



Hawaan Forest Conservation Trust Monthly site inspection report:

26.09.2022

Summary:

- i. The monthly site visit to the Hawaan Forest by A. Starke was conducted on the 19.09.2022.
- ii. Items checked during the visit are detailed in the table on page 6. Further to these items, the site visits entailed ongoing planting of new wildflower species in the grassland areas, checking up on staff and facilitating clearing of vegetation on the pipeline.
- iii. Patrols by HCT during September revealed no snares in the western and north-west portion of the forest.
- iv. The forest is still extremely dry and no significant rain has fallen yet in September. However, some summer migrant birds such as Yellow-billed Kites and Klaas's cuckoo have returned from their equatorial winter retreats.
- vi. Action items for October are to continue sourcing (and plant) wild-flowers into the grassland restoration nodes and to start clearing the pipeline of over grown vegetation.

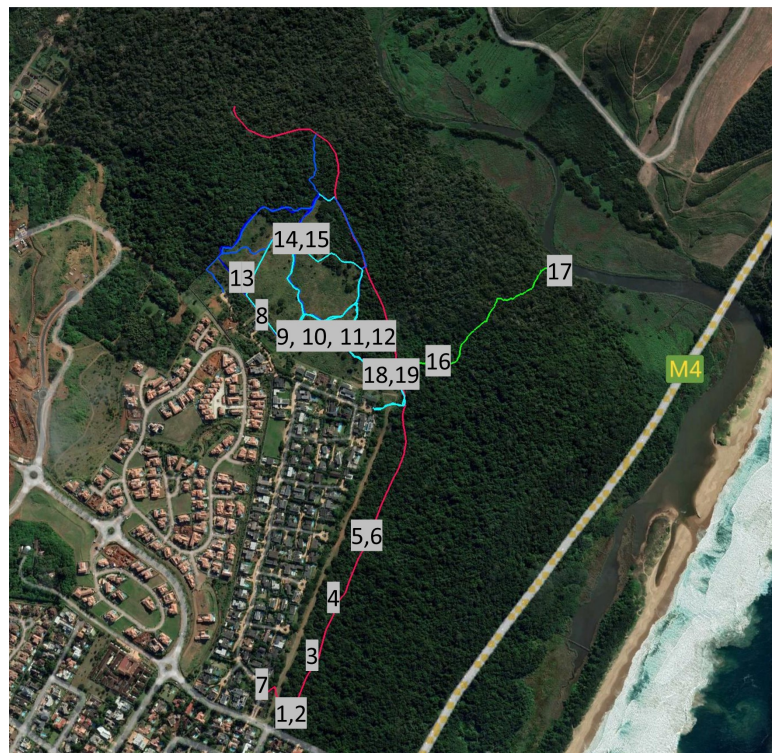


Figure 1. Numbers on the map refer to items below.



(1)

There has been no further regrowth of Creeping inch plant at the forest gate. But we will continue to monitor this area to see if it returns during the summer.



(2)

The stock pile of mulch at the forest entrance has been relatively well managed but some of the plastic in the mulch should be cleaned-up by Life Landscapes before it has a chance to blow into the forest.



(3)

The camera traps continue to provide surveillance of humans and wildlife within the reserve. Though there are some challenges in keeping them running on a continuous basis.



(4)

The forest pathways did not need to be cut this month as spring growth has not yet set in. However, the grassland pathways will be cut early in October.



(5)

The forest is still particularly dry and in its deciduous winter form. We should expect that late September or early October rain will kick off a green flush. Klaas's but no Black Cuckoos were heard during the visit. These are summer migrants to the forest and their presence is signal that the summer breeding season has begun.



(6)

This *Eugenia uniflora* (Siam cherry - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugenia_uniflora) is an invasive shrub and has been noted growing on the edge of forest along the pipeline and will be removed by the HCT staff.



(7)

The swallow platform at the entrance ponds seems to have been used over the winter.



