

Press Report for Gansbaai Courant
Tel 028 – 384 1473
Fax 028 – 384 2397
courant@itec.co.za

PEARLY BEACH BEWAREA CONSERVANCY

BUTTERFLY-SPOTTERS CAN NOW SNAP AND MAP

The following very interesting article appeared in the SANPark Times of September 2014:

Are you a great butterfly spotter? What about months? According to Megan Loftie-Eaton, the LepiMAP project coordinator, an Africa-wide assessment of these beauties is taking place, and they need your help. LepiMAP (The Atlas of African Lepidoptera) is a Citizen Science Project, run in partnership with the Lepidopterists Society of Africa and the animal demography unit, University of Cape Town. The project aims to determine the distribution and conservation priorities of butterflies and months across the continent and create the 21st century distribution maps for Africa's lepidoptera.

LepiMAP was preceded by Sabca (The Southern African Butterfly Conservation Assessment), during which a database of more than 300 000 records of butterfly distributions was compiled. However, whereas Sabca focused only on butterflies in South Africa, LepiMAP includes both butterflies and months, and is now turning to the rest of Africa as well. This is an enormous task, and with a camera and a little enthusiasm, you can be part of it.

It is an excellent opportunity to make your photos count for biodiversity conservation, as the project depends on a huge database of photographs with details of the location where each was taken. Unless knowledge of the geographic ranges of species, and how they are changing over time, is based on solid evidence, conservation initiatives will only be based on anecdotes and the person with the loudest voice.

You can do your part for Lepidoptera conservation by uploading your photos of butterflies and months to the LepiMAP database. To upload your images, visit <http://vmus.adu.org.za/>

More information: <http://lepimap.adu.org.za> or the LepiMAP facebook page.

Source: SANParks Times, September 2014
Compiled by Elrina Versfeld on behalf of the Pearly Beach Conservancy.

To be published during October 2014