

THE GREATER KYALAMI CONSERVANCY GEKCO



Gauteng Conservancy Association Registration No: 055

Dear Potential Buyer/New Landowner.

Welcome to Greater Kyalami, an area which incorporates the suburbs of Kyalami AH, Kyalami Ext 1, Glenferness, Kleve, Treesbank, Beaulieu, Blue Hills Country Estate, Saddlebrook Estate, Sun Valley and portions of Blue Hills. The purpose of this letter is to provide important and useful information for your benefit. The area is part of a declared conservancy called the Greater Kyalami Conservancy, or GEKCO, and is recognised as the first Urban Conservancy in Johannesburg. The residents and members of GEKCO feel very privileged to be living in an area that has wide open spaces and yet is close to Johannesburg, Sandton and Pretoria. We believe that our area is special and worth preserving and ask you to take cognisance of the following:

The Horse Industry

This area has one of the greatest concentrations of horses and horse related activities in the world. In fact the equestrian industry in this area alone generates approximately R1 Billion per annum. So, when passing horses on the road, please drive slowly and give them a wide berth. The recommended speed when passing horses is 40km, but slower is even better.

The Wetlands

Besides the Merrivale Ramsar site near Nigel, the GEKCO area has been identified as Gauteng's second-most water-rich area per square meter. The Jukskei River (historically known as the Oori River) constitutes GEKCO's western boundary. There are three major wetlands and one lesser wetland that form a continuous confluence all the way through GEKCO. These wetlands originate in Blue Hills, Crowthorne, Kyalami Ridge and Carlswald.

Besides being of great aesthetic value, **wetlands are protected by law**. What you may think are reeds (or as one new homeowner put it – weeds!) may in fact be part of a very important wetland system. You are not allowed to have any negative impact on a wetland including (but not limited to) building within 30 metres of a delineated wetland, dumping rubble on the wetland, building a dam on your property, or changing the natural course of the wetland. If you do so, **you may be fined up to R1 million**.

We take the preservation of our wetlands very seriously, so we ask you to please take the time to understand all the natural features on your property and, if necessary, consult a wetland specialist to determine what you may and may not do in your wetland. The authorities periodically check the wetlands and we also do notify the authorities when wetlands are violated. For more information go to www.wetland.org

Endangered Species

We have small pockets of Endangered Egoli Granite grassland within the GEKCO boundaries. It is worth preserving! Please try to keep at least some of the natural grassland around your property; we recommend at least 25%. You will be well rewarded with many little creatures using these pockets for breeding, feeding and hunting.

Don't be surprised if you hear the yip of the jackal at night. Yes, right here, so close to Johannesburg, we still have some breeding pairs of Black-backed Jackal, and we would like to preserve them and their habitat. You will also hear the croak of the African Bullfrog – a wonderful sound during the rainy summer months. This bullfrog is endangered due to increased development, habitat disturbance, electric fences and road kill. Please obey the road signs and drive slowly on our roads – especially after night rains when the bullfrogs come out to feed.

We also occasionally see steenbok, tortoises, terrapins, hares, hedgehogs, genets, mongoose, Monitor Lizards, cranes, chameleons, and many other fauna. Very occasionally you may be fortunate enough to spot

THE GREATER KYALAMI CONSERVANCY GEKCO



Gauteng Conservancy Association Registration No: 055

the Blue Crane which breed nearby. Consider using a fence that will allow these small creatures to move through the area easily and safely. We would be happy to assist you with information on fence design.

Birdlife

Another sign that this is still a relatively healthy eco-system is the number of bats that appear in the evenings – especially if there are flying ants! They also help to keep the mosquito population at bay in the hot summer months.

The diverse habitats within GEKCO support a rich birdlife – we have recorded more than 250 bird species and invite you to help us continue recording species. Our owls are very precious and feed on the mice and rats that often accompany the feed associated with keeping horses. PLEASE do not use any rat poison, rather install an owl box and let nature take its course. For more information visit www.ecosolutions.co.za. In fact we strongly recommend that you DO NOT use any form of pesticide, poison or toxic chemical that could leach into the wetlands or threaten the wildlife in the area. A copy of the GEKCO fauna and flora list is available on request.

General

We'd like to encourage you to landscape with indigenous plants and trees and to practise water-wise principles. If you are fortunate enough to be in a position to re-grass your property, we recommend you plant *Cynodon Transvalensis*, a soft and beautiful, yet hardy and water wise grass. Kikuyu should be avoided at all costs. We would be happy to advise you on the indigenous plants best suited to your property.

We encourage all residents to recycle household waste. You can drop your recycling off at one of the local schools or you can sign up for a recycling service with Resolution Recycling. They collect all recycling from your house. If you're interested, ask us for details.

Recycle your garden refuse by establishing a compost heap, or you could even invest in the latest 'craze' in the Conservancy – vermiculture (earthworm farming).

Get to know your neighbours. The vast majority of residents within the conservancy are a lively and friendly bunch of people – many of whom have formed life-long friendships after moving into the area. The residents associations are active bodies that have the best interests of the residents at heart.

Be a good neighbour. Familiarise yourself with the area and its bylaws, policies and activities. Should you find yourself on the receiving end of a complaint or criticism, we ask that you deal with matters politely and respectfully. If at any stage you need advice, information or assistance please do not hesitate to contact us.

Lastly, if your property is not already a member of the conservancy, we invite you to become a member of GEKCO and participate in the conservancy activities in whatever way your time permits. We have a wide range of activities and projects to suit any individual who wishes to be involved. Don't forget to let us have your contact details as soon as they are available in order to add you to the community database. Details can be sent to info@kyalamicountry.co.za. You will periodically be notified of ongoing issues (including Council matters) in the area, various activities, as well as a range of talks hosted by GEKCO, throughout the year. More details on GEKCO can be found on our website at www.gekco.co.za

Margie Donde
Chairperson

Suburbia is where the developer bulldozes out the trees, then names the streets after them.

~Bill Vaughn