



all Fired up

Lowveld & Escarpment Fire Protection Association Newsletter

Issue 88 June 2023

Greetings,



www.today.com/pets/lion-love-father-meets-his-cub
-first-time-959026

La Niña has not gone quietly off into the autumn twilight - cold rains in May had us doublechecking that her opposite number, El Niño, is still on the cards for spring 2023. He is.

Father's Day is almost upon us and Andre hopes that fathers of all ages enjoy a cold one on June 18. He will!

Full dams and a green, lush landscape will soon be longed for as the climate pattern changes this year. Meanwhile, unwelcome vegetation invaders create a great deal of work for landowners who are preparing for the coming dry season.

Because yes, it will dry out and within weeks become fuel ready for August winds and care-less ignition. Until next time.



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Lowveld Air Show Thrills

The Lowveld Air Show captivated an attentive audience on Saturday 13th May; needless to say an event like this takes tremendous organisation and a shed-load of hard work behind the scenes. Andre Scheepers reports on page 2, but feast your eyes on these photos - spectacular flying, fireworks and lots of fun for the little ones, too. Radio Laeveld broadcast from the LEFPA offices, adding to the party atmosphere of the day. www.flightlineweekly.com/post/lowveld-airshow-air-legends-return



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in partnership with Air Show South Africa

JOC and the Lowveld Air Show - Planning, Planning, Planning

As exciting as an air show is, safety is paramount and an event like this provides plenty of opportunity for danger and things to go wrong. The Joint Operations Committee (JOC) that was recently established came into it's own with the safety planning for the 2023 Lowveld Air Show. JOC met regularly to plan and set safety protocols for the event, enjoying the excellent LEFPA coffee served at the meetings. The briefing and refining of protocols were practiced by all 186 deployed response members on both desktop and drills, which were found to be effective and within the correct "weight and speed" parameters.

"We prepared for the worst but are delighted that on the day we only encountered minor issues that were easily solved. The JOC would like to thank the Air Show Committee for their support, compliance with legislation and giving the JOC structures autonomy along with strong close links to SACAA," reports LEFPA General Manager Andre Scheepers.

During the air show, all deployed response members were coordinated from the specially built JOC at LEFPA Operations Offices, using various multimedia communications and platforms.

The 2023 air show closed with the traditional spectacular fireworks show. Andre thanks all LEFPA staff, members and board members for visiting the show and looks forward to seeing you next year

Some Lowveld Air Show JOC deployment statistics:

Total SAPS deployment - 63 members from all SAPS units, 32 of these were on stand-by. Part of this deployment covered Drivers, K9, Airwing, Negotiators, Disaster Units, etc.

The KMIA fire truck was supported by a fire tender and veld fire unit. Four helicopters were tasked with search and rescue, with three multi-disciplinary air and ground units.

There was a fleet of specialised vehicles including: fire trucks, eight 4X4 SARZA Units, Nyalas, advanced ambulances, an Incident Command van, motor cycles, ATV's and incident trailers totalling 66 vehicles.



TRAC Grass Cutting Induction

As per the Eskom Grass Cutting audits, LEFPA held a TRAC grass cutting induction in April.

Our new (not so new now!) premises are very busy these days. They have been a game-changer for a variety of training, inductions and Joint Operations Committee meetings among other gatherings.

And apparently, our coffee is the best!



Dutchman's Pipe - Alien Invasive Plant

This is a truly alien-looking alien plant! Thanks to Mr Johan Louw for the information.

Scientific Name: *Aristolochia littoralis*

NEMBA Category 1b

Common Name: Dutchman's pipe, Sisblom (Afrikaans), Calico flower (English)

Description: Distinguished by climbing habitat; leaves with heart-shaped base, leaf stalk twisted and with a stipule like small leaf at the base; flowers showy, made up of large pipe-shaped, petal-like calyx fruit - an oblong capsule, ending in a projection; seeds tear-drop shaped.

Where does this species come from? South America and West Indies.

Where in South Africa is it a problem? Limpopo and Mpumalanga.

How does it spread? It spreads by seeds.

Why is it a problem? Overtops and smothers other species. Poisonous.

What does it look like?

Leaves: Alternate - Bright green above, greyish below, membranous, heart- to kidney-shaped, 5-7 nerved from the base, 20-80 (up to 120) mm long; stipules round to kidney-shaped, 10-20 mm long.