(8)

Eulophia speciosa, a cool and quite common ground orchard (<http://pza.sanbi.org/eulophia-speciosa>) can be noted flowering within the grassland and other open wild places within the estate.



(9)

Some nice grassland forbs, *Drimia elata*, (https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/507050-Drimia-elata/browse_photos) were noted flowering in the original grassland restoration plot which was planted by Geoff Nichols in 2008.



(10)

HCT staff will manually clean the Curry bush and other woody plants from the original grassland wild-flower restoration plot during the month of October.



(11)

Hypoxis hemerocallidea, flowering in the original grassland plot, <http://pza.sanbi.org/hypoxis-hemerocallidea>.



(12)

Gladiolus dalenii bulbs on the pathway will be moved into the new grassland restoration clusters by HCT in October. <http://pza.sanbi.org/gladiolus-dalenii>



(13)

Silver Oak were cut back and managed on the western section of the grassland during September.



(14)

Some of the Lions Ear (*Leonotus*) have been browsed by antelope so we have installed a 'thorn boma' to protect them for the remainder of the dry season.



(15)

The grass around the picnic area is not looking good and is full of weeds. These will be cleaned up during October.



(16)

The Bush-shrike forest trail has been raked during September - we still would like to add tree tags along the path. A budget for these will be discussed with the HCT board.

(17)



Unfortunately, the Umhlanga River is not in great condition as a result of having raw sewage flowing into in from number source points in the catchment.

(18)



A most beautiful wild flower, *Scabiosa columbaria* (<http://pza.sanbi.org/scabiosa-columbaria>) have been tested for browsing in the restoration plots.

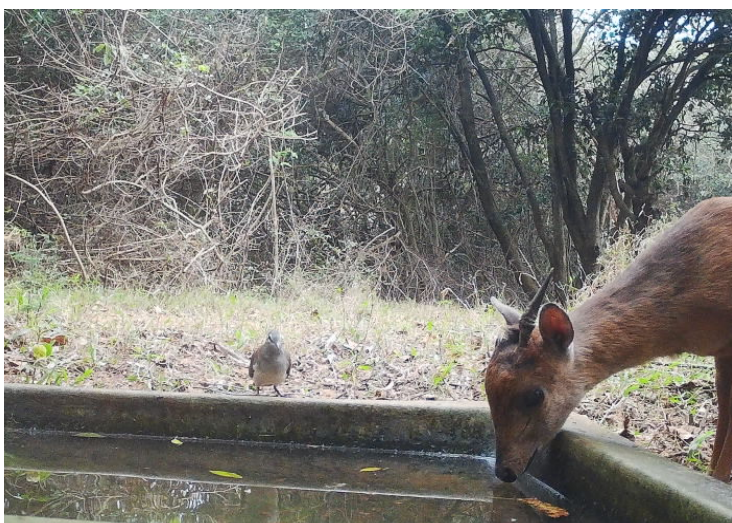
(19)



Vernonia capensis (Silver vernonia) have passed the browse test and have now been planted in six locations on the eastern portion of the grassland.

September 2022

The Red Duiker are the most beautiful forest antelope we have at the Hawaan Forest. Larger, and less common than their smaller cousins the Blue Duiker, they may reach up to 12 kg. They are coloured a deep chestnut red which contrasts pleasingly with the luminescent greens of the forest foliage in summer and similarly with the dry-scrub brown of the deciduous winter phase of the forest. These camera trap images, taken this month in September, showcase this most graceful forest antelope amongst the soft greens and browns of the forest before the onset of spring.



