



OCTOBER 2024

Spring has sprung



*Image credit: Neil du TOIT*



ERNEST MITCHELL'S KIRSTENBOSCH SPRING PHOTOGRAPHY



Double collared sunbird



Male pin tailed whydah trying to impress  
the female



Black Swallowhawk

Eben stands alone as the most capped Sprigbok rugby player of all time

South Africa is so proud of you



2nd Ernest Mitchell

3rd Peter Sampson

5th Nadia Jones

8th Michael Pitt

9th Claudia Burchell

9th Amanda Bester

11th Jill Hinde

12th Cheryl Vermeulen

13th David Gretton



14th Rodney Bryant

14th Lindsay Cohen

15th Robert Welsh

16th Brenda Stauch

16th Estelle Twiggs

16th Anneke Weber

18th Colin Levine

23rd Gill Blackman

25th Tony Farr



**A PUB EVENING WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY 25TH OCTOBER AT 6PM**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT BOOKS OF TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED ON THE NIGHT AT THE DOOR**

**KINDLY BOOK AT RECEPTION BY THE 18TH FOR CATERING PURPOSES**







*Music Evening*  
16 OCTOBER | 19H00

**PROGRAMME**

**ELGAR**  
**CELLO CONCERTO**  
CELLIST SHEKU KANNEH MASON  
CITY OF BIRMINGHAM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**SCHUBERT**  
**UNFINISHED SYMPHONY**  
ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA  
CONDUCTOR LAHAV SHANI

RSVP AT RECEPTION OR ON EXT. 3200

## WHATSAPP ABBREVIATIONS

X = Kiss

IC = I see

PLP = People

BTW = By the way

MU = Miss you

NM = Not much

U4E = You forever

GG = Good Game

HMU = Hit me up

IDK = I don't know

THX = Thanks

JK = Just kidding

AFAIK = As far as I know

RUOK = Are you OK?

AMA = Ask me anything

IKR = I know right

OMW = On my way

ICYMI = In case you missed it

ASAP = As soon as possible

RTTYS = Talk to you soon

FYI = For your information

POTD = Photo of the day

IRL = In real life



<https://pinterest.com>

### Alice and the Fly by James Rice - crit by Penny Marek

What a difficult book *Alice and the Fly* by is to review without giving a lot away in spoilers. This was James Rice's debut novel which I read a number of years ago. The story focuses on Greg, a teenage boy who is ripe for bullying because of his strangeness. His story is told in the form of 'diary' entries as suggested by one of his teachers and alternatively with interviews a detective has with the various role players involved in the events leading up to the spine-tingling climax. I really wanted things to be different for Greg.

In a way I was reminded of the very disturbing 'Sybil' (who suffered from D.I.D – Diffuse Identity Disorder) by Flora Rheta Schreiber, although very different in content and style. It was enormously popular in the 70s despite being very disturbing. *Alice and the Fly* is an enthralling read and it certainly lives up to its favourable reviews.

I am aware how very popular our library is and to that end, would like to hear from residents other than Penny, to whom I am very grateful, on "*What I have recently read*"

FW

## MATJIESFONTEIN



Matjiesfontein was founded in 1884 by the legendary and energetic Scottish railwayman James Douglas Logan. It became established as a fashionable Victorian health spa, and is now well known for its splendid historical buildings and a peace and timelessness that is rare. In testament, the entire Village was preserved as a National Heritage Site in 1975 under the direction of revered hotelier David Rawdon. Matjiesfontein is a feast for the imagination as between these walls lie a colourful history that includes international cricketers, Olive Schreiner's residency, fortification during the Boer war as headquarters of the Cape Command, refuge for Jamieson Raid reformers, and controversial war crimes hearings.

Matjiesfontein is a bastion of Victoriana. Explore the historic ambience of the famed Lord Milner Hotel, its old world charm, gracious servers, and elegant décor—not to mention discovering its ghost stories. Here, you can dine by candlelight in The Hotel Dining Room, be served by red-jacketed porters, while feasting on local specialities such as Karoo lamb.

There are various other accommodation options; which include, the Olive Schreiner Cottage, where the famous South African author of *The Story of an African Farm*, lived for a number of years; as well as private suites set by the pool, or along the riverbank, and more. The sprawling, well established garden is an oasis of green in an otherwise dry and sparse Karoo. This not only attracts visitors looking for relaxation and respite, but also a diversity of birdlife.

At the Laird's Arms enjoy a pint and a pub lunch in the atmosphere of a bygone era. Stay for the regular honky-tonk played on the piano, delve into Matjiesfontein's cricketing history and marvel at the antiques.

Though small, Matjiesfontein has plenty of attractions to keep visitors enthralled; from the Marie Rawdon and Transport museums, to the courthouse and jail, the British Army Remount Camp and the old English Bus—which promises the shortest tour on earth around the village to see its sights—and so much more.

