



KORSMAN CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2019

Dear Members,

It's been a busy summer, with two work parties so far and ongoing reed and weed removal.

Weed Pull Work Party, 20 January

Being in an urban area, seeds escaping from gardens within the whole catchment wash into Korsman via the storm water system. The plant is a type of *Acalypha*, probably from South America. It has invaded a large patch of grassland and is rapidly expanding. Eleven volunteers met to pull out the plants before they went to seed.



Jose Barbosa kept the volunteers entertained



Jennifer Taylor filling bags with weeds



The Ganerpersads like pulling out 'the big ones'



The cause of all the trouble: Acalypha

"Dirty and Dangerous" Litter Pickup, 17 February

Volunteers in waders braved swamps and mud, wielding a variety of home-invented tools to hook litter out of the reeds.



There is no truth in the rumour that Tracy and Hendro are stick-in-the-muds



Tracy Boggis is installing sturdy litter fences in critical inlets which we hope catches most trash in future, so she can get out of waders.



Adolf Hüster met the team afterwards (a smart move) and graciously removed all the litter bags.

Newest 'Member'

When a terrified Western Extension resident wanted a snake removed from her garden, expert snake catcher Conrad captured a year-old harmless Brown Water Snake.

He (and his kids – not scared of snakes) brought it to Korsman to release.

Its ideal new home was in a pile of logs where it would find plenty of insects to eat.



Q: Where's this terrifying snake, then?



A: In the boy's left hand



African Birdlife

January / February 2019 Edition

This lovely article and photographs by Jan de Beer has attracted visitors to Korsman who never knew we existed.



Who Am I?

On the website iNaturalist, I post observations of plants and insects found at Korsman. The common beetle on the left went unidentified by local experts. My suggested ID from internet research was ignored and one unhelpfully told me that you may have to dissect the genitals to tell it apart from other species.

I had a point to prove, so on my next London flight I visited the Natural History Museum Coleoptera collection. World famous entomologists Michael Geiser and Max Barclay helped me identify it as *Monolepta cruciata* – another accepted name (synonym) of what I had proposed in the beginning.



The Coleoptera collection holds hundreds of thousands of beetle specimens. Lucky the experts know where to look.



The British Museum of Natural History: Winter fairytale view, complete with outdoor skating rink

Insect hunt 10 February

Interested 'Citizen Scientists' and budding entomologists swept the grass to record fascinating critters.



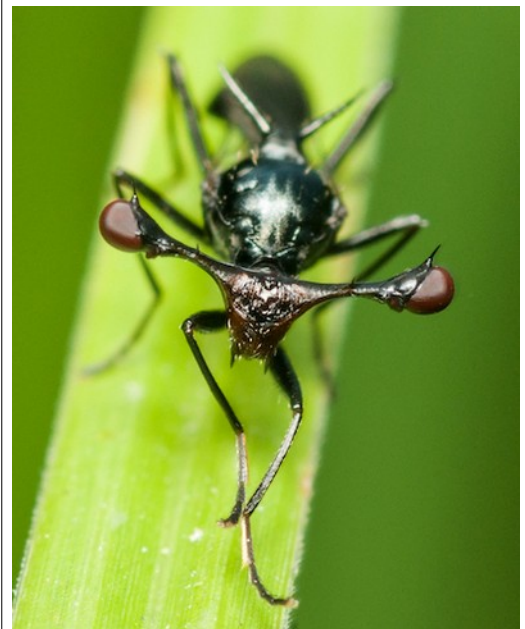
On the hunt with nets, cameras and collecting jars



Finding something interesting in the grass



Macro beauty of a plant midge, the size of a mosquito
Photo by Jaunne and Marelize van Tonder



How do you make eye contact?
Stalk-eye fly by Jaunne and Marelize van Tonder



This predatory Hadrocnemus beetle (about 7mm) has caught a plant midge (not the one pictured above!)

Latest Movie Release

See our latest Korsman video (2 min 49 sec) for a fascinating close-up journey into the insect's world https://youtu.be/M_n8-K7cO5I



Environmental Rehabilitation: Progress over the years

Two new pages on our website show dramatic before and after photos of the work that we have done (and which you have sponsored – our members and donors) over the years. Visit our pages

[Environmental Restoration 1](#)

[Environmental Restoration 2](#)

All 'After' photos were taken from the same aspect where possible, such as these examples from the berm near Short St – the difference between 2015 and 2018. The reed invasion was driven back and the grassland has regenerated with native grasses, sedges and wildflowers.



Eugene's Captures

Swifts and swallows fly past at such speed that only experts can identify the birds. Eugene Liebenberg's amazing photos have captured these in flight so we can all enjoy them – including the Palm Swift, below, showing its unusual face.



Greater Striped Swallow



White-throated Swallow