



Adopt Moreletaspruit/ Neem Moreletaspruit Aan Newsletter/Nuusbrief 23, April 2018

March was **Water Month** and we certainly had a very wet month with the highest rainfall figures for March since 1996 (282 mm measured in Garsfontein by Adolf van den Bergh). The Moreletaspruit has been known for its spectacular floods over the years. It rained steadily on 22 March, World Water Day, and the flood reached its peak early next morning. We had even bigger floods on 11 April as the ground was still saturated.



(Left) Flood over the pedestrian bridge across the Moreleta in Serene Valley. (Photo: Adolf van den Bergh)
(Right) The Hartbees-spruit (Photo: Tamsyn Sherwill) both early on 23 March.



Water flowing past the flood attenuation structure upstream of the January Masilela bridge in Faerie Glen Nature Reserve on 23 March. The high water mark can be seen on pillars. (Photo: Edwin van de Wiel)

Old Photos of floods: we cannot remember which year the high water bridge and flood attenuation structure were built across the Moreleta at the Old Military Rd, later Gen Louis Botha and now Januarie Masilela Ave - somewhere in the 1990's?



Water flooding across the low water bridge on the Old Military Road, possibly in the 1980's or 1990's. The familiar outline of Faerie Glen Hill is all that still looks the same today.

Water Month Celebration 2018 on Monday 26 March

For our annual Water Month event, the AMF collaborated with the Walter Sisulu Environmental Centre in Mamelodi to arrange a miniSASS afternoon in Faerie Glen Nature Reserve. WSEC brought 24 learners from different schools in Mamelodi as well as facilitators and teachers. Generation Earth learners and teachers from Willowridge High School and two learners from Laerskool Lynnwood also took part. We were very relieved that the flood waters had subsided enough for the testing to take place and we were privileged to have four professional SASS practitioners to do the demonstrations.



(Left) We gathered at the start for a picnic lunch. (Right) The four SASS practitioners: Byron Bester (Kim's brother and nephews) and Kieren Bremner from Digby Wells, Kim Perry and Peter Kimberg from Igdrasil.

Anneli Kuhn, our Chairman, welcomed everyone and there were short presentations over lunch. Kamogelo Kwakwa of the CoT described the CoT's role in caring for rivers, Carol Martin explained how the miniSASS works and Louise Kritzingler talked about recycling. The waste from the lunch was separated into three bags for recycling, composting and landfill. Then the primary school children went to one site with Byron and Kieran and the high school learners went to a second site at the wooden bridge with Kim and Peter. The children watched the practitioners do the practical work of collecting

samples and demonstrating the use of the clarity tube and velocity plank and then all took part in identifying the invertebrates and working out the scores – 4.85 and 5.75.



(Left) Kamogelo encourages learners to be eco warriors. (Right) Byron shows how to use the clarity tube.



(Left) Peter explains the process while Kim collects samples. (Right) High school learners got into groups around six sample trays and were absorbed in identifying the different invertebrates.

A big thank you to Christa van Schalkwyk of WSEC and Anneli Kuhn, Carol Martin, Louise Kritzinger, Jeannie du Plessis and Judy Scott-Goldman from AMF for organising a very successful event; to the CoT for the use of the venue and for support; to Tamsyn Sherwill of the WRC for the loan of the equipment and for posters and booklets; to the four SASS practitioners from Digby Wells and Iggdrasil for giving so generously of their time and knowledge and last but not least, to Edwin and Vincent van de Wiel of FFGNR who ensured that the testing sites were accessible. (Photos: Louise, Jeannie and Carol)



Exciting find in Moreleta Kloof NR

During a “Walk and Talk on Wetlands” in Moreleta Kloof on 10 March, a previously unknown peatland was identified by Dr Piet-Louis Grundling of the DEA, shown left taking a sample, watched by Dr Althea Grundling of the ARC-ISCW and Mike Robinson. Peatlands deliver invaluable ecosystem services and store vast quantities of carbon. To qualify as a peatland, a wetland must contain more than 30% of organic material and be more than 300

mm deep. We will put the report of this find on our website. (Photo: Jeannie du Plessis)

Previous studies of peat along the Moreleta: In scientific papers published by Verhoef in 1972 and Scott in 1984, which looked at evidence of veld fires and vegetation types by studying charcoal and pollen preserved in peat around South Africa, a sample from a peatland along the “Moreletta River” and “near a spring” or “spring seepage” was analysed. This peatland was found to be 4m thick and at least 5220 years old at 3m! Piet-Louis says this is definitely not the same peat as he found in Moreleta Kloof. If anyone knows where exactly this 1972 sample was taken, please let us know!

Friends Groups/Vriendegroepe

Vriende van Moreletakloof was baie aktief. Hulle het die omheining geverf, indringerplante uitgeroei en ook twee Water Ekodae vir kinders en hulle ouers gereël. Dit is van uiterste belang dat kinders die geleentheid kry om die natuur te leer ken en die skoonheid van die omgewing te sien en waardeer. Jeannie du Plessis het vir hulle die verskillende insekte en sampioene gewys en ook 'n miniSASS gedoen.



Die vlot op die dammetjie het groot aantrekkingskrag gehad tydens die eerste Ekodag (photo: Mostert Kriek)
Jeannie verduidelik vir die kinders hoe hulle die miniSASS gaan doen op 6 April (photo: Kent Williamson)

Vriende van Faerie Glen NR het hul maandelikse aksies teen indringerplante gehou. Hulle het 'n uitstappie op 7 April aangebied waar deelnemers kon leer hoe om uitheemse indringerplante te identifiseer om sodoende te weet watter plante in hulle tuine dalk verwyder moet word. Hulle het ook 'n skerpioenuitstappie op 21 April gehad.

Friends of Serene Valley had clean ups on 17 March and 21 April. So far this year they have removed about 55 bags of litter, mostly plastic, along the river. They will have a Land Art Morning on 12 May.

Important Reminder: Please make sure that no rain water can get from your gutters and paving into your domestic drains! The sudden huge increase in volume caused many sewer manholes to overflow and pollute the river during the recent rains.

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Facebook Group – Adopt-a-River Moreleta