Operations: Tasks 2022

Category	Item	Task	Schedule	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Trails	1.1	Clearing away vegetation that is growing over, repairing washways	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	1.2	Repairing washways	Weekly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	1.3	Resetting concrete sleeper treads on steeper parts of the trails	Weekly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-			
	1.4	Cut the trails using a brush cutter once every two weeks in summer and check for overgrowth in winter	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	1.5	Trails should be maintained because they function as fire breaks or tracer breaks for fire-fighting when annual burn is done each year in July/August.	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	1.6	Check trails for over-hanging branches and other vegetation.	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	1.7	Clearing litter on the trails and in the forest twice a week as not much pedestrian traffic if usage increases then checking daily will have to be done.	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	1.8	Check fuel and oil for machines and report.	Monthly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	-	-			
	1.9	Snare management – check hot spot sites for re-applied snares on a weekly basis	Monthly	x	--	-	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Water points	2.1	Check if waterpoints are soiled by animals	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	2.2	Fill waterpoints along the trails	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Infrastructure	3.1	Observe and report to Management where signage needs to be cleaned or replaced due to vandalism or fading	Monthly	x	x	x	-	x	x	x	x	x			
	3.2	Check signs and clean signs and benches weekly	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	3.3	Check exclusion plot for fallen trees or branches damaging the wire.	Monthly	x	-	-	x	x	x	x	-	-			
	3.4	Keep tools and equipment clean and serviced daily for hand tools.	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	3.5	Clean and service machine tools after each session of use. Chainsaw, Brushcutter.	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
	3.6	Service of machinery at Berries	Yearly	-	-	x	-	-	-	-	-	-			

3.7	Keep Tilley Huts neat and tidy sweep daily, clean windows every 10 days check maintenance and rusting on a monthly basis and report to HCT members.	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
3.8	Check that trail cameras daily to ensure they are not stolen.	Daily	-	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
3.9	Cleaning of toilet and shower on a daily basis after use.	na	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.10	Check and order cleaning consumables for shower and toilet	na	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woody plant management	On-going daily work is clearing invasive introduced plants such as Pepper Trees, Trifid etc..in both the forest and grassland systems.	Weekly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Checking for regrowth of IAPs monthly and set out new work areas each month.	Monthly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
4.2	Removal of selected indigenous woody encroachment species such Silver Oak in the grassland section	Monthly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
4.3	Monitoring herbicide stores on a monthly	Monthly	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Fire management	5.1 Ensure tracers belts and pathways in the grassland open before prescribed burn	Yearly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	5.2 Service fire-fighting equipment once before the annual burn is completed and then oil up so that next season the equipment has not seized up with rust. <i>Fire fighting =equipment one drip torch, 3 rubber beaters with handles, two Knapsack sprayers.</i>	Yearly	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Consumables	6.1 Order uniforms and personal protective gear for the 2 staff.	Yearly	-	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

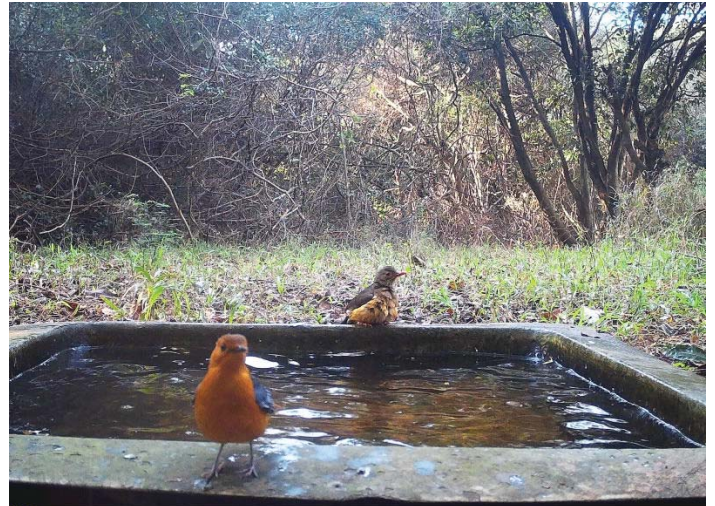
Herbicide register Hawaan forest nature reserve

Item	Herbicide name	Active ingredient	Type	Litres in stock	Date used	Species applied	Location
1.	Gladiator	Picloram	Selective	15L (pre-mix)	16/4/22	Callisa repens	Entrance gate
2.	Round-up	Glyphosate	Non-selective	3L	-	-	-

The forest fauna have been out in full force during August and the action has clearly revolved around the water point at the entrance to the Bush Shrike trail. One again some beautiful forest images have been captured.



