



African Black Duck

NPC: 2023/752314/08

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ANDANTE PRIMARY SCHOOL CLIMATE AND RIVER AWARENESS DAY REPORT

Introduction

On the Tuesday the 11th of June the African Black Duck (ABD) Association (NPC 2023/752314/08) hosted an event in partnership with the Andante Primary School to promote climate change awareness, as well as local, citizen-led, river conservation.

Who is the ABD?

The ABD Association is group of Ladysmith (uMnambithi) residents who concerns themselves with the state of the local stream, named the Cochrane Spruit (or more colloquially and aptly known as the “Stinkspruit”, as a result of the regular sewer spills lower down in the stream). The initiative is named after a special bird species which should be common in the area when rivers are in a good condition. The rationale is that this duck will return to the Spruit again if the Spruit is kept healthy and functioning. The ABD has three focus areas:

- 1) Addressing sewer spills
- 2) Controlling alien invasive plants and improving biodiversity
- 3) Preventing illegal dumping in the river

We do this through building relationships with decision-makers, facilitating collaboration, raising awareness and raising funds to support our activities.

The Youth Awareness day on the 11th of June was held in response to our ‘Awareness-raising’ portfolio. The ABD has become a key service provider for river and environmental events with the schools in Ladysmith.

Programme of the day

Although initially estimated at 46 learners and 4 educators, a total of 37 learners (grade 3 – 7; ages 9 – 14 years of age) and 4 educators participated in the event.

From 8:30 – 10:30 the ABD facilitated climate change conversations with each grade group using the “WESSA Puzzling Climate Change” game. This game involves a lot of debating, answering various questions relating to climate change, and the best of all – running! The kids thoroughly enjoyed the activity, and it resulted in heated debates in the groups. The winning teams received gifts in the form of stationery. At the end of this session all the kids also received art/craft supplies to take home and create art responding to the question “What can I do about climate change?”.

After a short break, an introductory talk about river health, how the river could potentially change under climate change, and how we can measure river health using the citizen science tool “MiniSASS” was given to all the kids. Thereafter, and for the rest of the school day, the kids were taken in groups into the Cochrane Spruit and shown how to follow the MiniSASS protocol. For many kids this was the first time ever to set foot in a river, and it was quite challenging to focus

A cluttered dining table with various items including a cardboard box, a printer, a roll of paper, and several bags. The table is surrounded by wooden chairs. On the table, there is a large cardboard box, a printer, a roll of paper, and several bags. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, yellowish light.





Figure.7j.Prepping.and.setting.up;





Figure.8j.Learning.about.climate.change.through.interactive.play;



Figure.9j.Awareness.talk;



Figure.0j. Handing out the gifts and prizes;



Figure 9. Kids doing quizzes and playing games related to water while waiting to be taken down to the stream;



Figure 9. Collecting macroinvertebrates;



Figure 9. Exploring and finding good spots to survey;



Figure 9. Helping the kids use the dichotomous key



Figure 9. Identifying macroinvertebrates



Figure.76;.Calculating.the.final.river.health.score;



Figure.77;.Kids.excited.about.finding.the.crab;