



Eynbos

Kleinmond

Natuurbewaringsvereniging
Nature Conservation Society

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The adult African harrier hawk

A well-known sight and sound in Kleinmond

– Text and images: Carin Malan

SUEEEE-SUEEE-SUEEE... and my husband comes running inside with his “that screaming bird will drive me mad” look on his face. Most of us can’t help but get tired of those loud calls which seem to go on for hours every day.

They are made by Kleinmond’s resident raptors, the African harrier hawk (kaalwangvalk or *Polyboroides typus*). Adults call year-round, most frequently four to five hours after sunrise. The birds call to communicate with one another, for courtship and to defend their territories. Juveniles still in the nest and begging for food make a more high-pitched call, ki-ki-ki-ki-ki.

African harrier hawks are birds of forests and savannas but also make themselves at home in the urban environment and on farms. They have adapted

well to the human landscape and forage and breed widely in the greater Kleinmond area. It is estimated that we have about 4 breeding pairs in Kleinmond village alone. It is one of the most common birds reported on the Kleinmond Birding/Voëlkykers WhatsApp group. The adult birds are easily identified, but the juvenile birds are regularly misidentified.

The African harrier hawks are unique in that they have flexible, modified tarsal joints (ankles) and bare facial skin, which enable them to exploit a special feeding niche. Their tarsal joints can move forward, backwards and sideways to access prey in cavities and hard-to-reach places. The bird clammers up trees and can hang quite easily from a weaver’s nest with wings open or flapping to balance itself. Heavy scaling on the legs protects them from dangerous



A juvenile growing into its adult plumage. Note the white stripe across the otherwise black tail.



The juvenile bird is mostly brown.

Databasis van al die KNBV-nuusbriefe

Carl Swart het die groot taak op hom geneem om die 175 nuusbriewe wat KNBV oor die jare uitgegee het, te skandeer en te indekseer. Hy en sy helper Gerrit van den Dool het met bekwame spoed gewerk en hy is tans besig om die indeksering te verfyn en af te handel.

Hier is 'n kosbare skat van inligting oor alles waarmee KNBV in dié tyd besig was en ook wat in die veld, in die lug, op die strand en in die see gebeur het.

Daar word nou planne gemaak oor die beste manier om hierdie databasis beskikbaar te stel aan geïnteresseerdes en navorsers.

Die voorblad van een van die nuusbriewe uit 1978 met 'n belangrike berig oor die Kleinmond Natuurreseervaat.

prey in the cavities.

Its former name, *gymnogene*, means "bare cheeks" and refers to the bird's bare facial patch. Ordinarily it is bright yellow, but it turns red when the bird is disturbed or aggressive and also during mating rituals.

The African harrier hawk breeds on a large platform nest in a tree or building. The nest is made from sticks and lined with fresh green leaves. They lay from 1 to 3 eggs that are incubated by both male and female. Often only the oldest chick survives. After 52 days the juvenile is ready to take its first flight and leave the nest.

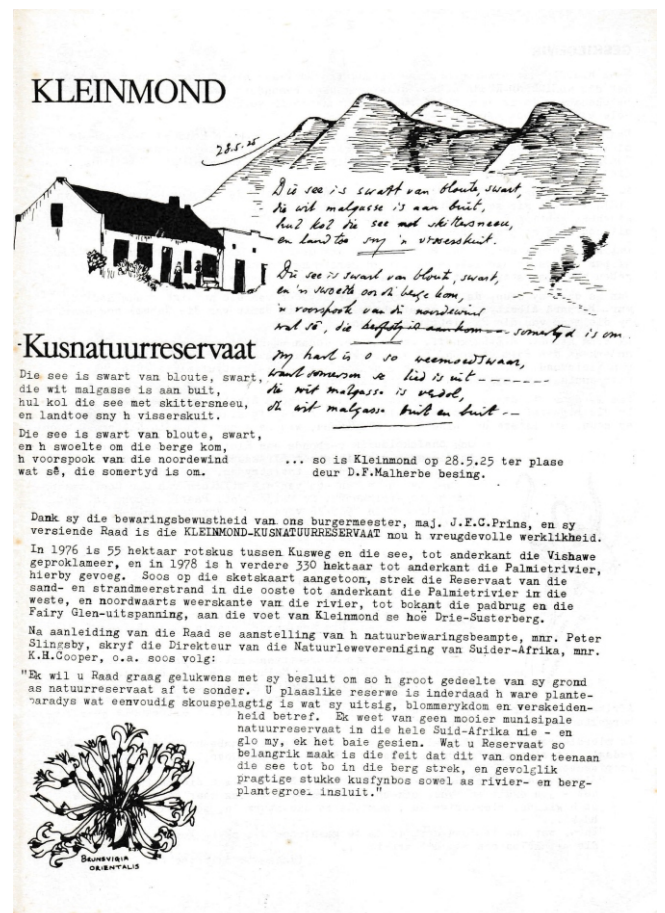
Next time when you hear that somewhat irritating sound, look up into the sky. If you see a raptor slowly flapping its broad wings, you will know it's an African harrier hawk ignoring us poor earth-bound humans as it goes about its secretive business.

