

Increased protection measures for Simon's Town penguins

The City of Cape Town has increased its penguin protection measures in the area between Seaforth Beach and Franks Bay.



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This follows the recent discovery of another 22 African penguins killed just north of Seaforth Beach near Simon's Town. Since the beginning of the year, 42 endangered African penguins have been killed as a result of ten dog-related incidents.

"This is a substantial loss to the penguin breeding population in Simon's Town. The situation cannot be allowed to continue," said the city's mayoral committee member for Energy, Environmental and Spatial Planning, Johan van der Merwe.

"We are continually trying to find an appropriate balance between protecting the African penguin, while at the same time not over-regulating human recreation in the area. We therefore again urge members of the public to work with us. We need active participation and responsibility from every person who uses the area."

Additional monitors

"The African penguin is our shared heritage and its survival in an urban environment requires a joint effort. To curb further penguin incidents, two additional full-time penguin monitors will be employed to boost the capacity of the four monitors who are already working in the area. The funding for these additional monitors has been generously provided by Shark Explorers and the Simon's Town Boat Company," Van der Merwe said.

The penguin monitors will patrol the area from sunrise to sunset on a full-time basis from 1 November 2015 to 31 January 2016.

As of 10 October 2015 the following measures came into effect:

- Burghers' Walk was reopened to dogs, but leashes are mandatory. The city placed a temporary ban on dogs along this walkway on 21 August 2015. Ongoing non-compliance with this requirement will result in the permanent closure of Burghers' Walk to all dogs.
- Windmill Beach (the sand area only) remains a free-running beach for dogs. However, the onus is on dog owners to ensure that their dogs are under control at all times and that they do not approach or harass penguins. Repeated non-compliance in this regard will result in a recommendation to the sub-council to remove Windmill Beach as a free-running dog area. Dog-walkers are to keep their dogs on a leash when arriving to and departing from Windmill Beach.
- Camera traps will be installed in the entire area to monitor attacks on penguins (this would include all natural predations and domestic animal attacks).

Penguin monitors deployed to the area have been mandated to ensure that penguins are not harassed, interfered with, or impacted on by recreational users. They will be supported by City Law Enforcement in this regard and members of the public and visitors are advised to heed their requests and instructions.

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