

Project Update: September 2016

The first peer reviewed article of the Knysna Seahorse Status project is available where we confirm that an artificial water body provides suitable habitat for the endangered Knysna seahorse. It is then also the Reno mattresses (wire baskets filled with rocks) that seems to be the habitat of choice for this species within the marina canals. To test this, we conducted a habitat choice experiment, where we assessed the habitat choice made by the seahorse when given a choice between two habitat types (eel grass and Reno mattress). We are in the process of submitting the results of this experiment to a scientific journal. We also continued with our seasonal seahorse surveys within the marina – and have now completed 2 years' worth of summer and winter surveys. In addition to this, we commenced with monthly seahorse surveys within the marina and in the larger estuary to assess seahorse population's differences between the different sites – and to really find out if the marina acts as a type of refuge for this species.



Pipefish – a Longsnout pipefish (*Syngnathus temminckii*), neighbour to the seahorse, found in Eel grass beds.

Seahorse found within the larger Knysna Estuary within Eel grass.



Seahorse found within the Reno mattress habitat within Thesen Islands Marina