These magnificent raptors are specialised predators and pose no danger to cats or dogs. In fact, they are symbols of faith in Africa.

Sources

Global Raptor Information Network. 2023. Species account: African Harrier-hawk *Polyboroides typus*. Downloaded from <http://www.globalraptors.org> on 17 July 2023

Carnaby, Trevor. 2009. *Beat about the bush: Birds*. Johannesburg, Acana Media.



Die uil

wat son gesoek het

— Jan Momsen

Vroeg die oggend van 20 Mei gewaar een van die inwoners van die Baobab-kompleks iets vreemds: 'n gevlekte ooruil (spotted eagle owl of *Bubo africanus*) wat ewe rustig op 'n lae muurtjie in die son sit en bak, min gepla oor die heen en weer verkeer in die rybaan skaars 3 meter van hom af.

Mens hoor hierdie uile se sagte roep dikwels saans en snags, maar só naby en só rustig in die helder dag het ek lanklaas een gesien. Gou-gou staan daar 'n volle ses gesinne (op 'n veilige afstand) besig om wyskede oor uile uit te ruil. Nogal 'n lekker gevoel om een so reg in die oë te kan kyk en te wonder of daai oorklossies nie dalk hoor wat ons alles sê nie.

Wat ons opgeval het, was dat die uil heeldag oop en bloot daar gesit het. Die oggendson het vol op hom geskyn en sy oë was dikwels toe. Sou hy dalk siek wees? Uiteindelik het hy opgevlieg, maar net versit na die dak van 'n ander eenheid waar hy die weste-son kon geniet. Hy het rustig met een oop oog na ons sit en staar.

Sou hy koud gekry het? Wie weet? Dis wel bekend dat uile somtyds in die dag jag as hulle prooi snags nie so aktief is nie (byvoorbeeld weens reën en koue). Daar is 'n teorie dat parasiete op die uil se vel meer aktief is in die son, en dus makliker om te vang. Daar is selfs ook 'n teorie dat die olie waarmee uile hulle vere stryk in die son meer vitamien D sou vervaardig, daarom dat uile



soms son soek. Dis in elk geval onwaarskynlik dat hulle in die son sit omdat hulle siek of beseer is.

Ons was net dankbaar vir die ervaring, en dat Kleinmond geseënd is met 'n gesonde omgewing waar daar nog uile is.

The coastal reserve

In 1976 is 55 hektaar rotskus tussen Kusweg en die see, tot anderkant die Vishawe geproklameer, en in 1978 is h verdere 330 hektaar tot anderkant die Palmietrivier, hierby gevoeg. Soos op die sketskaart aangetoon, strek die Reservaat van die sand- en strandmeerstrand in die ooste tot anderkant die Palmietrivier in die weste, en noordwaarts weerskante van die rivier, tot bokant die padbrug en die Fairy Glen-uitspanning, aan die voet van Kleinmond se hoë Drie-Susterberg.

Uit KNBV-nuusbrief 1978

KNCS recently discovered gardening activities in the coastal reserve in the vicinity of 10th Avenue.

Chairperson Carl Swart contacted OM and met with officials on site to discuss the matter. He was astonished to be informed that the coastal area between the main beach and estuary, Beach Road and Palmiet Beach was not a nature reserve (Zone 1) but a public space (Zone 2).

