

# ***FRIENDS OF NYLSVLEY AND NYL FLOODPLAIN***

Since 1991  
Newsflash March 2023

Dear Friends,

We are thrilled to announce that we shall be hosting the popular Beginners Bird course over the weekend 5-7 May presented by Geoff Lockwood. This course is suitable for beginner birders but also those with some experience who may like a refresher. I have run several of these courses and learn something new every time. Bookings now open. Geoff is a very experienced trainer he keeps us continuously enthralled with his tales. May is the most beautiful month of the year to be at Nylsvley. It can be cool at night but very pleasant during the day. And with the wonderful rains this season the reserve should still be beautifully green.

We welcome new members Yehuda Goshier & Elinor Kern, Bruce & Agi Cohen, Irene Roy, Elize Brandt, Jess & Alex Nepomuceno, Juliane Robinson, Jared Beukes, thank you for joining as we work hard to help look after Nylsvley and the Nyl floodplain.

Thanks also to all the Friends that renewed their membership, sending the thank you letters is my next job! Someone paid a single membership on 28 February but no name was quoted?

We had a great Raptors course over the weekend 24-26 February. The access road from the R101 was just navigable. I have never known such damage to the roads around Nylsvley in the 37 years I have been going there. The road to Vogelfontein is completely washed away in one place. That road was put in about 80 years ago to hold back the water making the habitat suitable for shooting wildfowl. At the time that piece of land where the Crake hide is was not part of the farm Nylsvley. It was added to Nylsvley in 1994.

Considering the amount of water that goes under the road, it has survived very well that is until February 2023. The road crosses the flow of the water which makes it very vulnerable. Along the length of the 70km or so of the Nyl floodplain there are very few roads crossing it at right angles like the Vogelfontein road My hope is that due to the quietness in that section of the floodplain that the booming of the Great Bittern will be heard again!

A Snake Eagle and Yellow-billed Kite were seen by Sonia van Wyk as she left the reserve to go home after the Raptors course and a Black-winged kite was seen by Moira van Heerden who also kindly sent the attached pics taken during the weekend. Our new caterers Henk and Erika did very well, they are so enthusiastic and like Susan and Gillian work very hard to do the menu's, shopping and get the meals ready on time.

More goods have been provided to help keep the group camp in good order including glass for the broken window pane in Hamerkop one and a new shower head for Hamerkop two.

We have had a bit of fun thinking up names for the new holiday houses that are presently being built. Trying to use 'one word' names and as 'biodiverse' as possible, these are some of the names we shall submit for management to choose from: Oriole, Warbler, Owl, Starling, Eagle, Frog, Agama, Mongoose, Reedbuck, Roan, Jackal-berry, Boekenhout, Moepel, Karee, Dragonfly and Butterfly.

At the Friends of Nylsvley committee meeting held on Thursday 9 March, the decision was made to offer to provide the finances to upgrade the existing ablution block in the campsite and rebuild the one that burnt down. The design is very similar except there will be no central corridor, instead a partition will separate the toilet from the shower and we would like to make both buildings unisex and add a washing up area. The excellent ablution block drawn up by Ben du Plessis has also been submitted for management to decide which to build.

Also at the meeting it was decided to hold an in person AGM this year venue still to be decided but it will probably be in the Irene area or Pretoria East. That will only happen in June as Ron and I will be taking some leave in late May.

**Cheers for now Marion x x x**

PS: You can still get to Vogelfontein: As you leave Nylsvley turn left and go over the river, keep going until you come to the end of the game fence, turn left into a narrow road below the pylons. Follow this until you come to a larger gravel road turn left and keep going to Vogelfontein.



We thank Moira van Heerden for all the pics except the evening in the boma which was taken by Susanna Caputi

