Newsletter June 2017

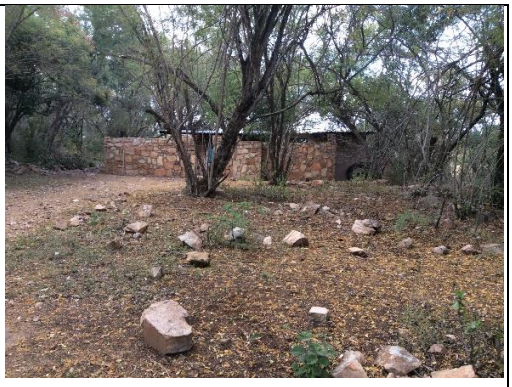
Dear Beneficiaries,
Hope that you are all well and have been able to enjoy Hamerkop! We were there this last week, always an inspiration for me to find time to do another newsletter!

HAMERKOP SIGHTINGS

Bushbaby – we saw 11! Viewing in the morning was better.	Spotted genet – he was hungry!	Trapdoor spider
Pictures taken by Jonathan Leeming		My picture

WORK HAPPENING AT HAMERKOP

Work done by Aleck, our new factotum, who is managed, looked after by Gary Cundill cell 083-440-7833

		
Firebreak, between Cillier's and Hamerkop property cut along whole driveway		
Road middelmannetjie too	Clearing dry wood & grass around house, annex & caretaker's cottage	

In disposing of the huge pile of dead wood, smaller branches were burnt. Bigger ones are still to be cut up and stored in woodbin next to the house.	Steve and Aleck sifting small branches with leaf litter sifted with a home-made sieve, to separate compost from bigger pieces.	Compost was spread as top-dressing over lawn on stoep. Remaining small twigs to be spread on forest floor away from house.

Pretty, our new caretaker, in front of their neat, clean cottage. Note the nice fencing around the stoop!	Within their yard is Pretty's little vegetable patch, with the newly installed, hopefully monkey, bird and insect proof fencing with wire mesh over it. Spinach plants are coming up nicely

HAMERKOP DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

PRETTY'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Cleaning Monday, Wednesday, Thursday Friday & Saturday for 2 hours, either 8-10am, or 9-11am – beneficiaries can let her know what time is good for them.
Tuesday spring cleaning 8-13h00

If beneficiaries would like Pretty to do extra work for them, please pay her R25 per hour.
She is very good with children and can baby sit or look after children whilst parents go off for their own walk at same rate of R25 per hour

Pretty has requested to go to Joburg to her church, her family and attend to things that need to be done there,once a month. She will leave on Saturday after her work is done and come back on Monday at an unspecified time, depending on when she can get transport. It is quite a mission and expensive for her to get to Joburg from Hamerkop and back! I will let the relevant beneficiary know when she wants to go to Joburg.

She has instructions on how to clean and which cleaning materials ingredients to use.
Pretty is looked after/ managed by me, so please any concerns, queries, contact me (cell 072-595-6991, tel 011-674-2980)?

She will let me know by WhatsApp what she needs for Hamerkop, also what she needs for herself from time to time, when I will ask the beneficiary due to come to Hamerkop next, to bring the various things. The beneficiary can liaise with our treasurer, Andre Dalais, for a refund for the Hamerkop things (eg dishwashing liquid, washing powder etc) and Pretty will pay the beneficiary for her things (mainly fresh foods such as cabbage, tomatoes). Beneficiaries are very welcome to give Pretty and Aleck any food or other things, but are not obliged to do so.

Pretty and Aleck are paid at the end of every month, either directly into their bank account, in cash or a bit of both. They each get R100 airtime for their cells every month.
They are given toilet paper for their use.

BENEFICIARY'S RESPONSIBILITIES AT HAMERKOP

Please report to Gary Cundill if anything is not working/ malfunctioning eg. leaky toilet. Preferably fix it yourself if possible? Also broken, missing lightbulbs – preferably replace them yourself☺?

