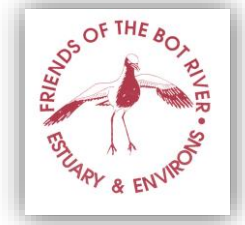


Botfriends newsletter

November / December 2019



XMAS TREES

Botfriends is once again offering free Christmas trees to local inhabitants – available on 13 and 20 December 2019 from 1400 to 1600.

Visit us outside The Blue Roof, Crescent Way, Fisherhaven to collect your tree. **DONATIONS WELCOME.**

Trees are responsibly sourced from Rooisand Horse Ranch.

Let's light up Ward 8 with festive cheer and make a contribution towards conservation as well.

Botfriends Exco wishes all our members an amazing festive season filled with goodwill, family and friends. Have fun, take care and respect our special environment.

and is doing great work for Botfriends.



Congrats to our chairperson and welcome to new members Sherry and Peter Hoefnagel, Ian and Julie Harrison and Andy and Anne Naumann. One of our members, Klaus Schmitt, has been co-opted onto our Exco as well as to our BACP sub-committee

REMEMBER:

- Rethink** your choices
- Refuse** single use
- Reduce** consumption
- Reuse** everything
- Refurbish** old stuff
- Repair** before use
- Repurpose**, be creative, reinvent
- Recycle** as a last option

AND, BY THE WAY, WHERE DO YOU RECYCLE NOW THAT WALKER BAY RECYCLING HAS CLOSED? Ask the OSM!!

The threat of fire – a letter sent to the OSM:

Botfriends would like to bring your attention to the following:

We are concerned that the Ward 8 area has been excluded from the proposed controlled burns in the OSM's areas. We are extremely worried about the potential for wild fires in the following areas:



- a) Lower Hawston where there is a dense population of invasive species; any fire could cause havoc in this area, with the potential for huge infrastructure damage as dense invasive species are right up against many houses
- b) Meerensee and surrounds where there is only one exit – what happens when there is a fire, as the access road is surrounded by almost 100%, highly flammable invasive species?
- c) Fisherhaven along Boundary and Farm Roads

All the above are full of Port Jacksons and other invasives which, as you know, are serious fire threats.

We recommend the following:

- 1 Do a controlled burn of the area west of the Fisherhaven- Hawston joining road up to the Hawston houses and extending through to the sports grounds.
- 2 At least do a controlled burn of the area between Fisherhaven and Meerensee, excluding the area along the estuary which has a reasonable population of indigenous species (map available) which can rapidly recover with proper control of the invasive species, mainly Port Jacksons.

These control burns will be done in wind conditions of our choosing rather than gale force winds with an uncontrollable fire.

Botfriends is prepared to help by: supplying a map with included areas and areas which should be excluded at this stage and helping to direct clearing lines where necessary.

We look forward to hearing from you. Regards

The Botfriends Executive

MEMBERSHIP

Do you know anyone who would like to be a member of Botfriends? Let Wendy know at botvlei@gmail.com and she will be in touch with you.



GIVING FOR XMAS

CHALLENGE: We are still in need of finances to do the following:

Complete the China Marais clean-up

Follow up on areas already cleaned of invasives

Other demarcated green areas

Please assist us if you can. Donations can be made to: Friends of the Bot River Estuary and Environs Standard Bank 185565549 Branch 050312

THE BACP – taking back the wetlands

The Bot River Estuary is a critical part of the UNESCO Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve. Much of the estuary environs are heavily invaded by alien woody plants, especially Port Jackson and Australian Myrtle.

Wetlands are our natural assets, providing a range of products, functions and services, free of charge. Despite being high-value ecosystems they make up only a small fraction of the country's land surface. In a changing climate, every wetland matters.

Among the most serious threats to the estuarine and the wetland ecosystems are the aggressive and rapid spread of invasive plants at the expense of the indigenous fynbos, and the pollution and drying up of the wetlands. This is why we have come up with pilot community-driven activities in alien clearing (about 30 ha cleared thus far with our own resources) and wetland preservation. Significant as this is, especially in establishing the most effective and affordable measures, it must be scaled up. Urgently. This is why we have come up with a plan, the Bot River Alien Clearing Project (BACP), to deal with large parts of the area south of the R43, from Rooisand to Hawston.

The aims of the BACP are to clear alien plants in the Bot River environs, re-establish wetlands in the area and demarcate three biodiversity corridors, reduce the fire risks to manageable proportions and develop a detailed management strategy, in collaboration with other role players, to enhance further clearing in the greater Hermanus area.

Financial contributions to the alien clearing project will be tax-deductible, as are donations to the Friends of the Botriver Estuary. For further information and potential contributions, please contact botvlei@gmail.com.

Klaus Schmitt and Michael Austin

Editor: Renee Austin