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This report is based on the activities undertaken by the Liesbeek Maintenance Project (LMP), from the period of the 1st to 30th April 2023. The LMP is a project established by the Friends of the Liesbeek (FoL) which seeks to maintain and enhance the ecological integrity and public interest of the Liesbeek River and its surrounding environs.

HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES

- ABAX Foundation branded team reflector vests were procured and subsequently completed a team photo shoot.
- The team worked tirelessly completing all scheduled targets in the month.
- Two pollution incidents occurred and were reported to the City of Cape Town (CCT).
- Late autumn seasonal rain affected the POA: Two working days were lost in the month.

SUMMARY

- April's Plans of Action (POAs) included clearing of invasive alien plants (IAPs) in Block 3 (Bridge on Kirstenbosch Drive) controlling Poplars, Wild ginger, Brumbe and Vines. Additionally, control of weeds in Ecological Support Infrastructure (ESI) in Newlands, Rondebosch (Roslyn Park) and Observatory (Levi's Patch).
- FOL received ~R35 000 for the Lythrum control project as part of the contract's two term pay agreements. However, there was a shortfall of R5 000 because the team did not undergo pre-medicals before commencing with the Lythrum control work. SANBI proposed advance the payment thereof for the next cycle of work.
- The initial special projects work on the retention Pond North of the N2 (Observatory) was initiated. Here, the team removed stands of *Datura stramonium* and *Xanthium strumarium* preparation for the earthworks and to limit unnecessary seed dispersal of both the former and latter species.
- 154 refuse bags of litter were collected in April during litter collections.

ECOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE MAINTENANCE

In April the LMPs POA focused on the clearing of IAPs from the Bridge on Kirstenbosch Drive to the Ponds north of the N2. Target species included Poplars (*Populus x Canadensis*), Wild ginger (*Canna sp.*), Crofton weed, vines, *Solanum mauritianum*, Bramble and annual weeds such as *Datura stramonium* and *Xanthium strumarium* (cochlearbur). Moreover, the ESIs in Rouwkoop and near St Michaels church were cleared of weeds and the Plumbago and Num-num (*Carissa macrocarpa*) hedges were trimmed back along the trail leading to the walkway bridge towards Roslyn Park. Apart from the prescribed POA, the monitoring of the PSHB infested trees' control by CCT contractors continued.

LIESBEEK MAINTENANCE MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2023



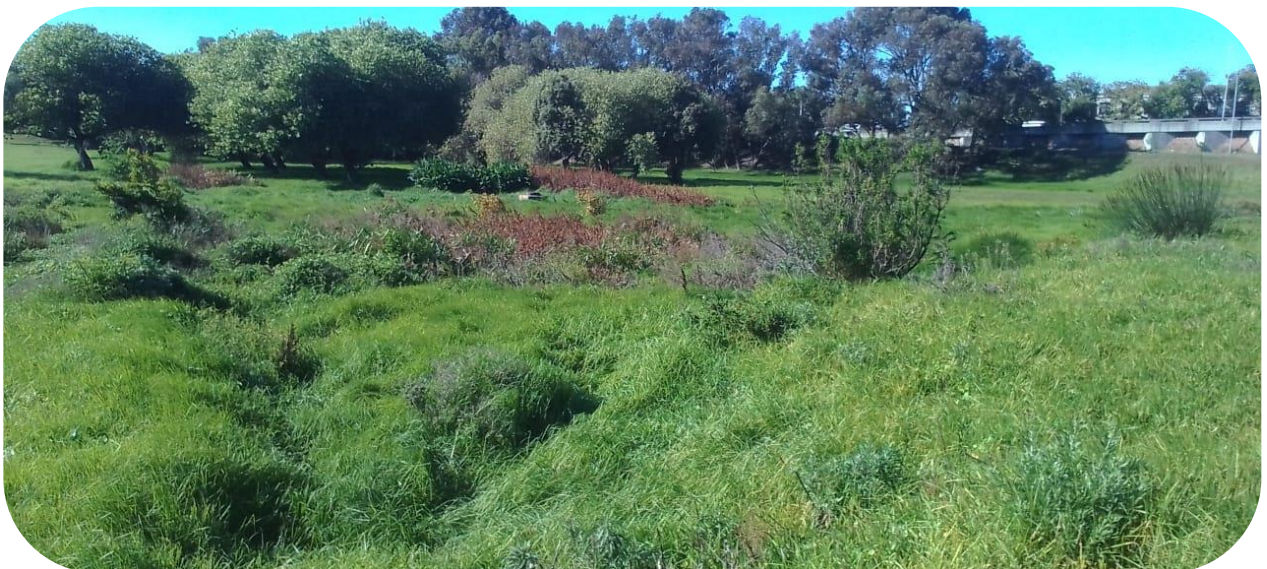
ABOVE: Some examples of the ESI maintenance work completed by the LMP team in April: Top left, ESI maintenance (OBS - Levi's Patch); Top Right; Riverbank maintenance (St Albans CL); Middle: ESI and path maintenance (St Michaels Church); Bottom left; Before river bank vegetation encroachment control; Middle bottom: Post riverbank maintenance (St Albans CL) and bottom right; The LMP team controlling morning glory and Brumble (St Albans CL to ULRG), (Photos: Mncekeleli Klaas and Sabelo Memani, 2023)

SPECIAL PROJECTS

There were no keynote special projects undertaken in April except the initial clearing of a 30x30m of a thick stand of *Xanthium strumarium* and *Datura stramonium* at the N2 pond in preparation for the sites clearing of *Pennisetum* and *Stenotaphrum* spp. The LMP team spent at least a day removing the above mentioned species in order to control the seed spread during the excavation process.



