

Dargle Conservancy

2016

Annual General Meeting



# Treasurer's report



# 2014/2015

## Income

Subs R21 750

Activities R7 515

Donations R2 200

Interest R2 248

Cash in bank R66 520

Thanks Vinusha Panday  
and Kevin Culverwell  
for auditing



# 2014/2015

## Expenditure



Signage R3 780

Education R15 600

Invasive Control R6 000

Functions R1 600

Office, Bank & Web R2 120

Subs & Donations R2 700

Gifts R1 697

Meetings R637

Owl Boxes R1 400

River Campaign R1 758

Fracking R2 620

2015/2016

Highlights

# *The Dargle River*

TWENTY KILOMETRES OF MEANDERING  
6 MILLION DOWNSTREAM USERS



The riparian zone is degraded – often with invasive plants which transform the natural landscape and overrun the original biodiversity. For grassland streams, like Dargle, the plants shade the water, change the temperature and the aquatic biodiversity, and dense stands prevent wild animals accessing the water.

When this ecosystem is weakened water quality is affected.

Supported  
by Steampunk,  
il Postino and  
Farmer's Daughter

**GOOD  
WATER  
=  
GOOD  
COFFEE**

*Steampunk Cafe only uses Dargle water*

**Help keep river banks clear of invasive vegetation  
and streams flowing strongly.**

**sms "DONATE DARGLE" to 40580**  
sms costs R20

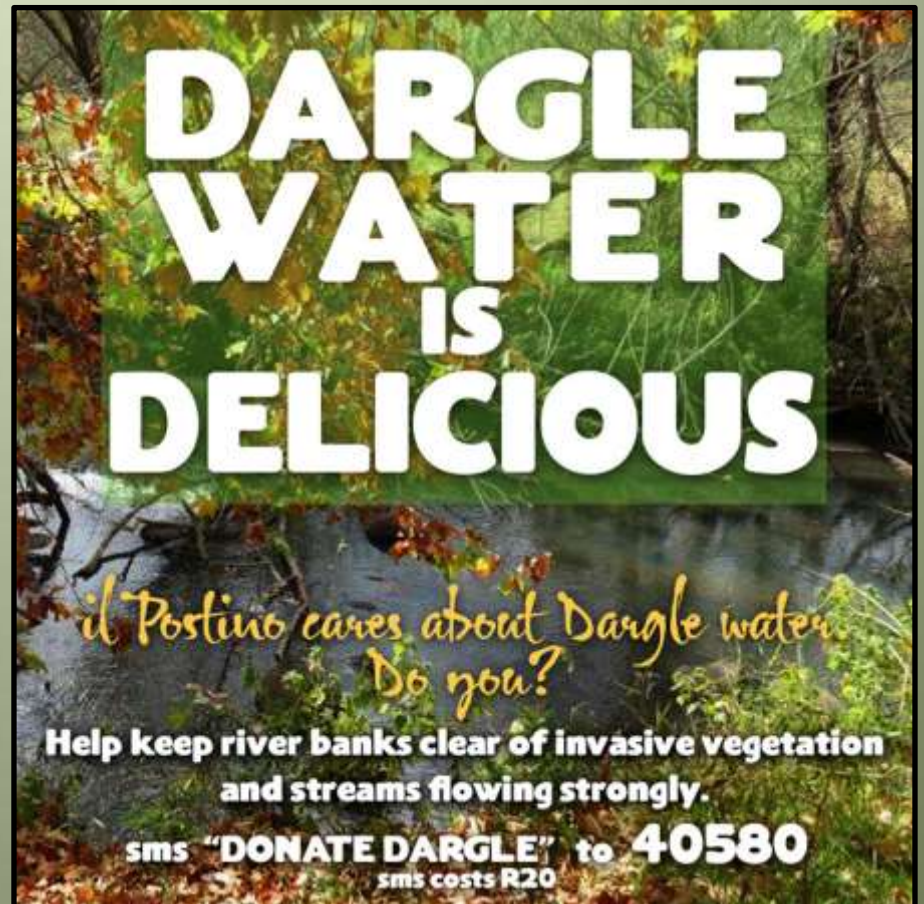
**DARGLE  
WATER  
IS  
DELICIOUS**

*Keep it flowing*





SMS donation line  
R170 raised!



# Jethro Bronner - Dargle to Dargle





# Clearing log jams & follow up









WATER IS  
PRECIOUS  
DO NOT POLLUTE IT

If a river has a long enough stretch without any negative impacts, with natural vegetation lining the banks, it can restore the quality of the water without help from humans.

