 5h30 minutes, followed by William Wertheim Aymes and Clinton Halsey.’

The winner of the ladies category was Fienie Barnard followed by Hannele Steyn and Karin Botha,

Deemed ‘Africa’s Top Travel Show’, the Durban tourism Indaba is undoubtedly the country’s biggest event. It was attended by 13,000 delegates from the travel and tourism related industries. Southern Africa Tourism Services Association (SATSA) has hosted the first round of 3 roadshows with South African Tourism (SAT). The first round was held at the Sandton Convention Centre back in November 2013. Round 2 was in Durban in May 2014 and Cape Town’s next. According to the Indaba’s website, SAT invited 400 to 600 hosted buyers to attend INDABA 2014. ‘For the first time, SAT packaged pre- and post-INDABA tours. SAT identified the seven most-in-demand experiences, and tours and created around these – both in the host city and further afield, ensuring delegates can be treated to exclusive INDABA experiences.’
Connecting society to opportunities in the GRNP

Management in the Garden Route National Park identified ‘adventure activities’ that could meet both the conservation mandate and also stimulate tourism in the Region. This will include opening up business opportunities to private companies.

Andile Namntu, Business Development Manager (BDU) for the Garden Route National Park says the GRNP is guided by the tourism and commercial strategies of SANParks. ‘We are guided by the Public, Private Partnership (PPP) as defined in the National Treasury Regulations, promulgated under the Public Finance Management Act of 1999.’ Namntu says an expression of interest for interested parties or companies with extensive experience in events management and adventure activities is now officially opened.

A briefing session was held earlier this year with various local companies. ‘An expression of interest (EOI) is issued by SANParks in accordance with guidelines for PPPs contained in the PPP Toolkit for Tourism, also contained in the Treasury Regulations 16 of the PFMA (Public Finance Management Act).’

‘Expression of Interest (EOI) is to test the market to see if companies are interested and also assess concepts. The information from the EOI will be used to complete a feasibility study’ he elaborates.

The regulatory provisions for tourism PPPs can be accessed on www.ppp.gov.za

Restaurant in Tsitsikamma gets a facelift

Work to reconstruct the restaurant has begun! In October 2013, SANParks announced the Tourvest group (operating as Cattle Baron) as the successful bidder for the provision of restaurant and retail services for the Tsitsikamma and Addo National Parks.

Andile Namntu, Business Development Manager of the GRNP has once again allayed fears of jobs losses. ‘The operator is currently training the 57 workers include waiters, waitresses, supervisors and others.’ Namntu also anticipates construction will be completed before the end of August 2014.

The restaurant, based in Storms River, comprises of an old deck, a dining room, reception area, coffee station, kitchen, cool room, freezer room, a liquor store, a dry store, an office kitchen, offices, the compressor room, guest store, staff room, laundry room, deck ablution, sharks deck and a new deck.

Kuli Roberts (right), popular personality in SA and also writer for an opinion piece in the Soweto Sunday World recently visited the newly-renovated restaurant in the Park.
Riyaaz Ismail writes:

Good day I was privileged to have hiked the world famous Otter Trail from 2May to 6May 2014. It recharged my batteries. I have wanderlust and am cerebral palsied.(Spastic diaplegia) The facilities were clean, the staff friendly and kind. The fireplaces at hut’s Oakhurst and Andre need to be rebuilt and the grids need rewelding or replacement. The wooden bridges replaced recently need to be sanded and the wood treated for the weather conditions. An amazing experience. If you would like the hike to be reviewed, do drop me a line.

Mr Sumpotion writes:

Staff in Tsitsikamma (Storms River Mouth Rest Camp) were very happy, cheerful and greeted us at the gate. The reception camp is professionally done. Accommodation was lovely and chalets well set out. Our waitress listened, was speedy and very friendly. Most impressed with the service, to which I also sent n sms.

Senior Official of WIOMSA writes to CEO about Marco Barnardo

The Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) has awarded Marco Barnardo, a ranger sergeant in the Tsitsikamma section of the Garden Route National Park with a PRO Level 1 certificate in Marine Field Operations. WIOMSA says this means Barnardo has proven experience and skills essential for the effective management of a Marine Protected Area (MPA).

Executive Secretary of WIOMSA, Julius Francis says the ‘association is set up to build the capacity of professionals tasked with the efficient and effective management of the continent’s marine protected areas.’

Francis says the certificate was a 3 month process involving:

- The screening of an application that detailed Barnardo’s background and experience in relation to the WIOMSA competence areas to determine suitability for the acceptance into the certification program
- A thorough review of portfolio of evidence of work experience submitted by the candidate, in depth interview regarding work experience, performance, etc.

Barnardo joins only 57 certified PROs in the continent! ‘I am ecstatic, at a loss for words’ says Barnardo who admits the admission process was rigorous.’ Three years ago, Owen Govender who is now the Senior Section Ranger in Knysna and Victor Cunningham, a Ranger in Tsitsikamma were also awarded with the PRO Level 1 certificate.
Andre Riley’s farewell

Andre Riley, the ex-Knysna Area Manager, now the national Head of Planning said he was saddened to leave such a hard-working and jovial team. Speaking at his farewell party recently organised by his Knysna section, he spoke heartily about his experience with all his colleagues.

