

Cape Epic beneficiaries partner on conservation project

Two charity beneficiaries of the ABSA Cape Epic will partner over the next few weeks to raise awareness of leopard conservation.

Children of Buffet Olives, the olive growing estate on the foothills of the Drakenstein Mountain, who are served by the Anna Foundation will be hosted by the Cape Leopard Trust to explore areas where leopards roam, on foot and on bikes, following their tracks as well as signs of other wildlife activity. Human-wildlife conflict is the main challenge facing Cape leopard survival, and farmers fear leopards because of risk to their livestock and personal safety.

Helen Turnbull, CEO of the Cape Leopard Trust, says: "These leopards are extremely elusive and live in rugged, inaccessible terrain, so it's difficult to be absolutely accurate about the number of wild leopards that still roam free across Absa Cape Epic territory. The organisation uses field cameras to investigate leopard presence, and a camera survey currently underway in the Cederberg indicates in preliminary findings that 47 individuals have been identified in that particular area."

Turnbull expounded on how her organisation is committed to using environmental education to inform communities about the role the leopard plays in maintaining eco-system health as apex predator. "Our educators use the natural environment to share knowledge of issues that affect leopard survival," she said.

This follows a recent conservation session with the children held near Paarl recently. "This eco-activity forms part of our 3Rs programme, reading, running and the third R — righting, which focuses on life skills and environmental appreciation," said Anna Brom, founding director of the Anna Foundation. "The children of Buffet Olives who participated are becoming extremely skilled on mountain bikes, thanks to our Sports Development programme, and a group of them were able to enjoy the Paarl veld from the saddle of their bikes."

Brom elaborated that the "running" in the Stellenbosch-based NGO's tagline referred to all sports coaching and development that the children in the programme enjoy.

She said: "There was much excitement yesterday when the children learnt that one of the leopards they were introduced to during the Cape Leopard Trust presentation, named Maximus, lives in the mountain, very close to the Buffet Olives property."

"As a beneficiary of the ABSA Cape Epic, the practical involvement in these events, and the benefits the children experience from engaging with the various activities related to the race, adds to the sustainability and educationally sound post-school programme we offer."

According to Turnbull, United Nations World Wildlife Day 2018, on 3 March, dedicated this year to Big Cats. It reinforced the message that helping to protect the Cape's remaining leopards needed action from everyone.



AbsaCape Epic beneficiaries the Anna Foundation and Cape Leopard Trust partnered to expose children of Buffet Olives to the natural habitat of the Cape Leopard. Linwille Lewak (left) of Buffet Olives and Hadley Lyners, Education Project Coordinator of the Cape Leopard Trust, out in the veld in search of Cape Leopard tracks.



Groep en besighede verwelkom ryers

Die Busy Beez is een van baie groepe en organisasies (onder andere die berede polisie-beamptes, trompoppies, Wellington-klopse, studenteteatergroepe en plaaslike skole) wat 22 Maart deur die strate van Wellington gaan loop om die Epic-fietsryers te verwelkom. Die groep vroue het hul naaldwerkvernuf aangewend om voorskote te maak met fraai rooi en geel fietse op om by die kleure van die toer aan te sluit. Die voorskote sal later hierdie jaar by die spogtee uitgestal en te koop wees. Vir nog inligting oor die Epic-program kan die toerismekantoor in Wellington gebel word by 021 864 1378.



Epiese kuns

Kunststude van die Kaapse Skiereiland-Universiteit vir Tegnologie (KSUT) het hul volle ondersteuning vir die voorbereidings vir die Absa Cape Epic gegee waar hul kleurvolle kunswerke die dorp sal versier.

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