



Adopt Moreletaspruit/ Neem Moreletaspruit Aan

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The Benefits of Spending Time in Natural Urban Green Spaces

We who live near the Moreletaspruit and its tributaries are very fortunate to have access to a natural area so close to our homes. A 15-month study in Stanford, California was recently completed in which 60 participants were subjected to complex tests before and after a 50 minute walk. Half the subjects walked along busy urban streets and half in a natural environment. Those who walked in the natural environment showed a greater

decrease in anxiety and increase in cognition and working memory and concentration.

So in the same way that natural areas provide “ecosystem services” which purify our water and regulate our climate, they also provide important benefits for mental health, or “psychological ecosystem services”, and of course also for physical well-being.

In his book “Last Child in the Woods” Richard Louv discusses the idea that children are suffering from “Nature Deficit Disorder” as they are so plugged-in to technology and under pressure to perform, and also because of the fear of stranger danger, that they spend little time in nature. They watch the natural world on TV but don’t experience it directly.

Children in South Africa do have more outdoor time than in countries like Britain, but nevertheless it is a good idea to let our children play in natural green spaces as this has been shown to increase happiness, creativity, problem-solving, self-esteem and health.



Hike along the Moreletaspruit on 16 May

In 1977/78 the Parks Dept of the then Pretoria Municipality opened a **Nature Trail** or **Wandelpad** along the river, starting along the Constantiaspruit from Garsfontein Rd and then down the Moreleta to Silverton. At left is a stone marker for the old Nature Trail.

In the 90’s people stopped using it because of the fear of crime. Residents along the river applied to have sections fenced off so the river could be protected from illegal dumping,

vagrancy and crime. Friends Groups were formed to help look after each section.

Keen hiker, Helene Gertenbach of Friends of Brookside Meander suggested the Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum should arrange a hike along the river. Permission was obtained from Nature Conservation as not all sections are now open to the public and at the end of March six members of the Forum walked from Moreletakloof to the Pioneers' House in Silverton. The photos of the river in this letter were taken during that hike. The public were then invited, through the Friends Groups, to a 12 km guided hike on 16 May. There was great interest and the limited places were filled in a matter of days so there will be more such hikes in the future.



Left: Graffiti under the N4 Bridge. Right: Jeannie du Plessis, Mike Silberbauer, Helene Gertenbach (kneeling), Louise Kritzinger, Carol Martin and Gunther Trumpelmann at the end of the 14.3 km hike which took almost 7 hours with one picnic stop.

Natural Green Spaces along the Rivers which are open to the Public

In most cases these are open from 06:00 to 18:00 every day. Where dogs are allowed they should be on a leash. All except one are free of charge. Bird watching is good everywhere as about 280 species have been recorded along the river. Keen photographers will find many subjects from scenery to insects and vegetation.

Moreletakloof Nature Reserve: Entrance in Helios St, Moreletapark. Walking, bird hide, game watching, no dogs allowed.

Faerie Glen Nature Reserve: Entrance in January Masilela Drive, Faerie Glen. Entrance fee for non-members of R6.00 for adults and R3.00 for children and pensioners, walking, bird watching, dogs allowed.

Colbyn Wetland Nature Reserve: Entrance next to Scout Hall in Kilnerton Road, Colbyn. Walking, bird watching.

Serene Valley: Gates in Gilda and Kentia Sts, Garsfontein open Mon to Fri; gate in Lola Ave open every day. Walking, bird watching, dogs allowed.

Brookside Meander: Entrance in Bouvardia St, Lynnwood Ridge. Walking, bird watching, dogs allowed.

Struben Dam Bird Sanctuary: Entrance in Innes Road, Lynnwood Glen. "Catch-and-release" fishing, walking, bird watching, dogs allowed.

Die Forum en die sakegemeenskap

Een van die belangrike doelstellings van die Adopt Moreletaspruit-inisiatief is om almal wat in die opvanggebied woon en werk bewus en betrokke te maak by die bewaring van die Moreletaspruit. Die Forum het in die afgelope tyd 'n goeie verhouding met die Capital City Business Chamber (CCBC) as verteenwoordiger van die sakegemeenskap opgebou.



Die CCBC het die Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum uigenooi en geborg om op 11 Maart 2015 aan hulle jaarlikse Mini Uitstalling deel te neem. Dit het aan Forum-lede die geleentheid gebied om sakeleiers te ontmoet en goeie kontak met hulle op te bou.

Op 21 Maart het die Forum in samewerking met die CCBC 'n voëluitstappie in die Moreletakloof gereël. Die voëlkenner, Rihann Geysler het die uitstappie gelei en entoesiastiese lede van die CCBC wat die uitstappie meegemaak het, vertel van die

pragtige voëls sowel as ander fauna en flora wat in die Moreletaspruit voorkom.



Op die fotos verduidelik Anneli die waarde van die Moreletaspruit by die CCBC Mini Uitstalling aan sakemanne en wys Rihann tydens die voël-uitstappie die verskeidenheid suikerbekkies wat in die Moreleta voorkom, sowel as 'n klein eivreter-slangetjie wat ons pad gekruis het.

Friends Groups/Vriendegroepe

Friends of Faerie Glen NR will have an Invasive Plant Hack on 24 May.

Friends of Skuilkrans will have a Braai on 24 May.

Friends of Brookside Meander will have a Bird Walk on 23 May.

Friends of Serene Valley will have a Foraging Walk on 6 June and a Clean Up for Mandela Day on 18 July.

Contact Details/ Kontak-besonderhede

DWS: Gauteng Region – Tel 012 392 1362. Email: RakgothoT@dwa.gov.za

CoT: Nature Conservation – Tel: 012 358 1510. Email: AdeleneL@TSHWANE.GOV.ZA

Adopt Moreletaspruit Forum – Email: anneli.kuhn@gmail.com - Tel 012 472 0069 or 083 750 2873. Secretary of the Forum: moreletaforum@gmail.com

Website: www.riv.co.za/ms

Facebook Group – Adopt-a-River Moreleta

The Facilitation Team/Die Fasiliteringspan