

RESEARCH AREAS FOR MEYERSDAL NATURE ESTATE

A mere 20 minutes drive south of Johannesburg, in Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (EMM), lies a conservation jewel and nature paradise. The 1080ha Meyersdal Nature Area, comprising of the very upmarket residential estates - Meyersdal Eco Estate and Meyersdal Nature Estate. The area is characterised by the undulating hills of the Klipriviersberg, with its southern bushveld flora species, to the typical Highveld grasslands flora species further south. Associated with such a rich flora kingdom is an equally diverse fauna kingdom. The Meyersdal Nature Estate area boast from the largest antelope in the world, the eland, to one of the smaller antelopes, the steenbok. A rich avifauna has also been recorded.

With such diverse fauna and flora species, some of which are red data species, wildlife and veld management becomes very important. A comprehensive Operational Environmental and Wildlife Management Plan has been compiled requiring research in:

1. ECOLOGY and ENVIRONMENT

- a. Mapping of alien plants
- b. GIS mapping of
 - i. Contours
 - ii. Streams
 - iii. Vegetation
 - iv. Soil
- c. Rainfall and temperature records
- d. Photomonitoring and biomonitoring of ecosystem changes
- e. Invader eradication programme
- f. Wetland survey and monitoring

2. FLORA AND VELDT MANAGEMENT

- a. Mapping of vegetation and species
- b. Vegetation survey and identification of all flora
- c. Flowering plants
- d. Grasses
- e. Compile comprehensive flora log
- f. Compile veld management programme
- g. Compile burn-programme
- h. Determine carrying capacity
- i. Functional evaluation of veldt conditions

3. FAUNA AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

- a. Survey of vertebrates
- b. Survey of small mammals
- c. Compile comprehensive fauna log
- d. Wildlife management and monitoring
- e. Game census
- f. Survey of frogs
- g. Survey of reptilians
- h. Survey of avifauna
- i. Survey of arthropods
- j. Survey of spiders
- k. Survey of butterflies
- l. Survey of aquatic invertebrates

Research and field work by interested external persons are welcomed. In consultation with our environmental manager, Deon Oosthuizen, research proposals can be submitted and undertaken by suitably qualified individuals by both undergraduate students requiring experience and field work or post graduate students.

Interested persons are welcome contact Deon Oosthuizen by email (naturemanager@natureestate.co.za) for more detail.