



## NEWSLETTER - JANUARY 2010

*The Greater Simonsberg Conservancy would like to wish all its members and Partners a Happy 2010!*

The Greater Simonsberg Conservancy consists of 19 farms surrounding the Simonsberg and Klapmutskop. This newsletter provides a quick overview of what the Conservancy is all about and how we help the member farms of the with their conservation efforts.

### Alien Clearing

The Conservancy received funding from Landcare to help with alien clearing efforts on Conservancy farms. This money is being used to assist farms identified by environmental specialists as priority areas for clearing. Tokara, Thelema, Wiesenhof, Rustenberg and Easthill are the first farms where assistance with alien clearing will be provided. Alien clearing teams have started clearing, and will finish by the end of February. The long-term plan will be to, where possible, offer assistance to all farms within the conservancy, to control their alien vegetation.



### Environmental Education

The conservancy received funding to host Junior Landcare camps in 2010. Approximately ten, three day camps will be held where kids from underprivileged schools in the Stellenbosch area will attend. At camp we will discuss topics, like fire and Fynbos, food gardens, sustainable use of natural resources, etc. The conservancy will also be working together with Department of Health to establish food gardens at some of these underprivileged schools in the area. The Conservancy is also proud to have helped two matriculates get bursaries to attend a field ranger and guide course in 2010. These teenagers will help us lead the Junior Landcare Camps.



### Full-moon hikes

Summer was kicked off with a full-moon hike on Klapmutskop, where about 40 partners and members of the Greater Simonsberg Conservancy attended. The media was also invited and the Conservancy was mentioned in Weg and Die Burger the day after. The next full-moon hike will be on **30 January 2010, and 28 February 2010**. For more information regarding the full-moon hikes please contact the trail centre on 021 884 4752.

### Fire Management

The Conservancy is working together with Cape Nature to get vertical firebreaks in place on the Simonsberg. These firebreaks will in future be used to create block burns on the Simonsberg. This will hopefully reduce fire risk in future, and prevent too frequent fires in the young fynbos. The Conservancy is also actively involved in the Stellenbosch FPA that is being formed.

### Skills training

Over 90 staff members from various farms within the conservancy have been trained in the same fire training course by Enviro Wildfire Services, in November and December 2009. This means that in case of fire, the farm workers, fighting the fire, will be able to communicate better, and know which procedures to follow. The Conservancy provides different conservation skills training courses throughout the year. In 2009 we also provided a Snake management course, alien identification course and a chainsaw course.

The Conservancy has grown a lot over the last couple of years and we are proud to have 19 members of the Greater Simonsberg Conservancy. We would like to include more farms surrounding the Simonsberg into the Conservancy boundaries. **If you would like to be part of the Conservancy, please contact the Conservation Officer on 079 276 3638.**

**MEMBERS:** De Goede Success; Delheim; DelVera; Dirtopia; East Hill; Elsenburg; Glen Elley; Kanonkop; Knorhoek; Laibach; Le Bonheur&Uitkyk; Marklew; Muratie; Quoin Rock; Remhoogte; Rustenberg; Thelema; Tokara; Warwick; Wiesenhof

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