

A Rocha South Africa Review 2006

A Rocha is an international conservation organisation working to show God's love for all creation. The name "A Rocha" means "The Rock"



A Rocha South Africa is a new Christian presence in South African conservation. Our two inaugural *Hope for the Earth* conferences in August, attended by 180 people, presented our vision for local community projects that contribute to global scientific conservation. The KZN post-conference programme explored the link between environmental, societal and personal healing – a crucial need in South Africa. Because of God's goodness, the whole year has been one of unprecedented growth. Fledgling Community Conservation Groups in Cape Town and Stellenbosch took on projects that are impacting local communities. In KZN a growing, hardworking staff and volunteer team is nurturing community partnerships.

This year's review is presented by Lydia Willems, Western Cape representative to the National Committee, Liz Martens, A Rocha's Environmental Educationist, Dieter Oschadleus, a facilitator of the Cape Town Community Conservation Group at Rondevlei, and Mark Brown, volunteer in A Rocha's scientific research.

Allen Goddard - Director

Bewonder en Bewaar – Lydia Willems

In the first half of the year, walks in pristine places, alien hacks, and a community service clean up day, focused us on our main objective, which is nature experience, "meeting the Creator in creation". During July and August preparations for the *Hope for the Earth* Conference were at the forefront. A Western Cape Cabinet was formed to work on the logistics. Strong bonds were formed between ARI and South Africa in KZN and WC.

Meeting Peter and Miranda Harris was the most inspirational part of our year. The conference brought together students, housewives, scientists, pensioners, environmental consultants, and moderators of denominations. We are working at maintaining strong links with all of our new members in the Western Cape.



Highlights of the second half of the year were the September Duthie Nature Reserve Wild Flower Hunt with Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wild Flowers (CREW), and the December Rondevlei bird-ringing and end-of-the-year picnic, where we met many of the new Cape Town members. Sue Winter and I also had

opportunities to present creation care talks on radio and in two Stellenbosch churches. We are exploring how A Rocha might partner with the Bridges-of-Hope Children’s Home in Franschoek, and Ali Corbett’s Cape4Kids in Cape Town.



Phila Endalweni Clubs in KZN – Liz Martens



During the first half of the year, Noluvuyo Mshumpela established and facilitated three environmental clubs in schools. Since July, the number of clubs has increased to seven; five schools and two children’s homes. This has brought the number of children reached weekly to 100, in addition to their educators and care givers. Many of the learners do not have extra-mural activities at their schools and the clubs have provided encouragement, enthusiasm and commitment through participation in the environmental activities. Activities range from establishing food gardens to team building exercises and lesson plans linked to the curriculum.

Msunduzi Clean-up Day – More than 2000 municipal bags of solid waste, extracted from the riparian zone.

The *Witness* Msunduzi River Clean-up day in mid September with the Duzi-Umgeni Conservation Trust (DUCT) and the Msunduzi Municipality involved many of our Phila Endalweni learners and educators. Further opportunities for partnerships were opened up through this initiative. We are working with some of these organisations to run an educators’ workshop in February 2007. Also, our preparation for staff accreditation with the National Qualifications Framework, as field guides, is progressing well. This will enable our programmes of day visits for learners, youth and educators into Bisley Valley Nature Reserve to go ahead early in 2007.



Research and Bird Ringing – Dieter Oschadleus, Cape Town, Mark Brown, KZN

Near the entrance to Rondevlei Nature Reserve is an ideal base for our monthly ringing activities as there are shady picnic areas. In addition to regular supporters, members of the general public pass by and stop to see what is happening. Many birdwatchers and families also join in. Over 40 species have been ringed. The most commonly ringed are Masked Weaver, Cape White-eye, Common Waxbill and Cape Bulbul. Many birds seem to be resident as the recapture rate is nearly 20%. An exciting record is Cape Robin (ring F31541) recaptured 10 years after first being ringed here. The scientific data we obtain by ringing is important, but even more amazing is watching the joy of the children holding a bird before letting it go.



along three transects in Bisley Valley Nature Reserve, ahead of the 2006 breeding season. Southern Black Tits and Scimitar-billed Woodhoopoes have taken residence. Both species are worthy of research so we have initiated a color ringing project. Also, secretions from the Woodhoopoes' uropygial glands have proved helpful to research these birds' chemical defense mechanisms.



Reaching Children Affected by HIV/AIDS Allen Goddard

In 2006 our partnership with Sobantu's *Nikuthando Welfare Organisation*, a home-based care network for children infected or affected by HIV/AIDS, included a *Phila Endalweni* visit to the KZN National Botanical Gardens in July, and an end of year Christmas party, with St Matthews Anglican Church, in December.

In KZN, Birdlife KZN Midlands, the University of KZN (UKZN) and A Rocha partner to run bird ringing at the Darvill Bird Sanctuary. In August we hosted a successful passerine ageing and sexing workshop run by Colin Jackson (A Rocha Kenya) and Peter Harris (A Rocha International) who shared many new techniques with us. We are grateful to them for their time. In 2006 we netted 1545 birds of 71 different species. Rings were fitted to 1302 birds, the remaining 243 birds being retraps. These figures confirm that Darvill is an ideal site for training new ringers, and seeing a variety of birds.

A Rocha in partnership with Prof. Colleen Downs of UKZN and the Msunduzi Municipality, Conservation & Environment Branch introduced 60 pine nest boxes



Tshalan'imithi Programme Launched



A Rocha's *Tshalan'imithi* (Plant healing plants!) Programme got under way in October. We planted 133 locally indigenous trees on the campus of the Lily of the Valley Children's home, which flanks the Tala Game Reserve, near Eston. A Rocha has a growing partnership with Warren Holland, and the children of "Lily", who also joined us in the Duzi River Clean up day.

Financial Review 06

A Rocha South Africa has 133 members of whom 85 are financial partners. Here is a summary of the 2006 financial Statements.

Income	Expenditure
R 384 941	R309 764
Net Surplus	R75 177*

* This surplus is allocated to environmental education in 2007.

Income Sources

South African monthly donors	- 56%
South African once off donors	- 2%
UK donors	- 10%
UK Trust	- 32%

Siyabonga! Dankie! Khotsong! Thank you!

Your donations enable A Rocha to demonstrate God's love - for a more sustainable world!

Contact Details

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In all the countries where we work, A Rocha is identified by five core commitments and to their practical outworking:

Cross-Cultural

We respect and draw on the repositories of knowledge and repertoires of skill embedded in diverse cultures, both locally and around the world.

Christian

Underlying all we do is our biblical faith in the living God, who made the world, loves it, and entrusts it to the care of human society.

Conservation

We carry out research for the conservation and restoration of the natural world and run environmental education programmes for people of all ages.

Cooperation

We work in partnerships with a wide variety of organizations and individuals who share our concerns for a sustainable world.

Community

Through our commitment to God, each other and the wider creation, we aim to develop good relationships, both within the A Rocha family and in our local communities.



A ROCHA

Christians in Conservation