



YWG Newsletter

August 10, 2009

Dear All,

We need to start planning for the 2010 conference and I have asked Johan Hardy to make enquiries at the Willem Pretorius Resort for a date between late March and mid April excluding long weekends. Delegates at the Sterkfontein conference will recall that this was the venue proposed and that we also suggested that we try and start at lunch time on the Friday and end on the Saturday afternoon.

We also need a sponsor for the Proceedings who is prepared to take this over on a permanent basis. This year the RPA kindly stepped in at the last moment but we cannot impose on them again.

Other News

1. There is an important conference to discuss the heavy metals in our water with particular focus on the Olifants River (East), the Vaal and the threat to agriculture. Among the speakers will be Dr Anthony Turton (who resigned from the CSIR after daring to tell the truth about our water), Mariette Lieferring, Dr Paul Oberholster, James Harris and Louis Meintjes. It will be at the Woodhill Country Estate, Pretoria on 22nd August and the contact person is Johann Botha at [jo@penta-net .co.za](mailto:jo@penta-net.co.za) or 083 2752061.
2. From KZN Rob Karssing has submitted this report – “EKZN Wildlife recently held a very fruitful meeting at its offices with representatives of Eskom (Environmental) and independent consultants of Aurecon Environmental Consultancy Group about the Drakensberg Pumped Storage Scheme. Aurecon developed a fairly comprehensive Fish Conservation Action Plan for the DPSS based on the biodiversity and human related risks associated with allowing the spillway of Kilburn Dam (KZN) to overflow due to the release of water from Driekloof Dam (linked to Sterkfontein). Eskom is keen to increase the HEP capacity of the DPSS by allowing extra water to flow into Kilburn Dam which would then overflow into the Tugela System. The report by Aurecon confirms that the integrity of the fish assemblages associated with the Tugela system are indeed intact and cautions Eskom that it would be environmentally irresponsible (NEMA Duty of Care, Precautionary Principle etc) of Eskom to intentionally allow Kilburn Dam to overflow into the Tugela due to the presence of a large number of alien Orange-Vaal fish species in the dam. Eskom have to be commended for voluntarily appointing the consultants based on EKZNW's fear that the Tugela would become contaminated by alien fish. Legally they are under no obligation to carry out a full EIA but decided to carry out the fish survey in terms of best practice principles. Recent research has indicated that there are at least six different genetic lineages of the Chubbyhead Minnow *Barbus anoplus* and that the long

term evolutionary process could be severely interrupted by bringing the different lineages (OFS, KZN) into contact with one another. The Tugela species has twelve naturally occurring fish species, two of which are KZN endemics. There is also a strong realization that the endemic Tugela Labeo *Labeo rubromaculatus* would hybridize with its cousin Orange-Vaal *Labeo capensis* and that the Orange-Vaal Smallmouth Yellowfish will hybridize with the KZN Yellowfish. The incidence of KZN species within Sterkfontein Dam was discussed and besides a few verbal allegations from anglers there have been no actual specimens submitted for taxonomic investigation. Eskom have also involved EKZNW in the development of the Ingula (Braamhoek) Pumped Storage Scheme where similar concerns have been expressed about the potential transfer and contamination of indigenous fish species.”

3. The Western Cape chapter of the YWG which has recently been reorganised has a very ambitious programme underway. It is currently working on a feedback document for *Labeobarbus capensis*, *Barbus serra* and *Barbus andrewi* to be submitted to the facilitator of the mapping workshops. In addition it is compiling a management plan for indigenous cyprinids of angling interest in the Western Cape. If you are interested in participating you should contact Leonard Flemming at leonard@sun.ac.za or 084 7718843.
4. We will be launching the final book, Volume 5, in the series ‘Favoured Flies & Select Techniques of the Experts’ on Friday 29th October, 18h00 for 18h30, at the Wanderers Golf Club, Johannesburg. Last year’s launch party for Vol.4 was a great success and if you want to come this year just let me know. In the meantime the preparations for the ‘FOSAF Guide to Flyfishing in Southern Africa’ due for launch in 2010 are moving ahead quickly but at the moment we are short of yellowfish and coastal destinations which cater for flyfishers. All that service providers need do is visit our website at www.fosaf.co.za if they wish to participate.
5. The spawning season for many yellowfish rivers will commence in the next couple of months. If you need some of the “Sustainable Yellowfishing” leaflets which were sponsored by Fishing Owl please let me know the quantity and postal address.
6. I will be in the UK from Sept 4 to 25 so there will be no newsletter next month.

Regards,
Peter