**Greenbelt Signage Boards Project**



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# Meet the local BIRDS

A variety of grassland, woodland and wetland bird species are now using the site due to the variety of habitats that have been created through the ecological rehabilitation that took place over the past ten years.

**More than 47 bird species have been recorded in the Green Belt.**
**See if you can spot some.**




## Interesting **Bird Facts**

### Navigation *Wizzards*

Birds use **instinct and perception to navigate** to and from their over-wintering grounds. First-time migrating birds learn certain **landmarks and perhaps even smells** along the way, that help them develop a mental map so that they can return to the same site year after year.

Birds use the **Earth's magnetic field** to determine direction. Studies have shown that they can 'see' magnetic lines. They can also detect magnetic intensities due to signals sent from a part of the beak containing magnetite. This allows them to make up a map based on the varying magnetic intensities of the world around them. The **sun and the stars** are a great guide; the sun by day and the position of the stars by night.



### Create your own **bird-friendly garden**

**Plant indigenous – use nature as a carbon copy**

The **healthiest way to attract birds to you garden is to plant indigenous plants** as they form the natural habitat for all wild creatures. These plants **provide fruit, seed, nectar and pollen. They also provide habitat for insects** that are a large part of most birds' diets.

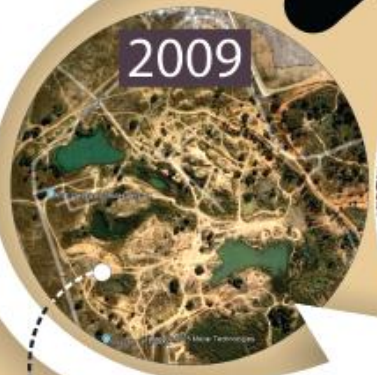
Remember to provide **water** for birds in a quiet spot so that they can drink and bathe, especially in the drier months.



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# Looking back: 2009 to the PRESENT

An aesthetically pleasing Green Belt with a functioning ecosystem has been created for the enjoyment of people working at the park.







**Above:** Earthworks and quarrying activities have historically occurred on site. This created significant dongas and erosion gullies.

**Below:** Since 2015 a channel and four artificial dams were constructed to help with water retention and to control stormwater runoff.





















Landscaping was done around the edges of dams, slopes and channels to control erosion, but also to create various new ecological habitats.


















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Welcome to the Lords View Green Belt Trail

# Entrance 1: CORMORANT CORNER

Take a walk along the paved pathways and explore this beautiful Green Belt of Lords View. Relax, sit and enjoy the views, watch the birds and learn more about the various aspects of this fascinating urban open space.

**Distance:** The distance of all the pathways combined is approximately 1,7 km.
**Time to complete:** 45 minutes to an hour at a comfortable walking pace. There are four entrances to the Green Belt and you can leave the trail at any of these points or retrace your footsteps back along the same route.
**Level of fitness required:** Easy

## An Informative Self-guided Trail

This self-guided trail meanders along the wetland and natural grassland sections of the Green Belt. Five viewpoints, each with an interesting information signboard, are situated along the route. Here you can sit and learn more about the grasslands, wetlands, invasive plants, local birds and tree species on the Tree Trail and much more.

**Bring along your binoculars**, you might be rewarded to spot a variety of different bird species occurring here.




**The magic of wetlands**

In the past, the Green Belt area was characterized by erosion gullies, dongas and exotic vegetation. With great effort, a green space with four dams and lush vegetation were created in its place, to present the Urban Open Space you will experience along your walk.
Learn more from the wetland information board on how to identify some wetland plants and how birds use the wetland in different ways for their nesting requirements.

## Trail Map




## Lots to See, Explore and Learn



**Grasslands are not so grassy**
Lords View is situated within the Grassland Biome. One of the information signs on the trail highlights why grasslands are such important ecological systems. You will also learn what role fire plays in the health of grasslands and why underground trees are a common phenomenon in grassland.