# #BRU Natal Fly Fishing Club Clearing the uMngeni & Furth banks



# Championed by Andrew Fowler





# Dargle Nature Reserve

PROCLAIMED 9 OCTOBER 2015

BAREND **BOOYSEN'S** MUCH LOVED FOREST WALK







# *Dargle Education*

THREE SCHOOLS  
COMMUNITY AND LANDOWNERS  
IMPENDLE



# Support for MMEP environmental education at Lion's River, Dargle and Corrie Lynn Primary



# Creative learning & lifeskills



# Forest Excursions





Dear Forest

We thought it was funny at first when we heard we were going to be visiting a home, but we soon realised that a habitat is a home and just as we would never barge into **someone's home** uninvited and behave badly, we should do the same here.

Thank you.



It is my first time to go into a forest. It is so peaceful and beautiful and I would like to bring my own children back here some time.

Ms Chalufa - Teacher

# Young Entrepreneurs



# Owls of Dargle

## Tammy Caine of Raptor Rescue



# Hike up Inhlosane





From the top we saw  
different places like  
iMpendle, Drakensberg,  
Kamberg, Karkloof .

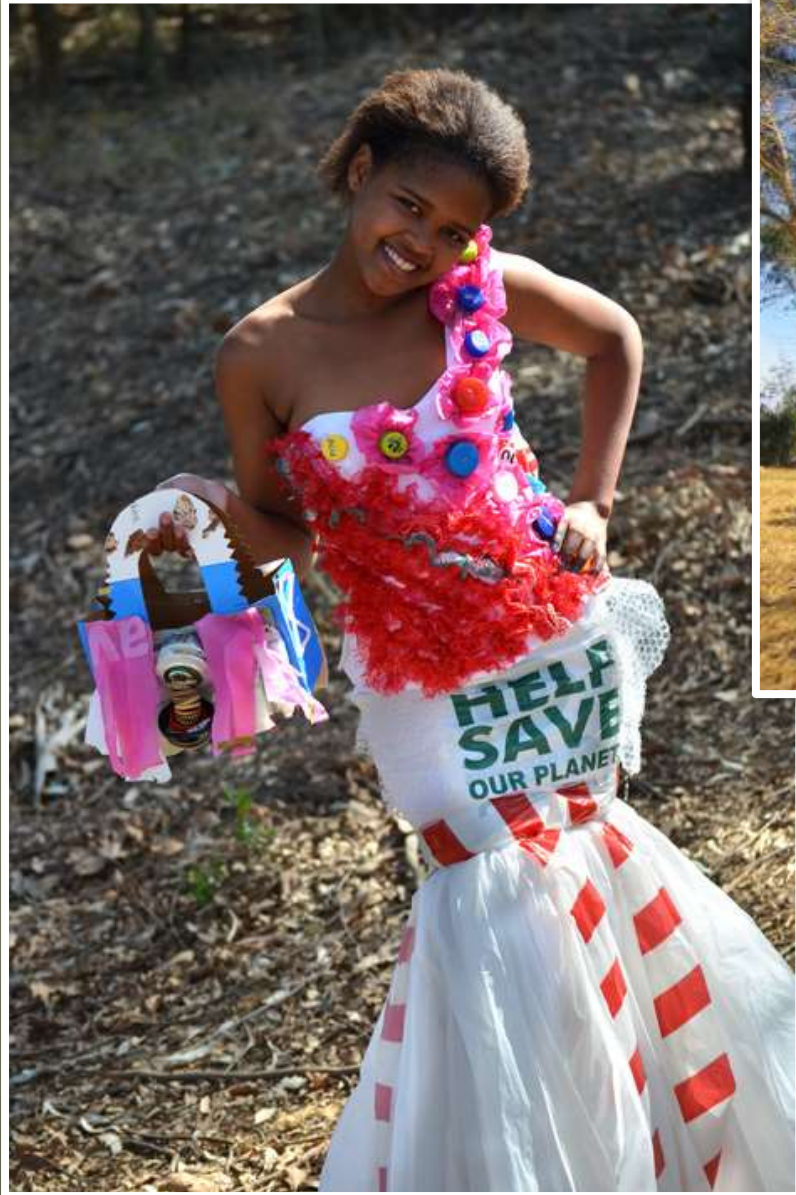
The part we enjoyed the  
most was racing  
down the mountain.