Andre unexpectedly took the time to thank everyone who had attended his farewell party, and also said how each one had contributed to his working life.

Lizelle Mavata’s farewell

Lizelle Mavata joined SANParks back in May 2009 and has worked to strengthen the Knysna Lakes area’s Administration function. This largely included managing the reception area, lease agreements, vessel permits and others.

Speaking at Liezel’s farewell, colleague Melaney Barrath said the office would miss Liezel’s outgoing and friendly personality. Liezel’s kind-heartedness and loud laughter will be missed.

Mzwai Mjadu leaves Wilderness

Mzwandile Mjadu, affectionately known as ‘Zwai’ is leaving his position as Area Manager for the Wilderness section of the Park. He will be taking up his new position as the new Park Manager for the Addo Elephant National Park, one of the Frontier Region’s Parks. Zwai was appointed as a Park Manager in the Wilderness section of the Garden Route National Park in October 2011. Before that he had worked as a Park Manager in the Karoo National Park since 2006. ‘The move to Addo will mean I’ll be a stone’s throw away from my home’ says Mjadu. He is looking forward to the challenge that comes with managing a relatively bigger Park in hectares and the number of people employed. The team in Wilderness will miss his level-headedness and sober determination.
Meet Johan de Klerk

The GRNP welcomes the new Area Manager for the Knysna section of the GRNP, Johan de Klerk, who has extensive experience and training whilst working for SANParks. He started his career at the old Zuurb erg National Park, now part of Addo Elephant National Park. He then moved to Mountain Zebra as a Section Ranger.

He later moved to the Karoo National Park, also within the Frontier Region, as a Senior Section Ranger, primarily managing biodiversity and conservation.

He is an intelligent thinker who is rather coy for an ex-Joburger. Yet he was raised in Alberton and studied in Pretoria, towards a National Diploma in Nature Conservation, and a degree in Nature Conservation.

He is looking forward to working and living in wonderful Knysna. When he is not at work, Johan will be spotted at various outdoor activities.

‘I look forward to be part of the Garden Route Management team and maintaining existing good relations with all stakeholders and the broader community of Knysna’ says Johan.

Johan is reachable on 044 302 5600 and via email: johan.deklerk@sanparks.org

Meet Walter Mzimba

The GRNP welcomes Walter Mzimba in his new position as Cluster Manager for the Biodiversity Social Programmes in the GRNP. He previously worked in the Kruger National Park as a Project Manager for Biodiversity Projects, managing Working for Land and Working for Water Projects.

His wealth of experience began with the former Natural Resources Management (NRM), a private implementer and then onto the Working for Water Programme as a General Worker. This Saasveld graduate eagerly worked his way up to become a contractor, then an Assistant Manager, the rest is history.

His office is at the new BSP premises in Knysna, the old Harkerville Hiking Hut or via email on: walter.mzimba@sanparks.org

BIRTHDAYS

11 July
Wilby Paulse
12 July
Lizel Kivett
14 July
Sam Jumat
Jan Kamfer
16 July
Cicily Damons
17 July
Niklass Jonas
18 July
Benjamin Uithaler
19 July
J. Miller
20 July
Carmen Gelderbloem
21 July
Nomthi Maxwele
24 July
Hendrik Davidson
26 July
Richmond Gewers
27 July
Frieda Maganie
29 July
Catherine Jantjies
30 July
Nadia Damons
Meet GRNP new Interns

GRNP welcomes its interns from the African Global Skills Academy and also the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). We start with interns working in Knysna, then focus on Wilderness in July and Tsitsikamma in September. Watch this space. ...

Adiness Skosana is part of the SANBI (Groen Sebenza) and works in the Conservation Department, Knysna

Bonisani Yongoma from the African Global Skills Academy, working in the Conservation Department, Knysna

Ntombozuko Nhlanga, from the African Global Skills Academy, working in the Conservation Department, Knysna

Jason Filander, from the African Global Skills Academy, working in the Conservation Department, Knysna

Nonhlanhla Bushwane is part of the SANBI (Groen Sebenza) team and works in the Finance division in the Knysna Regional Office.
'Auntie Martina’ as she was affectionately known met her untimely death on Friday, the 25th of April 2014 following a fatal vehicle accident. Aunt Martina joined SANParks in 1983 as a hut attendant in Tsitsikamma, she later transferred to Wilderness Rest camp and in 1998 transferred to Rondevlei Scientific Services where she worked until her last day.

The General Manager of the Garden Route National Park, Jill Bunding-Venter says ‘Aunt Bertina was a motherly figure to all. She was extremely helpful, kind-hearted yet firm.’

She grew up in Langkloof, went to school in Uniondale. She later married Jan Blouw who was also a ranger for SANParks for many years. She will be sadly missed by her husband, her (four) 4 children and grandchildren as well as her family at SANParks.

Colleague Nerina Kruger who is a GIS Practitioner at Scientific Services in Rondevlei says ‘Martina leaves a huge gap in the hearts of everyone at Rondevlei Scientific Services. She will always be remembered for her strong will and spirited nature, her famous roosterkoekie with braais and vetkoekie when it was cold. Sy het die jong mense by Rondevlei soos haar eie kinders handeer. Martin sal altyd in ons harte bly lewe. Sy het ‘n impak op elkeen gemaak wat sy in haar lewe ontmoet het. Ons mis jou elke dag.’