A lemon dove and male blue duiker



A Red capped robin chat with a Olive thrush



Juvenile crowned eagle



A family of bushbuck



Large spotted Genet



Dwarf mongoose

Some beautiful camera trap images were taken at the forest water point during July, 2022.



Red Duiker, female.



Bushbuck females.



Crested guinea fowl.



Red Duiker, male

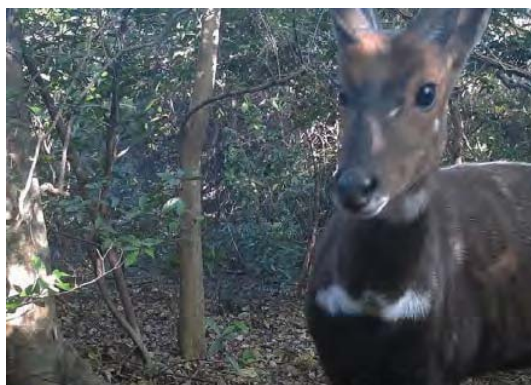


Vervet Monkey, Banded Mongoose, and Guinea fowl.



Banded Mongoose.

Some beautiful camera trap images were taken within the dry forest interior during June.



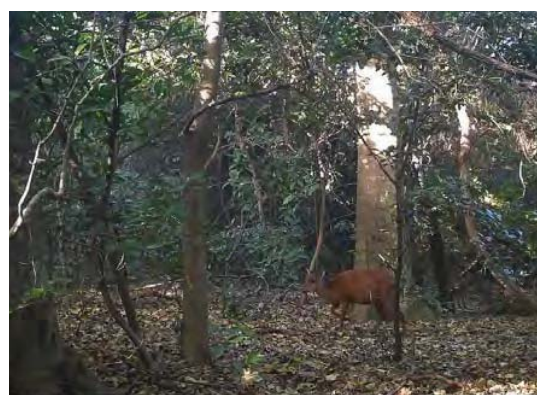
Bush buck female)



Bush buck (male)



Bush buck (female)



Red duiker (female)



Bush buck (female)



Blue duiker (pair)

Sewer break: During the rainfall and flooding in mid-April the municipal sewer pipeline on the boundary of the HFT property ruptured. The damage is therefore not in the HFT property but will effect the species in forest. The event resulted in a high pressure flow of sewerage which eroded sections of the pipeline infrastructure while causing a plume of waste into the forest. Fortunately, it appears that the runoff did not undercut the pipeline too badly and good work from the city ensured that the issue was resolved timorously. What remains, is for the city to repair the ailing infrastructure and to co-ordinate a clean-up of the litter/plastics which was discharged into the forest.



Fig 1a. The flow of the effluent took a north-easterly direction.



Fig. 2b. Some areas of the pipeline have been undercut and will need to be repaired.



Fig 2c. The manholes on the pipeline remain open for the time being.



Fig2d. Some of the surrounding vegetation at the source point has collapsed but damage does not seem to be extensive. However, a full inspection has not been conducted.



Fig. 2e. The sewage plume continues in a north-east direction down the forest slope. Litter from this plume should be cleaned-up.

Some beautiful images and interesting sightings on the camera traps were observed during May. Firstly, a lovely bushbuck male on the Bushshrike trail camera. While many birds (tambourine dove, dark backed weaver, natal-robin, kurrichane thrush, wood owl, purple-headed turaco, thick-billed weaver and ashy fly catchers) and forest mammals (red and blue duikers, bushbuck, water mongoose, vervet monkey) have also utilised the water point.