Fortunately, Carl knew that one of the Kleinmond Nature Conservation Society's newsletters (see previous page) contained a report about this area. It states that 55 ha were added to Kleinmond Coastal

Nature Reserve in 1976. In 1978 an additional 330 ha were added. The then mayor, JFC Prins, announced on behalf of the council that the area had been proclaimed a nature reserve. The newsletter included a map of the area and Carl was able to show them the article and map.

The OM officials then found that the original 1:50 000 map of the area shows it as Nature Reserve. They think that this part of the Kleinmond Nature Reserve was left out during the digitalisation process. The process of rezoning the area has now started.

Roofvoëls in Laerskool Kleinmond se skoolsaal

– Carin Malan



Groot opwinding! Kinders van Laerskool Kleinmond kon onlangs vier roofvoëls van naby leer ken.

'n Ruk gelede het Build it KNBV genader met die aanbod om uilkaste te skenk as die vereniging reël om dit by geskikte plekke te laat installeer. So gesê, so gedaan. Van die kaste is by die twee laerskole staan gemaak saam met inligtingsborde oor die gevlekte ooruide (*Bubo africanus*) wat volop in die area voorkom. Daarna het KNBV se komitee gereël dat Eagle Encounters van Stellenbosch 'n roofvoëlvertoning by die skole kom aanbied.

En so kon kinders van Laerskool Kleinmond onlangs vier roofvoëls en hul hanteerder Lauren in hulle skoolsaal ontmoet. Lauren het 'n witwanguiltjie, 'n nonnetjiesuil, 'n edelvalk en 'n blouvalkie saamgebring en een vir een uit hulle hokke gehaal. Die voëls het oor die kinders gevlieg en dan by Lauren kom kos haal. Intussen het sy een en ander van elke voël vertel.

Witwanguiltjies is van die kleinste uile en weeg maar so 200 gram. Die nonnetjiesuil is, soos die meeste uile, 'n uitstekende muisvanger.

Die edelvalk het 'n valkeniershoedjie op sy kop gehad

en vir die kinders het hy net soos Batman gelyk. 'n Edelvalk kan ongeveer 145 km per uur vlieg, maar 'n swerfvalk is nog vinniger. Hulle duik teen sowat 320 km per uur op hulle prooi af.

Die jong blouvalkie het 'n hele paar draaie gevlieg voordat sy haar kos gaan haal het. Sy het ook vir die kinders gewys hoe sy jag toe Lauren 'n nagemaakte rot vir haar gegooi het.

Lauren het die geleentheid gebruik om te verduidelik waarom dit nie

goed is om 'n wilde voël as 'n troeteldier aan te hou nie. Sy het ook gesê dat een uil tot 'n duisend muis per jaar kan vang. 'n Mens moet dus liever vir uile 'n vriendelike woonplek bied as om rotte en muis met gif te probeer beheer. Uile is baie beter plaagbeheerders as gif! Uile se grootste vyande is vergiftigde knaagdiere (as hulle dit eet, gaan hulle self dood), honde en katte.

Die kinders het ook elk 'n afskeidsgeskenk gekry – pamflette oor tuinvoëls, fynbosvoëls en watervoëls in ons omgewing. Die pamflette is in Afrikaans, Engels en isiXhosa.



Voor is juffrou Charlize Laing, agter Carin Malan, Lauren Conradie van Eagle Encounters en Carl Swart, voorsitter van KNBV. Saam met hulle is 'n groepie Eco-Klublede.

Wat om te doen as jy 'n beseerde voël vind

Kontak die Kogelberg Biosfeer se
Wildlife Rescue Team by
Corlie Hugo (082 380 9071) of
Michelle Watson (073 314 06774).
Hulle sal weet wat om te doen!

The loss of one is one loss too many

– Corlie Hugo

Although we rarely get to see them, we know otters live in our local rivers.

There are two otter species in South Africa, *Aonyx capensis* (Cape clawless otter or groototter) and *Hydrictis maculicollis* (spotted-necked otter or kleinotter). Their habitats sometimes overlap, but only the Cape clawless otter is found around Kleinmond.

Clawless otters inhabit areas surrounding permanent freshwater bodies. They prefer areas with lots of foliage, logs and branches as these provide shade and shelter, as well as play areas. They live in burrows in the riverbanks close to the water. Although they are slow and rather clumsy on land, they sometimes walk far to find food. From time to time they are also seen on our beaches hunting for food in the shallow water.