Flowers: Maroon with white marbling, throat yellow, heart-shaped, 50-100 mm long. Flowers between February-May.

Fruit/seeds: Capsule - Brown capsules, sausage-shaped, 40-60 mm long, six-ribbed, like hanging baskets after dehiscence.

Does the plant have any uses? Ornamental

Control:

Preventive Measures

The first step in preventative control of calico vine is to limit planting and removal of existing plants within the landscape. Inform the public to refrain from purchasing, propagating, or planting calico flower due to the ability to escape into natural areas.

Cultural/Physical

If possible, remove vines before seeds are produced. Care must be exercised to prevent seed spread and dispersal during the removal process.

Mechanical

Cutting is possible, although application of an herbicide may be required to control resprouting. Small seedlings can be hand pulled.

Biological

There are no known biological control programs for calico flower.

Chemical

Use a basal bark application of triclopyr at 100% to the base of the vine, as close to the root as possible. Do not cut vines. Repeat herbicide applications may be necessary to control regrowth or plants missed in the initial application.

References

Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants | University of Florida, IFAS (ufl.edu) <https://invasives.org.za/fact-sheet/dutchmans-pipe>

Henderson, L. 2020. **Invasive Alien Plants in South Africa.** Plant Protection Research Institute Handbook No. 21. Plant Protection Research Institute, Agricultural Research



How International Firefighters Day Came About

Observed on Saint Florian's (patron saint of fire fighters) Day, on May 4th we recognise and honour the sacrifices made by firefighters for the safety of their communities and environment while thanking current and past firefighters for their contributions. International Fire Fighters Day (IFFD) was instituted after the deaths of five firefighters in an Australian bushfire when on 2nd December 1998, a five-member strike team responding to a call for assistance from a neighbouring brigade headed into the hot zone. The wind suddenly switched direction, engulfing the truck in flames and killing all five.



The LEFPA Diepdrift and Injaka teams honour IFFD

One of the symbols of International Fire Fighters Day is the red and blue ribbon, cut exactly five centimetres long and one centimetre wide with the two colours joined at the top. IFFD founder JJ Edmondson chose red and blue; red representing the element of fire and blue the element of water.

The ribbon is traditionally worn on the lapel and is a simple, effective way to show support for International Fire Fighters Day. www.frimedia.org/fri-newsletter-28-april-main.html

Heroes with Big Hearts and Heavy Boots



©City of Cape Town Twitter

Firefighters don seriously heavy gear before they pick up and carry their equipment, this is why physical fitness is critical.

Running 21kms wearing full firefighting kit belongs in the realm of certifiable madness for most people. However, City of Cape Town firefighters Jermaine Carelse and Renaldo Duncan came up with the idea to raise funds for the Volunteer Wildfire Services in Cape Town, following it through in the respectable time of two hours 41 minutes.

These everyday heroes gained an extra set of wings and a halo - their heavily-burdened half marathon efforts raised more than R20 000.

© Good Things Guy

We've said it before and we'll say it again - firefighters are an exceptional breed of men and women and our world is a better place because of them.

Respect, Jermaine and Renaldo.

LEFPA's ground crews should start training for the 2024 Elands Valley marathon now!

https://web.facebook.com/100063959204016/posts/646529680822333/?mibextid=vPdvX0B5T65af74v&_rdc=1&_rdc



Activities for the Month - June

- Train airstrip loading crews.
- Check airstrips on a weekly basis.
- Attend LEFPA meetings regularly.
- Ensure Eskom servitudes are burnt.
- Burn your firebreaks as per your plan.
- Distribute your standby rosters to all neighbours.
- Advise all staff of call-out and dispatch protocols.
- Obtain FDI forecast on a daily basis from LEFPA.
- Identify and mark completed firebreaks on a map.
- Perform checks to ensure readiness and quick reaction at all times.
- Perform daily and weekly checks of all equipment, using checklists.



Important Note:

Basic Firefighting Training is available to LEFPA members. Interested parties can contact the LEFPA office. FDI weather emails and SMSs are available to LEFPA members; contact Ivina for more information.

SUCCESS cannot be spelt without **U**. Attend and participate - we need your contribution!