Male bushbuck



Tambourine dove



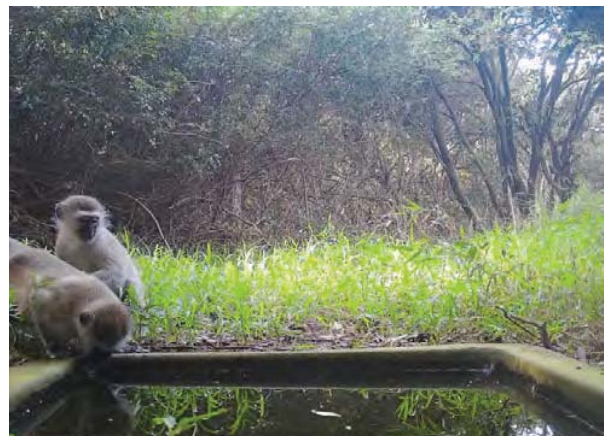
Blue duiker (female)



Dark backed forest weaver



Purple-headed turaco



Vervet monkey

Camera trap images February 2022

During Jan/Feb the HCT have worked closely with the HRA and Marshall security. The camera trap maintenance and daily checking is being conducted by Marshall security, though the HCT still have camera located in locations that will capture beautiful and interesting wildlife images. One highlight from February was a Bushbuck male captured at dawn on the interface between the estate and the grassland.



Bushbuck male at dawn.



Crested-guinea fowl in the forest at night!



Blue duiker in the forest



Lemon dove in the forest leaf litter



The pair of resident water-mongoose



A pair of Olive-thrush's

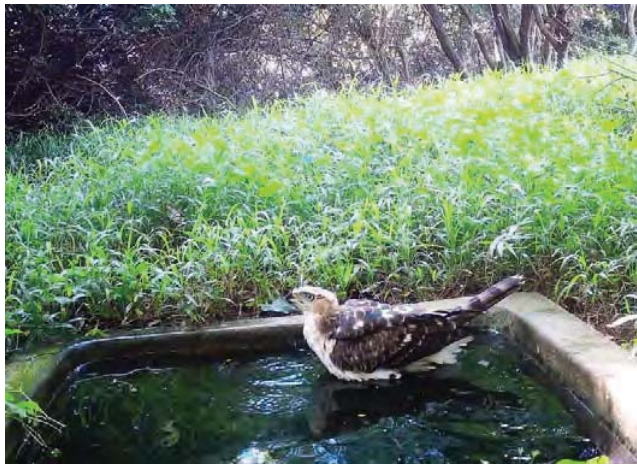
Camera trap observation Jan 2022. Due to the heat in January the most notable camera trap observations for Jan 2021 focused on the water trough at Bushshrike trail. An exciting observation was a juvenile crowned eagle having a drink and cooling off in the water.



Crested Guinea fowl



Purple crested turaco



Crowned eagle (Juvenile)



Female bushbuck



Wood owl



Tambourine dove

Six of the seven camera have been in operation during November-December. The Seventh camera is due to be installed within the next week. Camera batteries appear to last between 3-4 four weeks, while each camera used between 500 mb and 1gig of data. The data budget for each camera should be in the order of R 50-75 per month. Importantly no non-resident 'humans' have been noted on the cameras. AS will continue to monitor the camera in December but the way forward in January will be garner support from the HOA security to help with monitoring. Some interesting new species were observed over the Nov/Dec period, for example: on Camera V, a Steppe Eagle. Other observations in the images are : i) = Large spotted Genet ; ii) & vii) Female bushbuck; i) Water mongoose i) Male bushbuck.