They are active during the day. Early morning and evening are the best times to spot them. In urban areas they are mostly nocturnal, though, and spend their days resting in quiet bushy areas.

Though mostly solitary animals, African clawless otters live in neighbouring territories of family groups of up to five individuals. They often play together in the water.

Their diet includes water-dwelling animals, such as

crabs, fish, frogs and worms. They dive after prey to catch it but eat on the riverbank. Their forepaws come in handy as searching devices and for digging in the muddy bottoms of ponds and rivers, picking up rocks and looking under logs.

The clawless otter is a handsome animal. It weighs between 10 and 20 kg, where the smaller spotted-necked otter weighs less than 5 kg. The upper part of its fur is brown; underneath it is lighter. Its throat and cheeks are whitish and its hind paws are webbed. Females have one or two young, which can be born at any time in the year.

The otter is a useful flagship species indicating river health. Unfortunately, otters are listed as near threatened by the IUCN.

It was therefore a sad day when Corlie Hugo, who works for the Kogelberg Biosphere, was notified recently that two dead otters had been found in the harbour area. She and local vet dr Floris Kruger examined the animals, but could find no external wounds or marks to indicate the cause of their deaths. Hopefully an autopsy will help to solve the puzzle.

If you are ever privileged to see one of these rare animals, enjoy every minute and realize that you are part of a very small group of people to have seen the Cape clawless otter in its natural habitat.

Beseerde voëls op strande

In die wintermaande, veral na gure weer, word daar van tyd tot beseerde voëls op die strand opgemerk. Hulle kan gewoonlik nie wegvlieg as mense naderkom nie.

In die begin van die winter is daar byvoorbeeld heelwat trekduikers gevind. Volgens SANCCOB was dit meestal jong voëls wat ondervoed en gedisorïenteerd was. Hulle raak eenvoudig te moeg om te vlieg of te swem. As hulle wel die strand bereik en daar mense is wat SANCCOB kontak, word hulle gehaal en gerehabiliteer. Alhoewel die sukses hiermee nie baie goed is nie, word alles probeer om hulle aan die lewe te hou aangesien hulle bedreigde voëls is.

Hoe kan jy help om die voël te laat oorleef? Sit hom in

'n kartonboks en hou hom so stil as moontlik. Dra handskoene weens die geringe gevaar van voëlgriep. Kontak SANCCOB by 021 557 6155 en gee jou besonderhede. Veldwagters van Stony Point sal dan hopelik kan organiseer dat die voël na die rehabilitasie-sentrum in Milnerton toe geneem word.

Jy kan ook ons plaaslike reddingspan, Corlie Hugo (082 380 9071) en Michelle Watson (073 314 06774) kontak. Hulle is die Kogelberg Biosfeer se Wildlife Rescue Team en hulle sal weet wat om te doen!

Bron: "Weak immature Cape cormorants landing on beaches or in gardens" in Overstrand Herald, 16 Maart 2023, p. 13.

Granny's bonnet

Spring flowers are slowly starting to open along our hiking trails and one of the loveliest of these is a little orchid, *Disperis capensis* or granny's bonnet (moederkappie).

According to the authors of *Orchids of South Africa* (published in 2015) there are 78 species in this genus, most of which occur in Africa. There are 26 species in South Africa.

Plants in the *Disperis* genus are small and slender. Their leaves are variable: between 1 and 5, either reduced, sheathing and alternate or in a single opposite pair. They sometimes grow from the base and sometimes along the stem.

In the flowers the median sepal is fused to the petals and often form a hood or spur. Lateral sepals are spreading, each one having a spur or pouch. The lip ascends inside the hood and usually consists of a narrow claw, lip blade and appendage of some shape.

Disperis capensis var. *capensis* is widespread in the Cape Floristic Region. The plant is between 70 and 700 mm tall. Its two leaves grow along the stem and are alternate, spear-shaped, fairly small and usually hairless, but can have a few stiff hairs.

Each plant carries a single flower. Sepals are green and petals usually magenta with darker margins and papillae. In Kleinmond there are also lighter and even white forms.

The sepals, petals and lip are shortly hairy. The median sepal forms an ascending hood with a long, tail-like appendage at the apex. Lateral sepals are horizontally spreading, then recurved and often twisted backward with long appendages (up to 20 mm), forming the "strings" of the "bonnet". Spurs are pouch-shaped. Petals are broadly oblong. The lip is shaped like a narrow spatula with an appendage.

