



LEARNING THROUGH NATURE

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NEWSLETTER - November 2012

Greetings,

Six months have passed since the last newsletter and it has been the busiest time of all for **LEARNING THROUGH NATURE**

UNISA – Saturday mornings, face-to-face tutoring with approximately 12 Nature Conservation students in the Pietermaritzburg area took place during the second semester. Only one module, Fundamentals of Conservation, was offered this semester.



The second semester Fundamentals of Conservation students

Close to 350 students from around the country as well as students from Perth, Doha (Qatar) and Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) submitted assignments and wrote exam papers all of which needed marking.

The work with **WESSA / SustainEd** has increased significantly. SustainEd have been running a number of accredited courses in various regions. With each course learners produce Portfolios of Evidence and these, in turn, need to be assessed and this is where my role as an assessor begins. These courses are:

The Environmental Practices – Level 2 Skills Programme (8 modules) with separate course offered at the Soweto, Umjindi (Barberton), Umsinduzi, Umgungundlovu and more recently the George / Knysna / Eden municipalities.

The Environmental Practices – Level 5 Skills Programme (5 modules) which has been run with participants from Pietermaritzburg, Ethekwini and Jo'Berg municipalities.

The Environmental Education Training and Development Practices (EETDP) a qualification – Level 5 (4 modules) which was attended by 26 participants from all over South Africa.

The old favourite, the **Environmental Educators Course**, which has been run for many years by WESSA have been run in East London, Port St. Johns, Bushpigs EE Centre (Northern Areas), Twinstreams (Umtunzini), Treasure Beach (Durban), Umgeni Valley (Howick) and Lowveld Region (Nelspruit)

Final assessments on the **EETDP** course which was run in Cape Town.

For more information on these courses please go to the WESSA/SustainEd website www.wessa.org.za

Jeanette Stewart
Environmental Education Specialist



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The Environmental Practices courses are new and are accredited through LGSETA. These and the EETDP course have been skilfully re-written and updated making the learning and assessment processes more streamlined.

The task of re-writing the **Site Guides (Level 2)** course has been given to **LEARNING THROUGH NATURE**. The original learning material was written in 2007 and contained three unit standards. The material will now be based on two unit standards with elements of the third, environmental education, woven in as an underlying theme.



Lima Rural Development Foundation – the long and challenging accreditation process, in order to attain training provider status, continues. After a long awaited second site visit by an evaluator representing Services SETA in September further remedial actions need to be undertaken. We are hoping that perseverance will show positive results soon.

Two goals that were set at the beginning of the year have almost been achieved. Attendance of a **Moderators Course** will take place in January. Having been a committed assessor for a number of years becoming a qualified moderator is the next logical step. I enjoy being an assessor as I have a closer relationship with the learners and feel I can still

have a role in their ongoing education and development. I hope to still continue in this function.

The other goal was to attend the **30th Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA)** conference. This took place at Rhodes University in Grahamstown in September. How wonderful to be back on that lovely campus which, in spring, was adorned with bright orange-scarlet flowers of the large *Erythrina caffra*.



Having not attended EEASA for many years as the conferences were held in other southern African countries it was wonderful to be mingling with environmental education colleagues from around the world and to learning about all the work being done in the field of EE and the theories underpinning the important efforts of people improving environments and lives of people.

A publication "Learning for a Sustainable Future" – *Fifteen years of Swedish SADC co-operation in Environment and sustainability education* - was launched at the conference. Therefore I was astonished to find the following

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picture taken during an Environmental Educators course run at Umgeni Valley in 2008 in the publication. The caption emphasised the importance of networking.



Although EE has its serious side learning about people and the environment can be fun too!

The journey to EEASA from Howick was all part of the experience. We celebrated Andrea's birthday along the way to Grahamstown, via the scenic route through Kokstad, Matatiele, Ugie, Elliot, Lady Frere, Queenstown and Fort Beaufort. On the return we took the more conventional N2 route with challenges of rain, mist, flat tyre, stops for road works and lots of very bad singing with the drive through the night counteracted by many jokes and laughing until we were weak.



Yes, we still hug trees!

THANK YOU!

Thanks to Jeanette Eglington for keeping track of the finances and to Lindy McCann for doing a fine job with my tax. Many thanks too to Shari Cade and Clare Peddie for their photographic contributions.

LEARNING THROUGH NATURE is committed to providing a professional and quality service in developing skills in people working in the natural environment and early childhood development. Encouraging others to be inspired to take care of young children, ecological resources and promote sustainable livelihoods in South Africa through quality education and training.

*Wishing you all the best in 2013,
Jeanette*

Jeanette Stewart
Environmental Education Specialist