



Hawaan Forest Conservation Trust

Monthly site inspection report:

Summary:

12.12.2023

1. Bird life in the forest has been extremely active in November and December, with many species still seemingly in breeding season. Exciting birds spotted while on operations duty included the Green Malkoha in the western portion of the forest on the pipeline trail, while the Gorgeous Bush-shrike and Olive Bush-shrike were seen on the forest road near the management zone.
2. Work conducted during November by the HCT operations team comprised follow-up spot spraying of bush encroachment in the western portion of the grassland (Blocks 1, 4, & 3), followed by manual clearing of Block 5. Follow-up spot spraying in Block 5, and on the Dodder, has been scheduled for January-February 2024.
3. No snares were located in the usual area checked on the western boundary of the forest, though a possible incident of bushbuck poaching reported on the M4 has prompted a snare patrol of the eastern boundary of the reserve.
4. Pathways, trails, and water points were serviced during November and December in preparation for the holiday season.
5. Camera traps have been operating smoothly, with the new battery replacement system working well. Rather than using Marshall Security, we are training HCT staff to deploy and check the camera traps. We are fortunate to have received a donation from Vodacom to purchase five additional units.



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

(1)



Forest pathways have been managed and mowed in November and December.

(2)



White Stinkwoods (*Celtis africana*) were looking really good in the forest during November.

(3)



Forest cameras have been checked and the new systems are working effectively. A new camera has now been sited at the second waterpoint along pipeline trail

(4)



Stickyweed (*Drymaria cordata*), a relatively new invasive ground cover, has been noted in the forest. This species invades lawns and gardens and spreads into the forest via seeds transported by Hadadas and on people's shoes. It often colonizes trails and pathways. Our management objective is to consistently monitor and ensure that these small populations do not expand uncontrollably.

(5)



Green mamba vine (*Adenia gummiifera*) has been flowering in the forest

(6)



Spot spraying has been conducted in Grassland Block 1&3 on the regenerating woody plants that were cut back in October

(7)



The picnic site has been mowed, and the area around the tree has been slightly extended to accommodate more guests.

(8)



Trials for spot spraying *Searsia nebulosa* in the western portion of the grassland have been successful

(9)



A *Croton gratissimus* fell down on one of the western pathways and needs to be cleaned up a bit by the HCT staff in early December

(10)



HLEM contractors were deployed in late November to clean and manage the pipeline on the western portion of the forest.

(11)



Part of the work involved has been to ensure overhead branches are pruned and access kept clear.

(12)



Unfortunately, it was noted during these inspections that there are still ongoing ruptures and sewage spilling out of the pipeline into the surrounding forest

(13)



One of a pair of Green Malkoas was eyeballed on the pipeline trail towards the western portion of the forest.

(14)



Maintenance of the forest edge along the forest road is ongoing, but a focus has been on the western Francolin trail in November.

(15)



Bush encroachment has been cleared on eastern grassland in November by an external contractor (Garbriel) while some limited pruning was also done by HCT staff.

(16)



Opening up forest pathways by pruning was also conducted in November.

(17)



Dodda, *Cassytha filiformis*, <https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/191576394>, has started to get into some portions of grassland Block 5. HCT staff will attend to this in 2024.

(18)



Lavender-leaved Leucas, *Leucas lavandulifolia*, was noted flowering in some sandy patches of the grassland.

Camera Trap highlights from November 2023. Hawaan Forest.



Large Spotted Genet



Female Bushbuck



Red Capped Robin Chat



Pair of Red Duikers



Purple crested turaco



Tambourine dove

Operations: Tasks 2023

[illegible]

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.



