

## SOUTHBROOM CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER JUNE 2021

### **OF FLORA AND FISH!**

Heralding the onset of Winter, the **aloes** are resplendent in their bright blooming, contrasted so vividly against our azure sea and cerulean sky. This earthly flowering also signals another spectacular sight, but one in our ocean, that of the 'Greatest Shoal', the **sardine run**, which brings with it a frenzied feeding of whales, sharks, dolphins and seabirds as they gorge themselves upon this seafood extravaganza.

This fishy phenomenon attracts spectators and sportsmen, all hoping to haul in a bucket or boat-full --- it is an exhilarating coastal experience and one that is not a given every year, so do grab the opportunity to get down to the beach if word is out that they are here!!



**Aloe arborescens, The Outlook**

*Did you know there are more than 155 species of aloe?*



**'A Mighty Fine Catch!' Southbroom Main Beach, June 2020**

Another colourful display can currently be seen on the 10<sup>th</sup> fairway of our **Southbroom Golf Course**. Some years ago, *Kniphofia linearifolia*, or **common marsh poker**, and *Kniphofia rooperii*, or **winter poker**, were planted by Geoff and Anne Skelton in the marshy area of the fairway to coincide with two popular golfing competitions, the Men's Classic, which is held in July, and the Ladies Classic, which is traditionally held in May (this year to be held in August). If you're not playing in either, do yourselves a favour and take a walk there anyway – it's a beautiful sight! You will also find them in the marshy area along the left side of **Eyles Park**, where they were planted when the practice tee was built.



**Kniphofia linearifolia or common marsh poker**



## OF FAUNA

Have you heard of **Crab Creek**? This is the name by which the babbling brook which meanders its way through the **Bush Buck Trail** here in Southbroom, is called. The trail passes alongside the brook and should you stop a while, you will hear the birdsong of (amongst others) **black-headed orioles**, **bosmusikants** (Dark-backed weaver), **Spectacled weavers**, **Red-capped robin-chats**, **turaco** and even the plaintive call of the **Crowned eagle**.

The brook, which is mostly dry through the Winter months, is home to the humble freshwater **Natal river crab**. These commonly shelter in burrows which they dig into the muddy river banks or under rocks and come out at night or after rain.

As they mature, they spend more time on land and one will often see them in the vegetation alongside the BBT, on the golf course in and around the dams – or you may even have seen them crossing the roads in town!

They are a good sign of a healthy ecosystem and play an important role in keeping the riverine environment clean. They are *detrivores* and feed on organic debris. They are a primary source of food for the **Cape clawless otter**, **water mongoose** and **leguaans** (the Nile monitor lizard) – all of which are inhabitants of Southbroom!

**WARNING:** Although a spicy crab curry might be a popular dish in KZN, our river crabs are not good for consumption! They harbour bacteria that could make you ill – please rather be entertained by their antics!



**DATES TO SAVE: PLEASE TRACK US ON OUR FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM PAGES FOR DETAILS ABOUT THE FOLLOWING:**

- **THURSDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> JULY** – KZN SHARKS BOARD TALK AND SHARK DISSECTION – GRANNIES POOL BEACH;
- **SATURDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST** – 'DISCOVER THE DUNES' WALK AND TALK, UMKOBI BEACH
- **SATURDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER** – SOUTHBROOM CONSERVANCY GOLF DAY, SOUTHBROOM GOLF COURSE

**If you know of anyone who has a vested interest in Southbroom and who is not a Conservancy member, we ask that you put them in touch with us to sign up. Every additional member is very much needed and assists us in taking care of our green lungs.**