Please bring the following:
Toilet paper, garbage bags, towels, soap, own linen/ bedding.
There will be linen in the cupboards, but that is for use in case you forgot to bring your own.
Weekly washing of Hamerkop linen would require a washing machine, which costs about R4000+.
Maybe beneficiaries could contribute towards HK management committee buying a Hamerkop washing machine? If one could afford it, that would be great!

Please take home with you all the garbage and make sure that the pool has been emptied before you leave?

Read the one page fire policy on the noticeboard?– request by Margie.

Summary simply is, that in case of veld fire approaching Hamerkop, not to panic. Dead wood, dry grass has been moved away from Hamerkop buildings and the water tank, so there is no need to abandon Hamerkop. You should be safe inside the house, but when fire is approaching, do make sure that the water tank is full, water around the house and cottage, and then go inside.

The surrounding veld needs to be burnt to allow new grasses and other plants to come up. Old, dead grass suffocates underlying grasses and other plants, so does need to be burnt. Live trees around the house don't burn easily, but dry, dead ones do, so they are now removed, but please, do keep removing dead branches if you see any near the house?

The Oracle security service does work; Pretty has met with them and has their contact number. Their tel. number is on the Hamerkop notice board

Has anyone got one a bicycle that they would like to donate to Pretty and Aleck? Distances by foot in Hamerkop are far, a bicycle would help!

OCCUPANCY OF HAMERKOP

Please let Duncan Barker (cell 083-414-9939, email duncan@serala.co.za) know if you are unable to take up your week, so that another beneficiary may be able to occupy your week? It is very important for the house to be occupied! One of the reasons why Reginah, our previous care taker, left Hamerkop was that she was lonely! It is scary being at Hamerkop all on your own!

While Duncan has been coordinating occupancy over weekends, there are still concerns about security and wasted assets when the house lies empty during the week. Please adviseSteve Spottiswoode if you are interested in offering or taking up "spare" (mostly weekday) nights. Email sspotty@pixie.co.za or WhatsApp 082-558-3158 to be put on a WhatsApp group "Hamerkop swapping". Francis Charlton (083-560-6996) and Duncan Barker are also administrators of this group.

Group rules.
1.) Only post nights that you are making available. No other postings please!
2.) If anyone is interested in taking up one or more nights, do NOT post onto the group, but directly to the contact person offering the available nights.

No financial model for these nights has been formulated yet. Duncan has suggested that it be linked to the levy and paid directly to the Trust so that that the Trust would benefit from all or part of the income. At what stage, if at all, would Hamerkop try to draw other trusted MCSA members into such a project? Any specific proposals?

ALIEN INVASIVE PLANTS NEEDING ATTENTION NOW

Ronde klits/ burweed/ *Cyathula uncinulata* – horrible burs – stick onto T-shirts and socks – roundish, soft leaves coming off stems, opposite each other. Much has been removed but there are still burr bushes on either side of the road just before reaching Pretty's cottage. Aleck will work on them when finished with dry wood removal and slashing grass.

Crofton weed and Pampas grass in both Rotsboom and Hamerkop Kloofs remain a problem, but those can be dealt with later. Syringa trees need to be ring barked and there are some Senna plants coming up in the kloof.

SWANEPOEL BOUNDARY FENCE

Kobus Swanepoel is indeed erecting a fence between his property and Hamerkop & MCSA properties.

Stakes, poles are installed

Bushes have been cut where poles are being put up

Old rusted wire fencing under and over big roots shows that Swanepoel is erecting fence on the official boundary

The Trustees are responding to his verbal demands to Hamerkop to pay 50% of the costs and to "clear" 10m on our side of the boundary.

GROOTKLOOF – JUNCTION POOL – ILLEGAL FIRES

Small church group (ZCC) found cooking on a fire in Grootkloof this last Sunday (28th May). Any suggestions on how this can be stopped or avoided? Maybe a "Strictly no fires" sign put up by the MCSA and regular patrolling may be necessary?

That's all for now ☺. Keep well and warm!

Kind regard,

Karin Spottiswoode - Cell 072-595-6991, Tel 011-674-2980