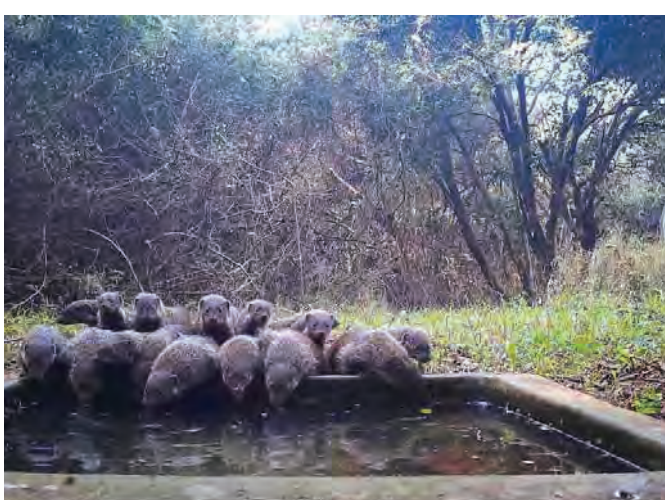
Crested guinea fowl.



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)

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Red Duiker, female.



Bushbuck females.



Crested guinea fowl.



Red Duiker, male



Vervet Monkey, Banded Mongoose, and Guinea fowl.



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Bushbuck females.



Crested guinea fowl.



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Vervet Monkey, Banded Mongoose, and Guinea fowl.



Banded Mongoose.

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.



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-guineafowl 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

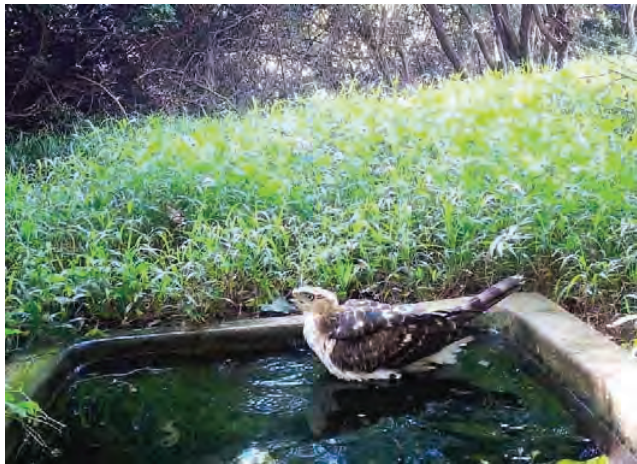
Camera trap observation Jan 2022. Due to the heat in January the most notable camera trap observations for Jan 2021 focused on the water trough at Bushshrike trail. An exciting observation was a juvenile crowned eagle having a drink and cooling off in the water.



Crested Guinea fowl



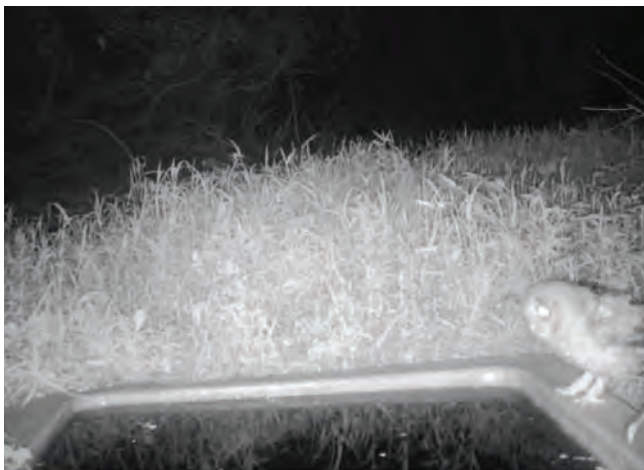
Purple crested turaco



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)

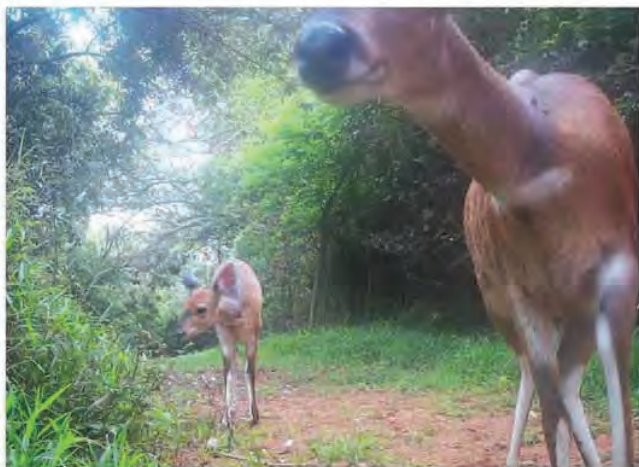


i)