Disperis capensis var. *capensis* grows on damp sandstone and seepages from 10 to 1000 m above sea level. They flower between July and September and although they produce no nectar, they manage to fool carpenter bees (genus *Xylocopa*) into pollinating them by mimicking the flowers of the genus *Polygala*, a firm favourite of the bees. They have purple petals of a very similar size and colour, and the mimicry is enhanced by the central boss of white. But the shape is quite different, so it is surprising that the bees are so easily fooled. Although their flowering overlaps, *Disperis capensis* starts flowering a few weeks before the *Polygalas*, thereby getting first call on the bees.

Disperis capensis var. *brevicaudata* grows in roughly



the same area, but only occurs sporadically. It is smaller than the better-known *D. capensis* var. *capensis*, its sepals are boat shaped and its sepals, petals and lip are usually without hairs. Its lip does not have an appendage. It flowers later than *D. capensis* var. *capensis*, from September to December.

The name *Disperis* derives from the Greek *dis-* (two) and *-peris* (pouches). *Capensis* refers to the Cape of Good Hope.

Sources

Johnson, S. & Bytebier, B. 2015. *Orchids of South Africa: A field guide*. Cape Town: Struik Nature.

Whitehouse, C. [S.a.] "Deceptive grannies".

Phillipskop Mountain Reserve. Downloaded from <https://www.phillipskop.co.za/flora/disperis-capensis> on 15 July 2023.

Fynbos is die nuusbrieff van die Kleinmond Natuurbewaringsvereniging

Saamgestel deur die redaksionele komitee

Artikels, behalwe herdrukke uit ander bronne, mag sonder verlof herdruk of aangehaal word, mits die bron, *Fynbos*, erken word. Die menings van die artikelskrywers is nie noodwendig die opinie van KNBV nie.

Fynbos is the newsletter of the Kleinmond Nature Conservation Society

Compiled by the editorial committee.

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The Kleinmond creepy swamp monster

We first noticed the monster in 2013 in a very wet, sandy, peaty, marshy part of Kleinmond's Coastal Reserve between Palmiet neighbourhood and its beach.

Later the same creepy monster was observed further inland in an area that often gets flooded in winter.

At first there was some discussion on the identification of this monster, but at last it was accepted that its proper name was *Lampranthus serpens*, a member of the Brightfig Tribe (Tribe Ruschieae). (However, it has recently come to our attention that this species may soon be sunk under *Lampranthus reptans*.)

Lampranthus serpens is different from most of the other members of the genus. For one, its leaves are fatter than *Lampranthus* leaves usually are, and trigonous. The plant roots at the nodes, hence its creepy habit. One of the experts of this genus wrote: "This thing is monstrous when it comes to *Lampranthus*."

What makes this species stand out from its peers, however, is its habit of growing in wet swampy soil. In winter they are sometimes completely submerged. We have also never seen that particular patch completely



dry, even in February. This *Lampranthus* clearly prefers to have its feet permanently wet.

This species is redlisted as Vulnerable and Data Deficient, another very special plant to add to the list for that little spot in Kleinmond's protected coastal reserve, an area which is already overflowing with them.

Riete in die strandmeer

Daar is van tyd tot tyd ontsteltenis oor die vinnige toename van die riete in die strandmeer.

Hierdie saak is ook van tyd tot tyd op die agenda van BREF (Bot River Estuary Forum). OM en Cape Nature, sowel as belanghebbendes by ander riviermondings in die OM-gebied is by die forum betrokke.

Die konsensus is tans dat riviermondings lewende organismes is en dat die natuur toegelaat moet word om self 'n gebalanseerde eko-stelsel uit te werk. Op die oomblik vermeerder die riete. Later sal die proses wel omgekeer word en sal die riete weer verminder en iets anders die plek daarvan inneem. Die mens moet poog om so min as moontlik in hierdie stelsels in te meng.

Kapgroep

Hierdie gideonsbende werk onverpoos voort, selfs al is die veld nat en modderig. Daar is vanjaar al duisende klein indringerboompies uitgetrek. Ander is afgekap en met plantdoder behandel.

