

# NEWS LETTER



OYSTER BAY RESERVE  
CONSERVATION TRUST



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YOUR MONTHLY UPDATE ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND CONSERVATION PROJECTS!

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Without habitat, there is no wildlife. It is that simple

(Wildlife Habitat Canada)



## High risk Hyrax

The past couple of years you might have noticed that the vegetation around the St Blaize lighthouse has decreased and that the Dassie population has increased incredibly. The Dassie population is sadly in a bad condition even though most think they are thriving. There is almost next to nothing left of the natural Dolomitic Fynbos vegetation around the lighthouse, which is actually their natural food.

Growing up in Mossel Bay, Chelee always remembered going to the Point and seeing people feeding the Pigeons and Dassies and thought nothing of it. Chelee Brown, Nature College student doing her internship at the Oyster Bay Reserve, decided to fully investigate the Hyrax and hope that her findings will help to educate all and ultimately save these little furry members of Mossel Bay Community.

The question Chelee raised was is this really artificial feeding or are people actually helping the Dassies during the drought? She was told that there is a Municipal bylaw that is controlled by fines that prevent people from dumping anything in public spaces, including food scraps.

Cape Nature's Mammologist Peter Lloyd, who informed Chelee that Dassies (Rock Hyrax) have a diet of mainly fynbos species which include mostly endemic grasses, foliage and interestingly also include insects, lizards and bird's eggs from time to time. They will eat other food sources that are artificially brought in, but they will not get the correct nutritional balance that they need that occurs in the natural vegetation. This will sadly affect the health of the animals, and the spread of diseases will naturally follow. The population explosion and inbreeding is also a direct result of the artificial food supplementation. The Point's environment has been under severe pressure caused by the drought. The "good will" of the community members to assist these animals by dumping vegetable waste is actually potentially on track to destroy the entire population. To read the full article [click here](#).



The Oyster Bay Reserve team is in front from left: Michelle Middendorp (MEP intern Labourer), Vivien Viviers (Secretary), Wiseman Manyonta (Project) and at the back from left: Aiden Beck (Manager), Jason Mullins (Student Intern), Daniel Chippendale (Student Intern) and Chelee Brown (Student Intern).

## Skilpad se Huis

Die mens is een van die grootste bedreigings vir die voortbestaan van skilpaaie. In verskeie gevalle word skilpaaie wederregtelik uit hulle omgewing gehaal en as troeteldiere aanhou. Mense beseft nie altyd watter onreg hulle wilde diere aandoen deur hulle uit hul natuurlike habitat en omgewing te verwyder nie. Anders as honde en katte, is skilpaaie heeltemal onafhanklik en gemaak om vry in die natuur te beweeg. Ons sien so dikwels dat mense veral klein skilpadjies langs ons paaie optel en saamneem huis toe. Dit bring daartoe mee dat skilpaaie dikwels in 'n totaal ander klimaat op 'n afgeskorste stukkie gras in die agterplaas losgelaat word. Daar vrek hulle mettertyd weens verandering in klimaat en plantegroei. Lees meer oor die nadele om skilpaaie as troeteldiere aan te hou : [klik hier](#).