Sabelo Zuma



# Dargle Trash Fashion Show









# Snakes by Pat McKrill



# Dargle Play Day







# *Dangle Wildlife*

HUNTING, POACHING, REHABILITATION & RELEASE

# The Reedbuck Roundup Saga



# The Application for a Permit

<b>Property size and description</b> e.g. Natural/ altered/ developed/ steep/ flat/ wetland/ dry/ condition of veld	350 HA VELD + PASTURE MIXED TERRAIN
<b>Fencing</b> e.g. What type & entire property?	BARB WIRE ENTIRE PROPERTY
<b>Management interventions</b> e.g. burning/ mowing	
<b>Species on property and last year's game count figures.</b>	ORIBI 6 BUSH BUCK. 25 TO 30 REED BUCK. 150 ±



## Reedbuck Management - is it necessary? PC Howard

Many landowners fear that if nothing is done to control the reedbuck populations on their farms, crop and pasture losses will get out of control. This is not so.

In a situation where no shooting occurs, a reedbuck population will stabilize of its own accord, and no management is necessary. Where the numbers of births exceeds the number of deaths, as it usually will, **the 'excess' will move off naturally to look for a new area.**

The level at which the population stabilizes is governed largely by the amount of suitable cover available to that population. A farm with plenty of cover, interspersed with a few pastures, is likely to support a strong reedbuck population. It is nevertheless, unlikely to exceed a level of about 10 reedbuck/km<sup>2</sup> (0.2 large stock units/ha).

Farmers should decide whether management is desirable, and this decision can best be made after first counting the animals. To calculate likely pasture losses consider that five reedbuck consume the same as seven sheep or a single cow.

