



Special Issue No 5

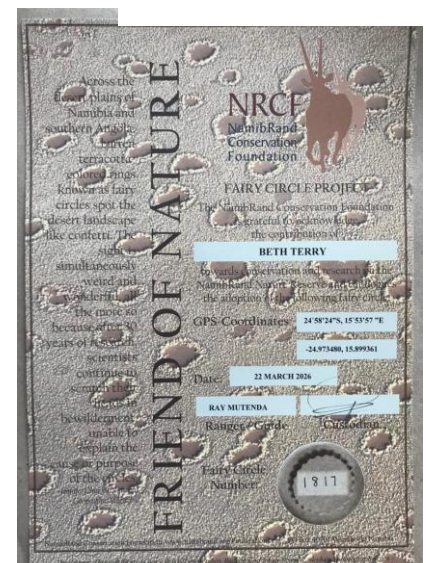
Wolwedans...

... the romance and magic that the very name conjures up in one's mind! Did someone really see wolves dancing on the dunes? In the moonlight? No one seems quite certain as to how the name came about so we use our own imagination. And the magic continues with fairy circles and more fairy circles, with mystical shades of light over the dunes and the mountains, the deep velvety blackness of the night sky and the occasional call of a jackal. You can even buy a fairy circle (funds used for the ongoing research of the phenomenon) – and Beth did just that!



The long weekend of 21 – 23 March and a visit to the famed NamibRand Nature Reserve was an opportunity not to be missed.

Koos Barkhuizen, Heide Beinhauer, Christien Boshoff, Lesley Crawford, Thelma Cumming, Silke Felton, Jaco Fourie, Norman and Avril Green, Ellen Gudde, Luise Hoffmann, Britta Lohrke, Mema Merdes, Anna Muller, Alexandra Sacharow, Christina Schulz, Manda Steynberg, Annelene Sigg, Beth Terry, Diana Thompson, Helen Vale, Annabelle Venter and Barrie Watson were able to participate in this exciting outing.



NamibRand Nature Reserve lies approximately 400km to the southwest of Windhoek, high on a dune plateau. It is a non-profit private nature reserve of 1890 square kilometers, made up of several farms that subscribe to the no fence policy of the Reserve. This allows the several species of game to roam freely over the area. In addition there are the spectacular views of dunes, the awe-inspiring breadth of the landscape, the dark skies and the silence of time standing still.



Most of the first day was spent travelling to our accommodation at Desert Lodge. We arrived at the reception area, were warmly greeted and then conveyed to the Lodge itself in the vehicles provided. The ethos of the Wolwedans collection is based on the 4C Sustainability Models ie Conservation, Community, Culture and Commerce. Latterly a 5th C has been added, Consciousness. To this end, no private vehicles may drive in the Reserve and lodge vehicles may not deviate from the tracks already there.

Time was then spent settling in, becoming acquainted with each other – there were some new faces – being treated to a sumptuous meal and resting for the full days ahead. Our hosts for the weekend were Jessica Steyn, the warden of the area, her husband Andre plus of course their young son Dominic and their dog!

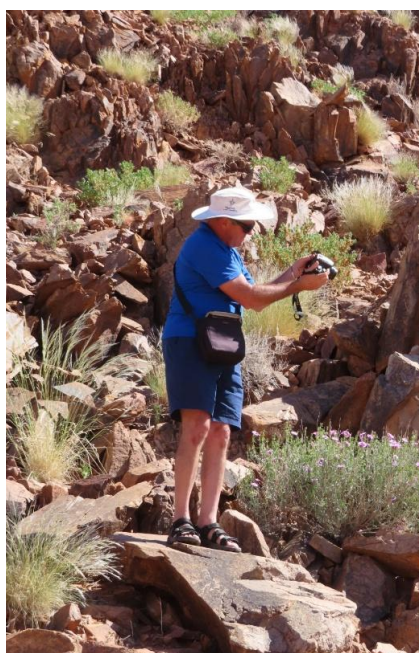
For the twitchers, there was enough bird life to make them excited at what they saw.

A beautiful Dune lark sunning himself on the dune.



Andre,
their dog,
Dominic,
Jessica and
their
unborn
baby girl





Page 3: **What plant lovers do!**

Clockwise:

Anna Muller, Jaco, Manda & Ellen,

Even ants like the plants-
Camponotus detritus on
Sesamum sp

Lunch at the Sustainability
Village, Mema investigating a
Moringa tree.

Centre: Britta & Luise

Page 4: Oryx at a waterhole



Over the two full days we had there, we were given a taste of the vastness of the Reserve, of the differing landscapes, the tourist accommodations offered, a glimpse of the Sustainability Village (where vegetables and fruit are grown organically for the table) and the opportunity of experiencing the “Dark Sky”. NamibRand was the first registered International Dark Sky Resort in Africa, more of the magic! It has also been registered as Africa's First Wilderness Quiet Park.

The good rains in 2025 made the desert come alive and we were able to see *Limeum arenicolum* (found only at Wolwedans dune area and not eaten by any animal), the poisonous *Greigeria ornativa* and different *Stipagrostis* species. Jessica had given us a glimpse of these in her presentation for Botsoc in October last year.

Hibiscus elliotiae



Limeum arenicolum

Photos: Jessica Steyn



Polygala leptophylla



Barleria lancifolia



The Botanical Society is indebted to Stephan Brückner (Group MD at Wolwerdians), Nils Odendaal (CEO of NamibRand Nature Reserve) and Jessica Steyn (Warden) for the invitation to visit Wolwedans, for their generosity and hospitality to Botsoc members and to the staff who all helped make this a most memorable outing.

Photos: Koos Barkhuizen, Heide Beinhauer, Christien Boshoff, Silke Felton, Avril Green, Britta Lohrke, Alexandra Sacharow, Annelene Sigg, Beth Terry,

