

BRENTON BLUE NEWS – JUNE 2008

To all friends and neighbours of the Brenton Blue butterfly – welcome to your annual newsletter! We can all be proud of our fantastic butterfly reserve – one of only two official ones in South Africa – and we are glad to report that your very own butterfly is surviving and thriving! This newsletter includes some basic facts as well as the latest news on management of the reserve. Your management committee (MC) includes representatives from CapeNature, WESSA, EWT, LepSoc, the Greater Knysna Municipality (GKM) and the local residents.

New Website on the Brenton Blue

A new website has been developed by the MC, which is crammed with information on the butterfly, the reserve, and other plants and creatures found in the reserve. You are encouraged to visit this website at www.brentonblue.org.za and become a “Friend of the Brenton Blue” by making a small donation to assist management of the reserve.



Brenton Blue female

Ecological Audit

An independent auditor conducted this audit in September 2007. He found that the reserve was basically managed on a sound basis, and made some recommendations that are being implemented by the MC, one of which was to increase the level of public participation in the reserve. If you have any suggestions as to how this could be achieved, or if you would like to volunteer some help, please let us know.

Control of alien vegetation

The MC actively controls alien vegetation in the reserve. Work continues on the eradication of Kikuyu grass on the road verges along Fynbosoord at the bottom and W K Grobler Drive at the top. This is being accomplished by selective spraying of *Roundup* herbicide followed by manual removal of any surviving Kikuyu grass. Any neighbours of the reserve who have a Kikuyu lawn are asked to prevent it from encroaching into the reserve.

Management of Uitzicht 216/81

Uitzicht 216/81 is a public open space owned by the GKM, opposite the reserve, north of W K Grobler. The land appears to be suitable for expansion of the Brenton Blue population, provided that it can be managed to promote the growth of the food plant *I. erecta*. CapeNature has entered into a contract with the GKM that authorises them to manage the land on behalf of the GKM.

Butterfly counts

The adult butterfly population at the reserve is currently on a rising trend, having increased from 72 in February 2007 to 104 in November 2007 and 162 in February 2008. This increase is believed to be a result of an improved rainfall pattern at crucial stages of the life cycle, and more diligent and focused reserve maintenance to promote growth of the butterfly foodplant.

20 June 2008