# Hunting with Dogs





# Support for FreeMe



# **GAME COUNT WEEKEND**



**Saturday 25 June** at Lions River Club

# Wildlife Sighting Winners

MOST UNUSUAL

Wyndham Robartes -  
Processionary Worms

BEST TRAIL CAMERA  
CAPTURE

Katie Robinson  
Porcupines mating

BEST PHOTO

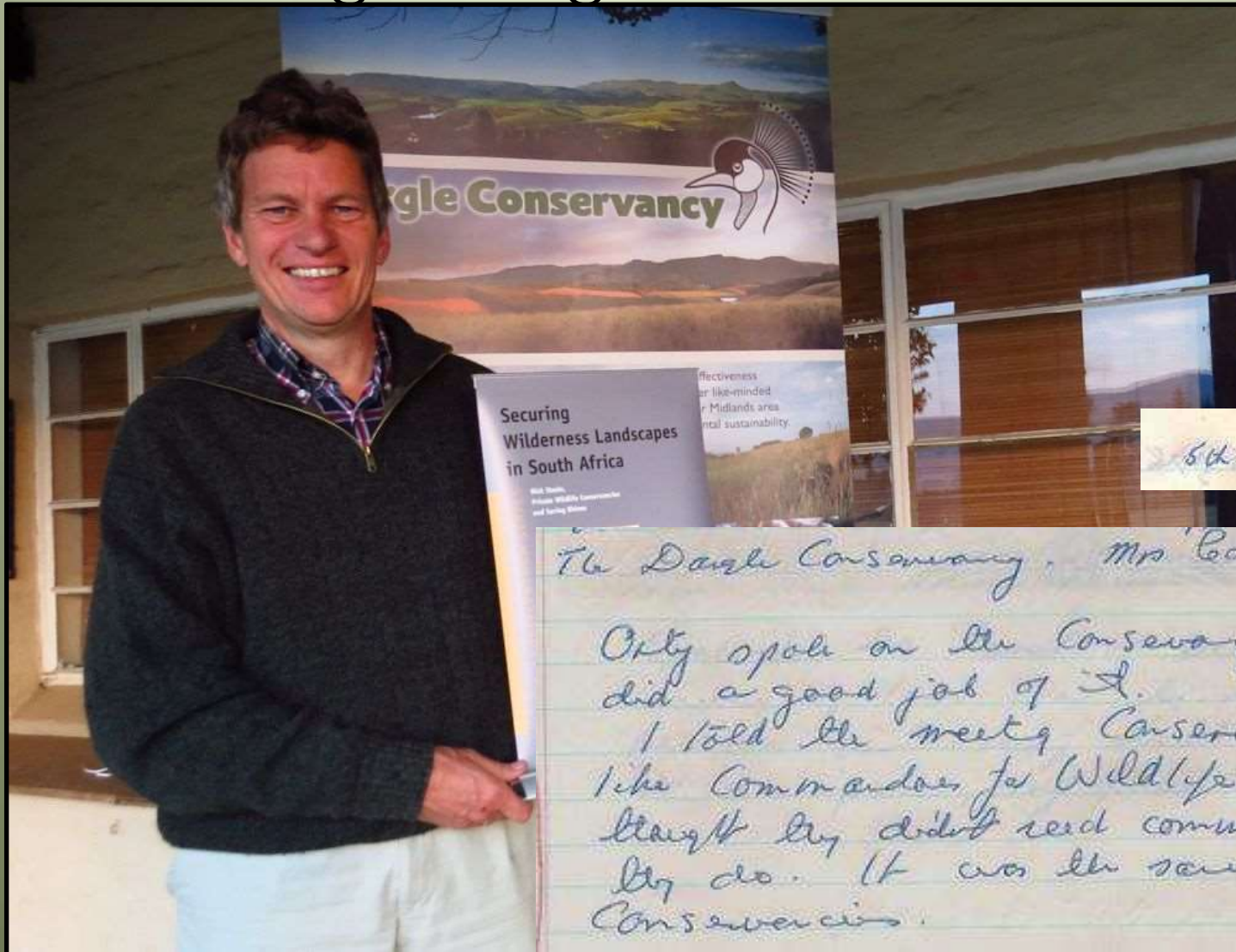
Malvina van Bremem  
Dwarf Chameleon



# *Dangle Gatherings*

CELEBRATING, LEARNING AND SHARING

# Dr Harry Wels – The beginnings of the Conservancy



# Generous donations from A Little Exhibition & Mongolian Derby Evenings (thanks EidinGriffin, Brandon Powell & Carl Bronner)



# THE TRUE COST

RENT \$3.99



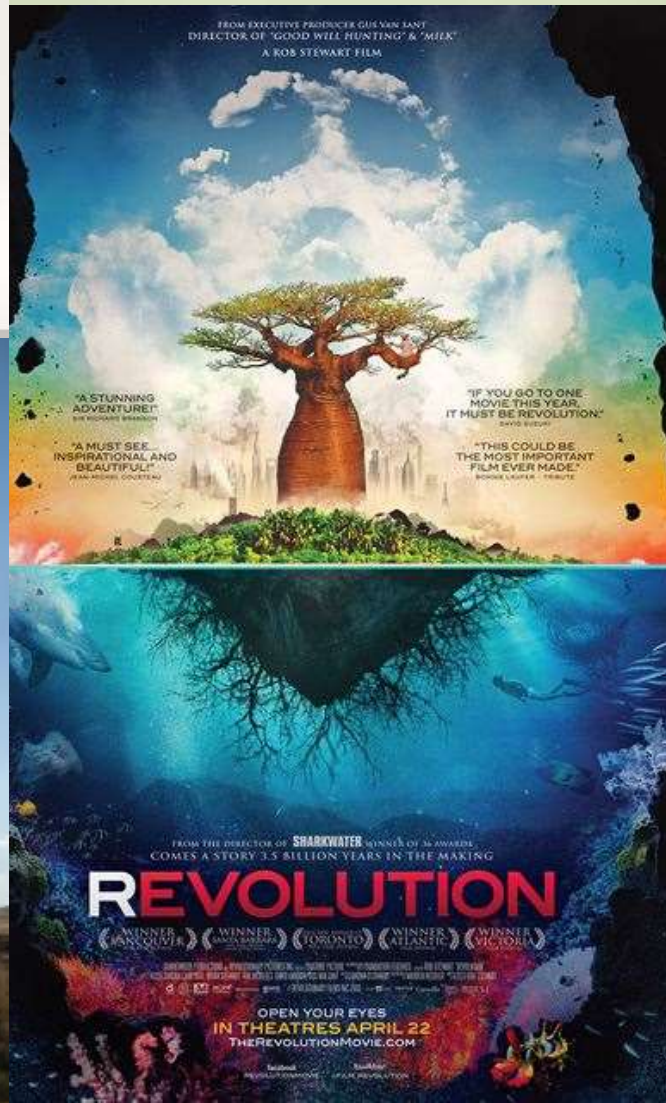
"A South African film with critical, international relevance, and with the ability to inspire action across the world."

## unearthed.

The deeper the dig, the closer the secrets.