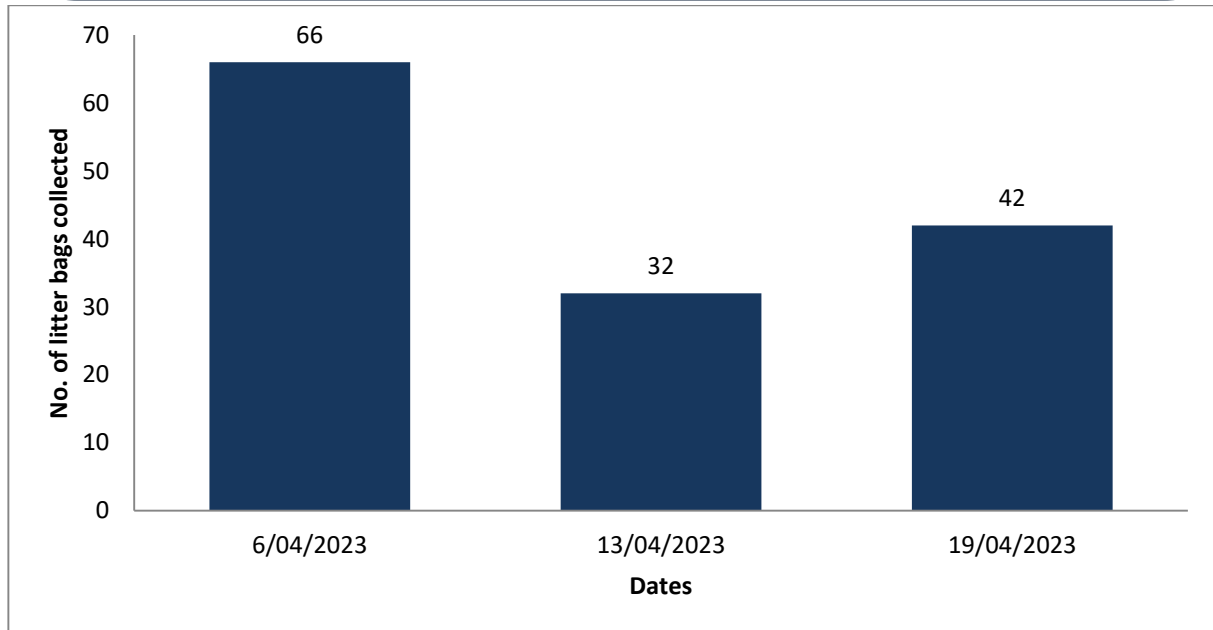
ABOVE: The N2 pond *Xanthium* and *Datura stramonium* infestation extent (Photo: Sabelo Memani, 2023).



ABOVE: The N2 pond *Xanthium* and *Datura* spp. Invasion extent (Red back ground depicting a birds eyeview of the previous photo comparison (Photo: Sabelo Memani, 2023).

POLLUTION & WEEKLY THURSDAY LITTER RUN ACCOUNTING

Over 140 refuse bags were filled and collected from the Liesbeek River in April over three litter run days and, further, there were two pollution incidents that occurred in the month. Both were reported to the City of Cape Town's water and sanitation, pollution authorities.



ABOVE 1: The number of litter bags collected from the Liesbeek over a four week period in April.

INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT (SPECIAL PROJECTS)

This month as was in March, the Invasive Species Unit continued the control of the PSHB infested Box alders (*Acer nungendo*) trees in the riverine sections in Newlands. Sabelo monitored the clearing, (i) to ensure that PSHB control protocol was observed, (ii) to ensure no biomass was left in situ and (iii) that no ESI were affected through collectoral damage of the tree felling process.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- a) Nothing major to report on except: The LMP team do require chainsaw and brush cutter training. Over reliance on one official operator may delay POAs requiring small plant operations.
- b) Interns and three LMP staff attended OHS training with SANBI in connection with the Loesestribe contractual clauses.

PLANS FOR NEXT MONTH

- a) Site prep in OBS: Wetland Project (on going).
- b) ESI maintenance in Obs and Newlands (possibly during poor weather days)
- c) Regular litter runs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the committee and our main sponsors SAB Newlands Brewery, ABAX investments and Tuffy as well as other associated stakeholders for continued support of the Liesbeek Maintenance Project.