'n Gedeelte van Meimaand se statistieke wys wat die omvang van die probleem van indringerplante is, maar ook wat die kapgroep alles regkry wanneer hulle een oggend van elke maand indringers gaan uitroei.

Net in Mei alleen het hulle 2600 mirteboompies, 480 Port Jacksonbome, 190 bloekomboompies, 34 dennebome en 82 langblaarboompies uitgehaal. Hierdie bome het meestal na die brand opgekom. Pampasgras bly ook 'n permanente probleem.

Mimetespark

Hierdie park is besig om in 'n ware lushof te ontwikkel en die resultate wat reeds behaal is, het die stoutste verwagtinge oortref.

Dit het ons te danke aan Magdaleen Brits, haar ywerige en getroue span vrywillige helpers en BBB Gardens van Vicky Kotze van Bettysbaai se span.

In die boonste deel van die park begin die nuwe plante met mening groei. Bolplante steek ook oral kop uit. Ongelukkig het die pragtige ou sonskynbos in een van die storms wat ons getref het, in die slag gebly. Dis 'n

gevoelige verlies.

Intussen bekijk die inwonende dikkop-familie alles op 'n afstand, maar voel skynbaar glad nie bedreig nie. Hulle gaan in elk geval nie weg nie.

In die nat gedeelte is indringerbome en -plante verwyder en die inheemse plante geniet die spasie. Hulle groei asof hulle betaal word. Die nuwe paadjies wat tussen die fynbos gemaak is, is 'n louter plesier vir elkeen wat daar loop. Die vlei-gedeelte langs die hoofpad is nou onder water, maar allerhande planne word reeds gemaak en sal waarskynlik in die lente uitgevoer kan word.

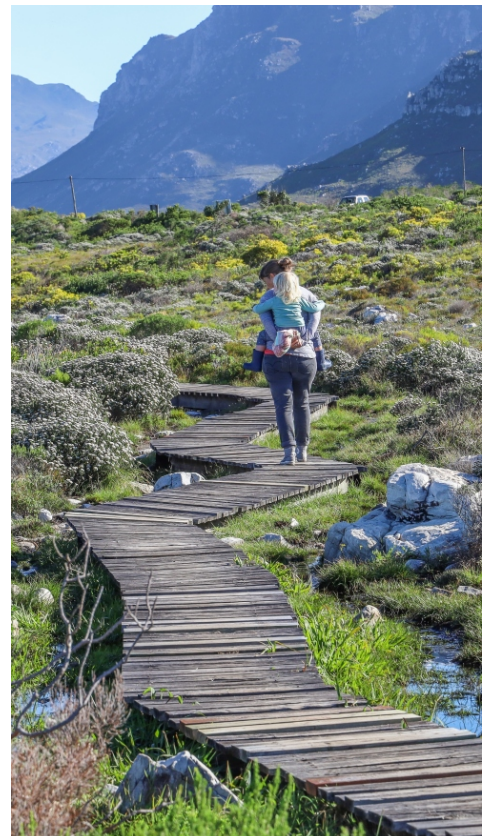
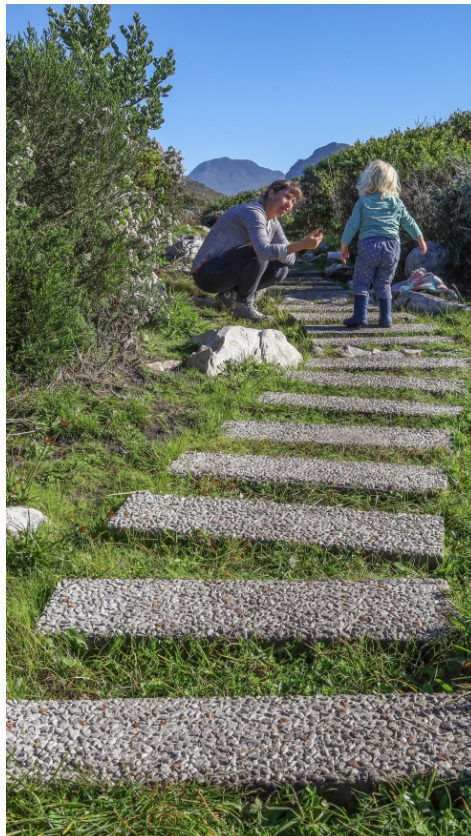
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