**Meet the local birds**
The habitats that were established in the Green Belt provides a home to a variety of birds species. More than 47 different species have been recorded here and it would be worth your while to see how many you can spot in the different habitats and during different times of the day.




**Walk the Tree Trail**

The Tree Trail is situated near Entrance 3 and enables you to get to know 11 indigenous trees, each marked. Find additional information on each tree species along the route and in the Tree Trail booklet.

You can find the booklet on **www.lordsview.co.za**

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Welcome to the Lords View Green Belt Trail

# Entrance 2: GRASSY GLADE

Take a walk along the pathway and explore this beautiful green zone. Relax, sit and enjoy the views, watch the birds and learn more about various aspects of this fascinating biodiverse environment.

**Distance:** The distance of all the pathways combined is approximately 1,7 km.
**Time to complete:** 45 minutes to an hour at a comfortable walking pace. There are four entrances to the Green Belt and you can leave the trail at any of these points or retrace your steps back along the same route.
**Level of fitness required:** Easy

## An informative Self-guided Trail

This self-guided trail meanders along the wetland and natural grassland sections of the Green Belt. Five viewpoints, each with an interesting information signboard, are situated along the route. Here you can sit and learn more about the grasslands, wetlands, invasive plants, local birds and tree species on the Tree Trail and much more.

### Crucial ecosystems

Grasslands are often viewed as wasteland, but they are crucial ecosystems that play a vital role in nature and in the city environment. Many indigenous grass species have established in this rehabilitated green belt. Do the trail and learn more from the grassland information board how grasses are adapted to extreme environmental conditions and the unique faunal diversity they support.

Bring along your binoculars, you might be awarded to spot a variety of different bird species occurring here.









See if you can spot Rhodes grass (*Chloris gayana*) that is abundant in the area. It can grow to 1 200 mm high. This tough pioneer grass stabilises soil and cover bare patches to protect the soil.




## Trail Map




## Lots to See, Explore and Learn



### The important role of wetlands

In the past, the Green Belt area was characterized by erosion gullies, dongas and exotic vegetation. With great effort, a green space with four dams and lush vegetation were created in its place, to present the Urban Open Space you will experience along your walk. Learn more from the wetland information board on how to identify some wetland plants and how birds use the wetland in different ways for their nesting requirements.



### Meet the local birds

The indigenous vegetation that has now established here provides a home to a big variety of birds. More than 47 different species have been recorded here and it would be worth your while to see how many you can spot in the different environments and during different times of the day.




### Do the Tree Trail

The Tree Trail is situated near Entrance 3 and enables you to get to know 11 indigenous trees. Find additional information on each tree species along the route and in the Tree Trail booklet.

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Welcome to the Lords View Green Belt Trail

# Entrance 3: WOODLAND BOULEVARD

Take a walk along the paved pathways and explore this beautiful Green Belt of Lords View. Relax, sit and enjoy the views, watch the birds and learn more about various aspects of this fascinating urban open space.

**Distance:** The distance of all the pathways combined is approximately 1,7 km
**Time to complete:** 45 minutes to an hour at a comfortable walking pace. There are four entrances to the Green Belt and you can leave the trail at any of these points or retrace your steps back along the same route.
**Level of fitness required:** Easy

## An informative Self-guided Trail

This self-guided trail meanders along the wetland and natural grassland sections of the Green Belt. Five viewpoints, each with an interesting information signboard, are situated along the route. Here you can sit and learn more about the grasslands, wetlands, invasive plants, local birds and tree species on the Tree Trail and much more.




**Bring along your binoculars**, you might be rewarded to spot a variety of different bird species occurring here.

**Walk the Tree Trail** close to Entrance 3 that will enable you to get to know 11 indigenous trees. Find additional information on each tree species along the route and in the Tree Trail booklet.

You can find the booklet on **www.lordsview.co.za**

## Trail Map




## Lots to See, Explore and Learn



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**Grasslands are not so grassy**
Grasslands are often viewed as wasteland, but they are crucial ecosystems that play a vital role in nature and in the city environment. Many indigenous grass species have established in this rehabilitated Green Belt. Do the trail and learn more from the grassland information board on how grasses are adapted to extreme environmental conditions and the unique faunal diversity they support.

