

Project Update: April 2013

Major achievements from December 2012 to April 2013 were as follows:

1. Student Willem Matthee continued his research on rehabilitation interventions in the Eastern, Western and Northern Cape areas of the Karoo.
2. Student Andrew Jackson, registered for a Masters degree through the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, is working at Loxton with the Endangered Wildlife Trust to establish habitat restoration trials for the Critically Rare riverine Rabbit. Sue Milton-Dean is an advisor on this project.
3. The Non-Profit Organization Wolwekraal Research and Conservation Organization (WOCRO) that is dealing with the public benefit aspects of the Renu-Karoo project activities has elected additional members that add skills in environmental education, the physical aspects of ecological restoration and biodiversity research. Renu-Karoo Veld Restoration cc will continue to run a biodiversity-based business specialising in Karoo veld consulting, indigenous nursery, composting and seed collection.
4. In April 2013, the South African Revenue Service (SARS) approved WCRO as a Public Benefit Organisation exempt from donations tax and estate duty.
5. The delivery vehicle (Hyundai H100, 2010 model) with canopy to transport purchased with Rufford funding is proving ideal for transporting employees and Renu-Karoo products. Driver Wilfred Luttig has obtained a Public Driving Permit permitting him to carry more than six passengers.
6. From February 2013, WCRO and Renu-Karoo staff presented a 2-day plant propagation and veld restoration course for 12 adults, of whom eight came from poor rural communities in Spoegrivier (Namaqualand) and Merweville (Great Karoo). In December 2012, and throughout March 2013, WCRO/Renu-Karoo assisted the local Extended Public Works Programme team with their environmental training. In March 2013, Sue Milton-Dean gave a lecture on ecology at Albert College, a local school. Sue and Meraai Isaacs gave a talk on Karoo garden and medicinal plants to the women's club at Rietbron. The talks both bore the Rufford logo.
7. During the reporting period we guided 71 visitors on nature walks including an ecology outing for senior school learners from a local school (Albert College).
8. Renu-Karoo staff re-fenced 500 m of the boundary of Wolwekraal Nature Reserve to keep neighbouring goats out of the protected area.
9. Local snake catcher Athol Loppnow released a Namaqua chameleon onto Wolwekraal Nature Reserve after confiscating it from youths who wanted to sell it. This beetle-eating, ground chameleon is indigenous to the area but occurs at very low densities.



Veld rehabilitation discussion Feb 2013



EPWP training Feb 2013



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Nanaqua Chamaeleon Wolvekraal NR

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