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



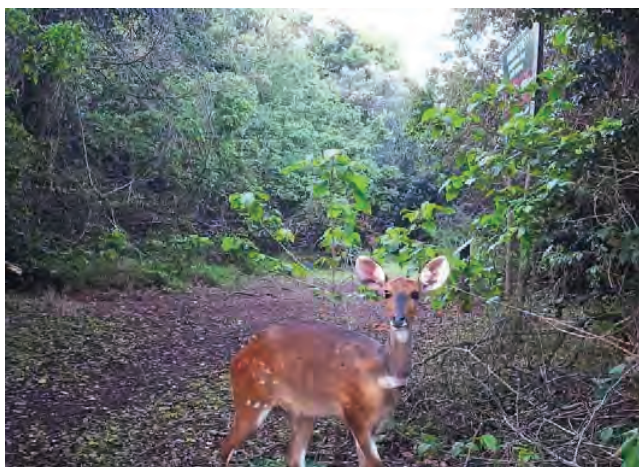
Banded Mongoose



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.



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 sighting 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

The most interesting camera trap images for October 2022 were of Bush buck males rutting, Red duiker and parties of Crested guinea fowl. Unfortunately we are yet to pick up Bushpig in the forest.



Bushbuck rutting



Bushbuck rutting



Crested Guinea fowl



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Red duiker



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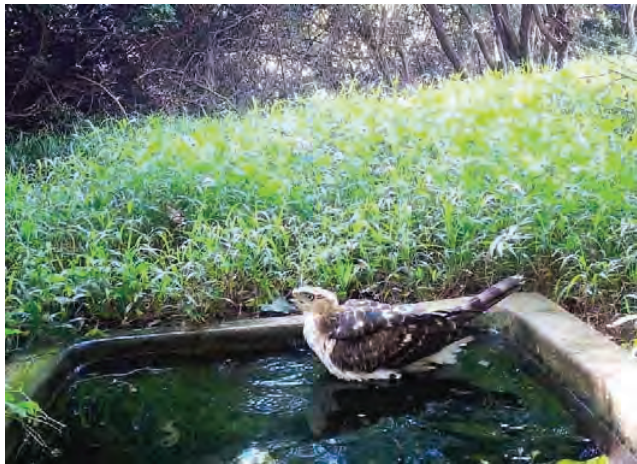
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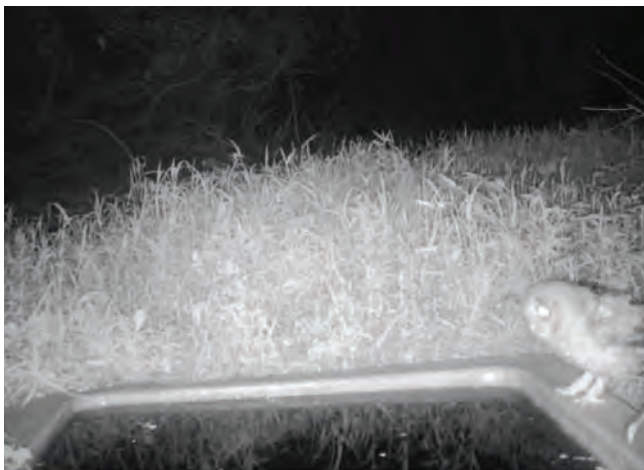
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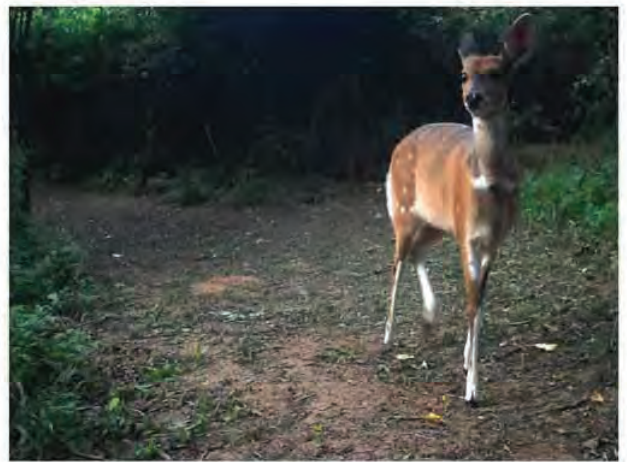
⌂ v)



