



## Newsletter 5, July 2023

### Alien Hacks

We appreciate all the help we get from the volunteers that join us for the Saturday Alien Hacks, where we clear large areas of alien invader plants. We also have a group of volunteers led by Leroy and Marise, that work on some Sundays. The Saturday and Sunday Alien Hacks are very well supported, with new volunteers joining us every month.

Look out for our posters on Facebook and in the reserve and please consider coming to assist at future events on Saturday mornings. Our next Saturday Alien Hack is on 22 July 2023 to celebrate Mandela Day, so join us for 67 minutes or more.



### Biocontrol for Alien Invader Plants

We are pleased to have found some lantana flower mite on some of the lantanas in the reserve. This budmite causes the host to produce vegetative galls instead of flowers. It will only attack the lantana weed and not indigenous plants. These mites cannot be observed with the naked eye. Although this process is very slow, we will continue to monitor and encourage the spread to other plants.



We've also found a large prickly pear that was infected with the biocontrol, cochineal. We are slowly using some of this infected plant to spread to other plants. The cochineal will slowly assist with the control of the prickly pears.

## The River Starts Here!

On 27 May 2023 Elané Joubert (Lubbe), an Aquatic Ecologist & Environmental Scientist lead a full SASS (South African Scoring System) in the Rademeyer Spruit on the reserve to assess the state of the spruit. The results from the SASS show that the “Rademeyerspruit is seriously modified”. This means that our spruit has been polluted. This could be due to the groundwater and the water from the stormwater drains being polluted.

The Friends of Moreleta Kloof Nature Reserve try hard to keep the spruit clean and it is an ongoing concern that litter and other pollutants enter the reserve via the stormwater drains. We will continue with the monitoring and take measures where we can, to limit contamination of the spruit.



## Maintenance

Volunteers are constantly hard at work with maintenance and repairs in the reserve with very limited resources. In the past year, the Friends of Moreleta Kloof contributed goods and services in the reserve, to the value of close to R164 000 (from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023). If you are in any way able to assist the Friends in this regard, please consider supporting us via SnapScan or contact us on the contact details below.



## **Friends' Membership**

So far this year, we have had very good response to the number of people wishing to become Friends of the reserve.

The annual Friends of Moreleta Kloof membership runs from 1 March to 28 February every year. If you want to join the Friends of Moreleta Kloof Nature Reserve, please visit our website [www.moreletakloof.co.za](http://www.moreletakloof.co.za) or contact us at [info@moreletakloof.co.za](mailto:info@moreletakloof.co.za).

The membership fee of R250 gives you, plus one other adult and two children under 18, two days free entry into the following reserves in Tshwane:

- Rietvlei Nature Reserve
- Groenkloof Nature Reserve
- Wonderboom Nature Reserve
- Rooihuiskraal
- Faerie Glen Nature Reserve

The entrance fees for all the City's Nature Reserves went up on 1 July in this new financial year. The value of the Friends Group membership card is now R1492 if it is fully utilised. Also, your membership fee and any donation you make, goes directly to the work that the Friends of Moreleta Kloof do in the reserve.

For more information please feel free to contact Faan at 083 325 1704 or Jeannie at 082 927 4673.

*What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make. – Jane Goodall*