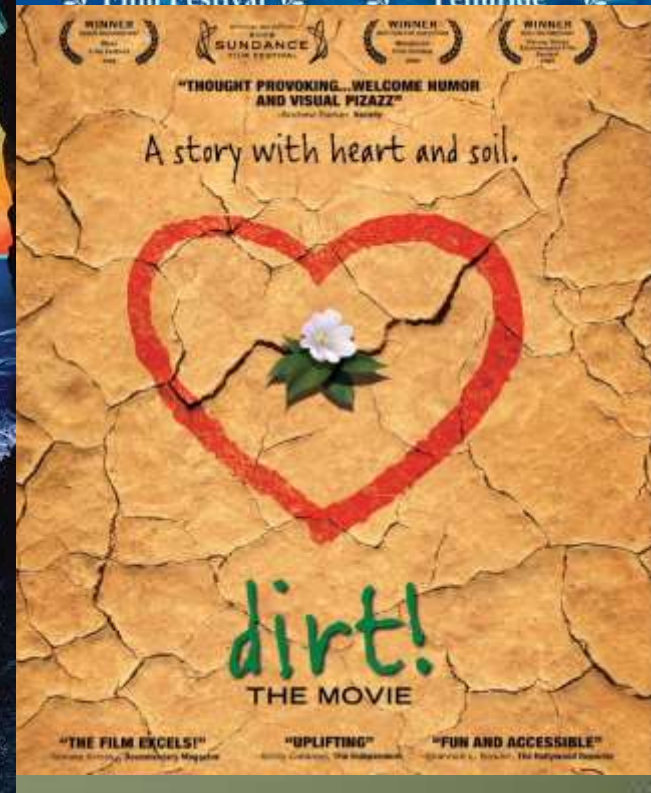


# Movies



# THE END OF THE LINE

Imagine a world without fish





# Cheerio Brandon Powell

the most charming committee member ever!



*Don't Mine in Dargle!*

FOSSIL FREE  
FRACKING

# Rhino Oil & Gas meeting Oct 2015





# Jeff Barbee

## Director of The High Cost of Cheap Gas



# Rhino Meeting Howick West Feb 2016



# 50/50 feature filmed at Old Furth



# EXPLORATION IMPACT

**Seismic surveys  
may destroy  
habitats**

**(Rhino Oil & Gas BID)**



**NO FRACKING KZN**

**FRACKFREE**

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**DARGLE**

# Dangle Icons

INFORMATION FOR CURIOUS LOCALS & VISITORS TOO  
THANKS JAYNE AND CHRIS OF IL POSTINO



KwaZulu-Natal is the most chameleon-rich province in South Africa, possessing six of the 17 currently described dwarf chameleons. Dargle is home to the Natal Midlands dwarf chameleon (*Bradypodion thamnobates*).

The genus *Bradypodium* means 'slow foot' and describes the deliberate, jerky gait of the animal. Adults are between 10 and 18cm in length, have a spikey ridge along their back, a 'beard' of scaly lobes and bodies covered in knobby warts. Colouration is distinctive – breeding males are usually green/turquoise and black with a yellow stripe and females are a mottled green, grey and brown. They change colour to aid camouflage and are often hard to find. Dwarf chameleons give birth to live young as opposed to common chameleons which lay eggs.

Midlands Dwarf Chameleons live in mist-belt forest, usually on the lower branches. During winter they become brown and hibernate in long grass. Due to habitat loss, they are now often found in gardens and along roadsides. The international pet trade is a major threat to dwarf chameleons.

By conserving forests and woodlands, and protecting the grasslands that they need to survive in nature, we contribute to the health of entire ecosystems.

# Midlands Dwarf Chameleon

(*Bradypodion thamnobates*)



Flocks of Cape Parrots (*Poicephalus robustus*) are a regular sighting in Dargle and Boston as they fly between indigenous forest patches in search of food, squawking loudly. There are only between 1000 and 1500 birds left in the wild and they are listed as Critically Endangered.

The birds are bright green, about 30cm tall and weigh around 300grams. Their large, unmistakable beak helps them break open the pods and seeds that they eat. Dead Yellowwood trees are their favourite nesting sites and they hatch between two and four chicks in a good breeding season.

Cape Parrots face numerous threats including habitat destruction and especially, the removal of dead trees from the mist-belt forests. They have adapted their diet to include a range of commercially produced fruit and seed as their preferred food sources become unavailable. This makes them susceptible to malnutrition and disease. Unfortunately, they are also captured and sold to the pet trade. Cape Parrots can live for up to 60 years.