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Welcome to the Lords View Green Belt Trail

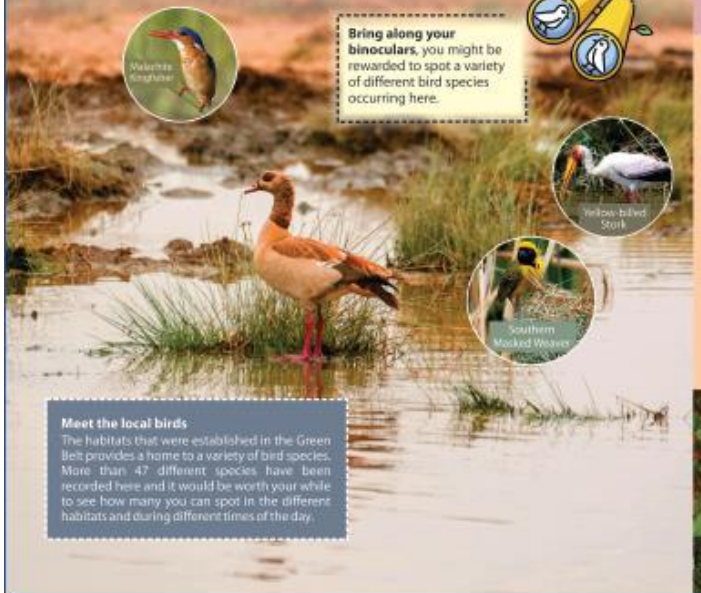
# Entrance 4: KINGFISHER CROSSING

Take a walk along the paved pathways and explore this beautiful Green Belt of Lords View. Relax, sit and enjoy the views, watch the birds and learn more about various aspects of this fascinating urban open space.

**Distance:** The distance of all the pathways combined is approximately 1,7 km.
**Time to complete:** 45 minutes to an hour at a comfortable walking pace. There are four entrances to the Green Belt and you can leave the trail at any of these points or retrace your steps back along the same route.
**Level of fitness required:** Easy

## An informative Self-guided Trail

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## Trail Map




## Lots to See, Explore and Learn



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**Walk the Tree Trail**
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# HIGHVELD GRASSLANDS: More than meets the eye

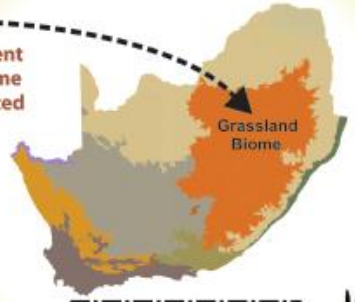
Gauteng, the most urbanised province in South Africa, is situated in the grassland biome which covers the high central plateau of the country. Grasslands are hugely important and its ecology plays a vital role within the city-region.



*Themeda triandra* (Red grass)

Red grass is sweet and very palatable and nutritious for game and stock.

**The Highveld central plateau is an environment of extremes, from hot, dry summers to extreme cold conditions in winter. Grasses have adapted to this in many interesting ways such as having deep, extensive root systems for accessing water and the ability to go dormant during droughts or cold.**




Less than 2 percent of South Africa's grasslands are currently conserved.

## Grasslands are ancient

Although grass pollen dates back much earlier, true grasslands began forming around 20 million years ago, with widespread expansion accelerating between 5 and 8 million years ago.

## Unique animals and birds

**The Grassland Biome is home to a diverse faunal community, many of which are endangered. These include the Straw-coloured fruit bat, the African rock python and the Blue Crane. Well-known mammals found in the grassland, include the Brown hyena, Leopard, African civet, Mountain zebra and Honey badger.**



The **Blue Crane** (*Anthropoides paradiseus*) is endemic to grassland and Nama Karoo regions.



The **Giant girdled lizard** (*Smaug giganteus*) also called the Sungazer, is endemic to the Highveld region and it exists nowhere else on Earth.