📷 v)



📷 i)



📷 iii)



📷 vii)

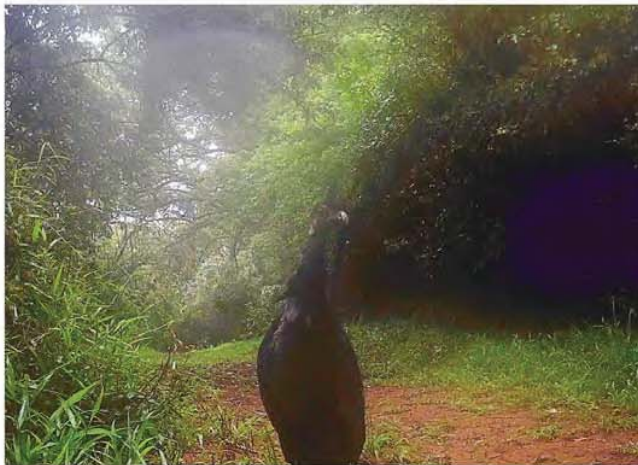


📷 i)



📷 i)

Camera trap images October-November 2021. New species observations in November were Water Mongoose. Other sightings include: Bushbuck family activity, Blue Duiker pairs and Crested Guine fowel.



Camera trap images March 2022

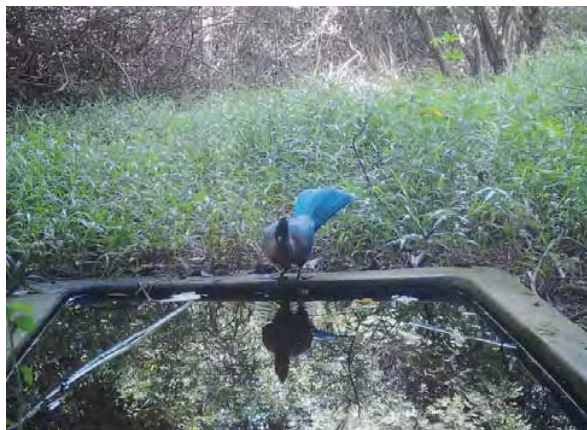
During March the HCT have again worked closely with the HRA and Marshall security. Highlights from March 2022 include: Many different forest fauna utilising the water point at the BushShrike junction, including: Blue Duiker; Black Sparrow Hawk; Purple Turaco; and a Wood Owl. The camera on the Bush-Shrike trail also picked up some beautiful images of foraging Banded Mongoose and Crested Guinea fowl.



Blue Duiker



Black Sparrow-Hawk



Purple Turaco



Wood Owl



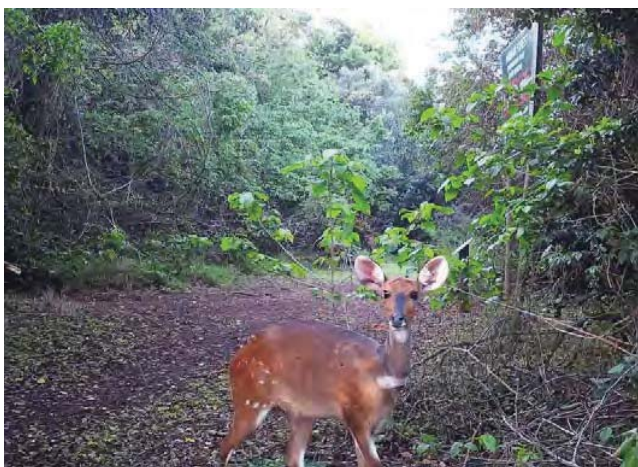
Banded Mongoose



Crested Guinea fowl

Camera trap images September /October 2021

Given that we are still working out how best to deploy the camera traps in the nature reserve, some of the images received so far have been beautiful. Species noted below are as follows: Crested guinea fowl, spotted Genet, and female, male and juvenile bushbuck. Other forest antelope noted have been both red and blue duiker. Four cameras have now been deployed. Their locations have been sited in Fig. 1.



