



FAIRY FOREST 2016

Rumour has it that the 'waste witch' living in Piet se Bos milkwood forest is making fairies out of unwanted, discarded and littered materials. We went to see if we could find them.



Rob Fryer and Denfred Bruintjies (above) set up a suitable environment for the fairies to come out to play by stringing up fairy lights in the trees in a likely place in the forest.



Over two evenings about 75 adults and children came to see them.

As with all Whale Coast Conservation's eco-experiences, we included an educational element with the fun. We discussed milkwood ecology, flowers, pollinators, fruit and monkeys. We saw the unique convergence of coastal and afro-montane forest at Piet se Bos.



Dr Robin Lee of the Hermanus History Society started the adventure with a short history of the grottos, how they were formed, what happened to all the water and ferns that were there and why the beautiful wetland was filled in.

In the forest we looked at the human impact on the centuries-old trees and talked about the milkwood national monuments.

Then we found our way along boardwalks and sandy paths through the dark forest, torches lighting our way, all the while looking to see if we could spot the fairies.



When one participant remarked that "we must be near Gansbaai by now", we suddenly saw the lights. Magic!

Morgan Hendricks, Whale Coast Conservation's Junior Reporter, described her experience:

Towards the end of our hike through the forest, I thought I saw fireflies. "Wait a minute... fireflies flicker, so those steady lights can't be fireflies." Suddenly I realised what they were...the promised fairies in their forest fairy garden!

All the children in our group ran ahead in excitement and we found four fairies made out of recycled items. Who made these fairies? They were really beautiful and very posh!

I now declare: I believe in fairies... recycled ones!!

Everyone loved the Blue Fairy.



Ilyana and Emihle Plaatjies posed with her,



as did Tertia, Lizelle & Morgan Hendricks.



Annabella also liked her, but declared the 'sack fairy' a bit scary.



In the end a fine time was had by all. After all, who doesn't love fairies, especially when they help to teach us to litter less.

We thank Joke and the team at Dutchies Beach Lounge for generously providing cocktails and cool drinks prior to the adventure on the second evening. What a great way to start any adventure.