⌂ i)



⌂ iii)



⌂ vii)

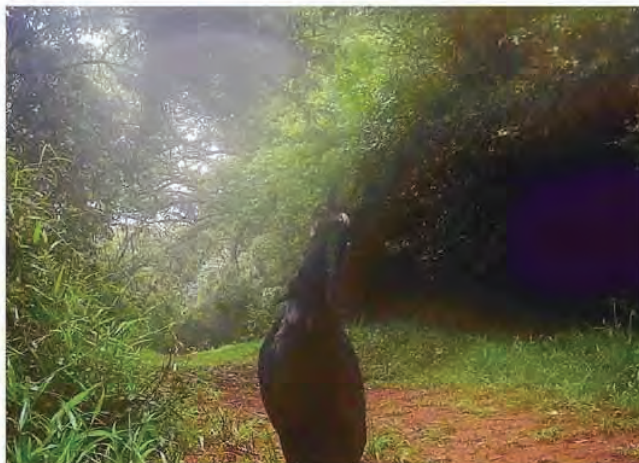
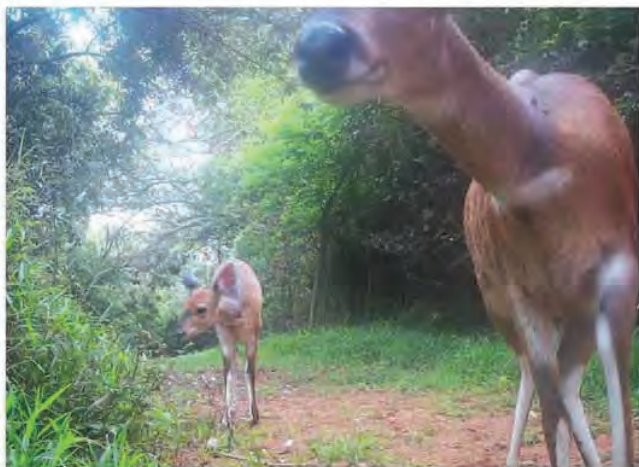


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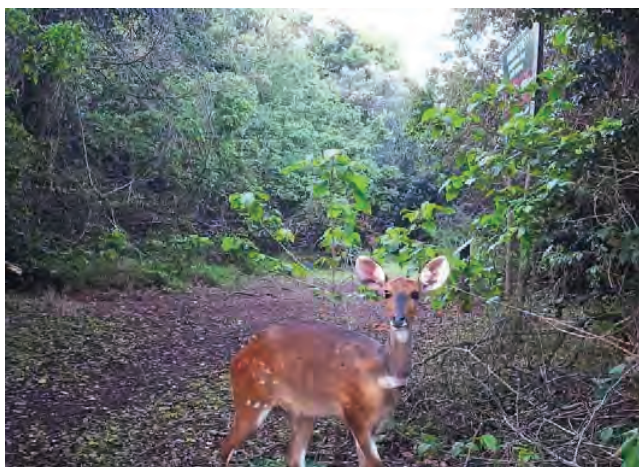
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Embankment slip: The extensive rain in mid-April and flooding of the Umhlanga river has triggered a slip of a steep section of the northern forest embankment (Fig. 1a,b). This section of forest appears to have been compromised for some time as exposed 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

**HAWAIIAN ESTATE GRASSLAND
(ALIEN PLANT CONTROL)**

Scale: 1:2000
Date: 11/2009
Drawn: 11/2009

Legend
Parcels
Study Area

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
ENVIRONMENT & MANAGEMENT UNIT

B
BODIVERSITY BRANCH
Created by: Lucky murebe
Tel Number: 031 311 7940
Email address: murebe@biodiversity.gov.za
Phone: 031 311 7940

**ETHEKWINI
MUNICIPALITY**