Embankment slip: The extensive rain in mid-April and flooding of the Umhlanga river has triggered a slip of a steep section of the northern forest embankment (Fig. 1a,b). This section of forest appears to have been compromised for some time as exposed sections vegetation (sandy areas in Fig 1c) are visible in the orthophoto which was taken in 2018-2019. The vegetation cover on this slope prior to the slip was largely composed of pioneer vegetation such as *Chromolaena odorata* and *Brachyleana discolor*. It is not immediately clear what management or rehabilitation actions can be conducted to secure such as steep slope. Its likely that the dune slope will find a natural gradient. Aside from engineering options, one approach could be to plant or reseed this bank with fast growing and deep rooting indigenous trees such as *Albizia adianthifolia*. These will take 10 years to become established but if so they will offer resilience to this area for next decadal-scale rainfall event.



Fig. 1a. A perspective of the slip, looking north towards the bend in the Umhlanga river.

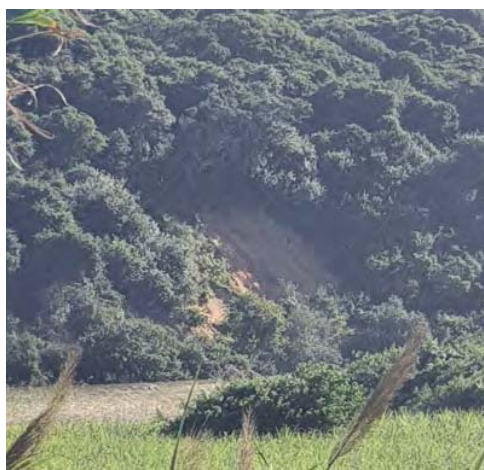


Fig. 1b. A perspective of the slip, looking south across the Umhlanga river towards the forest embankment.



Fig. 1c. An aerial perspective of the area taken in 2018/2019 shows a previous slip which would have likely occurred due to a similar rainfall or disturbance event. The erosion site is located on the outer-apex of the river bend so this may be part of ongoing catchment-scale processes.

The Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (*Euwallacea fornicatus**) and *Fusarium dieback* (*Fusarium euwallaceae*)

The Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (PSHB) is an ambrosia beetle native to Southeast Asia. In 2017 this pest was detected on London Plane trees in the KwaZulu-Natal National Botanical Gardens, Pietermaritzburg. Its presence has since been confirmed in multiple locations in eight provinces in South Africa. The beetle has a symbiotic relationship with the fungus *Fusarium euwallaceae*, which serves as a food source for the adults and their larvae. In susceptible trees the fungus causes a disease called Fusarium dieback, which can lead to dying branches and tree death. The beetles attack a wide range of exotic and indigenous trees in urban, agricultural and natural landscapes.



Above: An adult female is 1.8-2.6mm long. Males are smaller and cannot fly.



PSHB is not able to complete its life cycle on all the tree species it attacks. Trees in which the beetle is able to breed and multiply are referred to as '**reproductive host trees**'. Important reproductive hosts include species of oaks, maples, willows and coral trees, avocado and castor bean. '**Non-reproductive host trees**' are attacked by the beetle, but the beetles do not establish galleries (tunnels) or breed. The fungus may, or may not cause disease. Trees are generally not expected to die. An updated list of confirmed hosts in South Africa can be viewed at www.fabinet.up.ac.za/pshb/

The movement of infested wood is an important means of spread of the beetle. Therefore, appropriate disposal of infested trees (by chipping/composting, solarization or burning) will be key to reducing the spread of this damaging pest. Surveys to monitor the spread of the beetle in South Africa are continuing. The public can assist by looking out for symptoms. Suspected instances can be reported to pshb@fabi.up.ac.za

Left: Chinese maple tree killed by PSHB and its fungus



Reproductive galleries in pecan



PSHB galleries in coral tree



Shot gun-like symptoms on London Plane

Compiled by Z.W. de Beer & T. Paap (Version 2021-03-04) www.fabinet.up.ac.za/pshb

HAWAAN ESTATE GRASSLAND
(ALIEN PLANT CONTROL)

Scale: 1:1,000
Date: Council Report 2010

Legend
Parcels
Study Area

Block3
Area=1.99ha


Block2
Area=2.0ha

Block1
Area=1.7ha

Block4
Area=2.2ha

Block5
Area=2.4ha

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