



## FROGS AND FIREFLIES IN FERNKLOOF

A window of opportunity opened at the end of October when the mating call of the endemic Drewes' Moss Frog and mating season of the Fernkloof fireflies coincided. It presented WCC with an opportunity to launch its first "experience" activity for WCC members and the public.



Sheraine van Wyk, local frog whisperer, and Anina Lee hosted two groups of enthusiasts - a total of 26 - in Fernkloof. Before setting off, Sheraine gave a brief talk explaining the contribution we can all make to our knowledge of the frogs and fireflies in our area by identifying and mapping the animals.

As dusk fell the explorers, equipped with lights and walking sticks, headed up the hill.



But not before we witnessed a dung beetle hard at work to get his precious cargo of dog dung off the tarmac and onto softer ground.



We listened for evidence of Drewes' Moss Frog all along the banks of the river



and recorded the calls and GPS coordinates.



Several calls were heard but the tiny moss frogs were too well camouflaged to be seen.



How to catch a frog.



However, Sheraine "whispered" several Cape River Frogs and explained how to identify and to sex them. Everyone was intrigued.



The highlight was undoubtedly a beautiful, highly endangered Cape Ghost Frog.



And then the fireflies appeared like magic. Thanks Leanne Dryburgh @thephotowalkers for this wonderful record of the flight path and flash pattern of 2 fireflies.

A male and female were collected to be taken back to determine the species of this tiny beetle – no bigger than a mosquito.



It was then carefully released back where it was found.

"There is something new and exciting to experience on every one of these events. Different people also see different things and contribute something worthwhile. I am humbled to have shared a special time with you all and glad to have made new friends. Besides that I have learnt so much more about frogs, fireflies and our precious Fernkloof." – Sheraine van Wyk. Thank you all.