The **Oribi** (*Ourebia ourebi*) is a small, endangered antelope found in high-rainfall grasslands.



**Botha's Lark** (*Spizocorys fringillaris*) is an endemic bird found only in the Grassland Biome.



The **African pygmy mouse** (*Mus orangiae*) occurs in the high-altitude grasslands of the Free State and Lesotho.

## Interesting **Grassland facts**

South Africa's grasslands are home to over 3 370 plant species and one of the smallest grasses, the dwarf grass (*Oropetium capense*) occurs here.

## How *grassy* is a grassland

A sea of thousands of nodding grass stems often hides a vast variety of forbs and herbs (non-woody flowering plants). In fact, **only 1 in 6 plant species in the grasslands is a grass**. So more than 80% are other plant species, such as orchids, aloes, forbs and underground trees.



**Underground trees, can it be?**

To survive the harsh winters and fire, some plants such as **Elephant's root** (*Elephantorrhiza elephantina*) have developed huge underground root structures that resemble a tree. Water and food supplies are stored in this underground 'tree' with only the uppermost leaves and branches of the plant visible above-ground.

### Why are grass so successful?

Grasses grow from the base of the plant upwards, rather than from their tops like trees do. This means that grasses can grow easily again after being frozen, burnt, eaten or trodden on.

## *Fire* maintains grassland

Fires are a natural element of grasslands. Hot summers bring with them thunderstorms and lightning strikes that can start veld fires. While these fires can kill trees, they stimulate new growth and seed germination in grasses and forbs.





The Green Belt is located in Sourveld which means it offers palatable, high-nutrient grazing grasses in spring and summer, but becomes tough, fibrous, and low in nutrients during winter.

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# Lords View GREEN BELT

## Have you walked the self-guided **Green Belt Trail** and **Tree Trail?**




**LOTS to SEE, EXPLORE and LEARN**

**BIRDS**



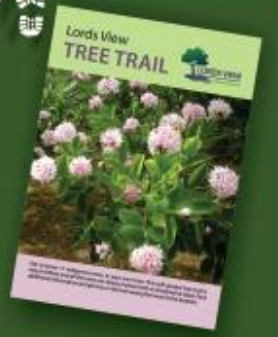

**GRASSLAND**



**WETLANDS**




**TREE TRAIL**



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# A diverse and thriving WETLAND

## A home for birds, mammals, insects, fish and amphibians

Since the rehabilitation of the site, a variety of different wetland plant communities established. They provide specific habitats and support a lush ecosystem of birds, frogs, fish and invertebrates.

A wetland is anything but dull. Many interesting and colourful plants thrive in this unique ecosystem as seen below.

Below is a photo of the site as it looked like in 2009. Before being rehabilitated, the site was mined, leaving only exotic trees, gullies and erosion behind.




Schoenoplectus corymbosus (Common sedge)


Paspalum dilatatum (Dallas grass)


Berkheya radula (Boesmanrietjie)


Monopsis decipiens (Butterfly monopsis)

# Part of the natural ecology

Wetlands are crucial for the environment as they act as sponges, absorbing excess water to reduce flood damage and recharge ground-water during dry periods. They are **biological hotspots** and provide habitats and breeding grounds for a vast array of species. A **biological supermarket** would be a good description for a wetland because they provide food for so many creatures.

Some waterbirds build nests with sedges and dry leaves, while others use mud. Coots build a platform on fallen wetland vegetation, in mid-deep water. Bitterns, crakes and rails use dense reed beds for feeding and resting.


Red-knobbed Coot


Southern Masked Weaver


Bittern nest in the reeds


Malachite Kingfisher


African Reed Warbler


Yellow-billed Stork

**The common reed** (*Phragmites australis*) is quite prominent and stabilises river banks and prevents soil erosion during flooding. It filters water and provides shelter and nesting materials for birds and animals.

*Typha capensis* (bulrush/*papkuil*)

Design: Linette Ferreira