The Annual Cape Parrot Big Birding Day takes place during Autumn, where enthusiasts and scientists count and monitor the birds in an effort to conserve them.

# Cape Parrot

(*Poicephalus robustus*)





The Dargle valley stretches out beneath Inhlosane, an iconic hill visible from just about anywhere in the Midlands. At 1976 metres above sea level, it is one of the highest peaks before the Drakensberg – which can be clearly seen from the top.

The shape of the hill, viewed from the east, inspired its name which means the 'developing breast of a young girl'. During the Bambatha Rebellion, Inhlosane was the furthest point that Bambatha's men came – their cries from the top of the peak chilling the blood of the pioneer settlers in the valley. In 1945 a big fire was lit on the peak of Inhlosane to celebrate the end of World War 2.

Hiking up Inhlosane is a popular pastime for both locals and visitors. The last part of the 2,2km ascent to the ridge is very steep through large dolerite boulders. Grassland flowers are splendid during summer, including swathes of pink Watsonia and blue Wahlenbergia. Near the top of the ridge, Ericas and Senecio macrocephalus thrive. Baboons and Natal Red Rock Rabbits are often seen on the slopes and Jackal Buzzard swoop below.

# Inhlosane



Light brown Oribi antelope are often seen bouncing across the gently undulating hills of Dargle, black tails in the air. Usually they are in groups of three – one ram and two ewes, producing one offspring each year. When started, they run off using straight-legged vertical leaps.

Adult Oribi weigh between 12 and 22 kgs, stand about 60-100cm high and are well camouflaged in the tall grass of healthy Midlands moist mist-belt grasslands which is their preferred habitat. During the rainy season, they graze on nutritious short grass and during winter they browse. They hide their young in the long grass for the first two months after birth.

Oribi are endangered due to habitat loss as a result of development for timber, agriculture and housing. Fragmentation of the landscape and poor management of grasslands also contribute to their plight. Illegal hunting with dogs is a major threat. There are approximately 1500 oribi left in the wild and they are listed as Threatened in the SA Red Data Book.

Report illegal hunting:  
SACAN Poaching hotline 083 799 1916

# Oribi

(*Ourebia ourebi*)



The Dargle River rises on a grassland ridge alongside the road to Fort Nottingham and plunges over a cliff into the mist-belt forest. When it emerges, the river meanders east through farmland for about 20 kilometres before joining the mighty uMgeni River near the Petrusstroom Bridge. The river was named by Irish settlers who arrived in the valley in 1840 and felt the area looked much like the Dargle near Dublin.

Although some of its journey is through beautiful original grassland, much of the riparian zone is degraded – often with plants like wattle, bramble and bamboo, which transform the natural landscape and overrun riparian zone biodiversity. For grassland streams, like the Dargle, these invasives shade the water, change the temperature and the aquatic biodiversity, and prevent animals accessing the water. When this ecosystem is weakened water quality is affected. As the Dargle is a tributary of the uMgeni River, which provides 6 million people with water, this is cause for concern.

*Support our river bank rehabilitation programme and help protect our water sources and ensure there is delicious Dargle water for all.*  
SMS 'DONATE DARGLE' to 40580.  
SMS costs R,20 per sms on all SA Networks – free minutes do not apply.



# Dargle River





The Samango monkey (*Cercopithecus mitis*) is South Africa's only exclusively forest dwelling monkey. The endangered subspecies *Cercopithecus mitis labiatus* occurs in Afri-montane forests. These irreplaceable forests, found on moist southern slopes from the Cape to Limpopo, comprise just 0.4 % of South Africa. They are fragmented and vulnerable due to degradation and increased demand for forest resources.

Samango monkeys spend most of their time in the forest canopy, eating fruit, leaves, insects, seeds, flowers and fungi, actively defending their home range of about 17ha. They eat a variety of plants but concentrate on a few species, which means their population density is dependent on plant species richness and diversity.

They stand about 50cm at shoulder height and weigh between 5-8 kgs. Troops average about 14 individuals, occasionally as many as 34, usually with only one adult male. Young are born during summer after a five month pregnancy; they become independent at two months but continue to nurse for around two years. Adults can live for up to 30 years.

Communication is through a variety of body movements and calls - clicking, booming and growling. Females and youngsters squeal loudly when threatened.

# Samango

(*Cercopithecus mitis*)



Thanks everyone for your  
contribution to conservation in  
Dangle this past year.