Matjiesfontein offers everything that a world-class destination does yet is wholly unique in the hospitality industry. It's a place of magic, history and utter relaxation.

## SHEEP FOR AFRICA

Were you, as a child, told to count sheep when you couldn't fall asleep? I was, but it never worked for me. I mean, I wasn't told to count the supposedly mindless animals while they were standing penned, running in single file or, jumping over fences. Can sheep really jump that high? It matters not now. What matters, in a minor way, is where and how this seemingly widespread and old folklore of monotonously counting imaginary sheep for inducing somnolency, came about.

Sheep and people have lived in close association with one another for a long time. At least 10,000 years. Indeed the first animals to be domesticated after the dog were the goat and the sheep. Whether domestic sheep were kept before domestic goats by stone-age people in the Middle East is not known for sure, because of the difficulty of distinguishing between the bones of sheep and goats. In any event, the first definitive evidence for the domestication of sheep derives from skeletal remains found in Iraq, dating back about 11,000 years ago.

A Eurocentric, typical image of a sheep is an androgynous, short-tailed, stocky, four-legged animal, covered in thick, white curly wool. In European mediaeval times sheep were intensively and selectively bred for white, woolly fleece - simply to facilitate the dying of wool different colours. In Asia and Africa, sheep continued to look pretty much as they had looked for thousands of years, showing shades of black, brown and grey in a hairy coat and carrying thick longish tails. These were the sheep which South Africa's first European visitors traded from their nomadic Khoi-Khoi herder owners. The oldest archaeological evidence for sheep in S.A., more precisely in the Western Cape, dates from some 2,000 years ago.

The likely wild ancestor of all domesticated breeds of sheep is the Asiatic mouflon. Horns are present in both sexes, the animal dark in colour. Domesticated descendants of this species were taken to Africa thousands of years ago where they apparently gave rise to at least two landraces. A landrace is a distinct population of animals which has been shaped by both natural selection and human selection. These two landraces were moved southwards down the length of Africa, one by a westerly route, culminating in the Damara sheep in Namibia, and the other in an easterly corridor ending up with the Cape fat-tailed sheep. Attempts are now being made to safeguard the gene-pools for the future - who knows how valuable these gene-pools might become.

The demise of the landraces was due to Daniel van Ryneveld at the end of the eighteenth century. He set about denigrating the indigenous livestock and extolling the virtues of Spanish merino sheep. The merino and the karakul became dominant in S.A. and Namibia. Their periods of dominance came to an end after the second world war, due to the development of synthetic fabrics and other factors. Today sheep are farmed mainly for their meat in Southern Africa, based on such crossbreeds as the dorper.

This seemingly esoteric discourse on ovine matters probably will initially interest few readers. It's a fact that while people in the Cape Peninsula eat lamb and mutton, they seldom see live sheep. Indeed, while they consume thousands of tons of mutton and lamb, many of the region's people, believe it or not, have never seen a



Sheep and know nothing about where their meat comes from. All of this in a region in which *braaivleis* and *skaaptjops* are a significant part of the local culture.

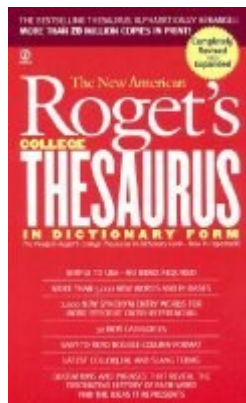
Forget about counting sheep, if you can't fall asleep, rather get up and eat some cheddar cheese and drink some milk. That way, you will get a dose of a sleep-inducing amino acid (trytophhan). It may give you a night-mare, but it should make you sleep.

*Abridged article - Roy Siegfried*



A truck loaded with thousands of copies of Roget's Thesaurus crashed yesterday losing its entire load. Witnesses were stunned, startled, aghast, taken aback, stupefied, confused, shocked, rattled, paralyzed, dazed, bewildered, mixed up, surprised, awed, dumbfounded, nonplussed, flabbergasted, astounded, amazed, confounded, astonished, overwhelmed, horrified, numbed, speechless, and perplexed.

*Mike Smith*





*Scotland's billboard*



Every year, dozens of local boat owners in Wisconsin band together to move a giant floating island on Lake Chippewa, also known as the Chippewa Flowage. This floating island, known as the “Forty Acre Bog,” is composed of peat, plant roots, mud and even mature trees. These trees act as sails, catching the wind and moving the island around the lake. When the bog drifts and blocks a crucial bridge connecting the east and west sides of the lake, it requires a community effort to push it back into position using their boats.

The floating bogs formed over time as peat bogs from the lake’s swampy bottom rose to the surface, creating a habitat rich in biodiversity. Moving the bog is a complex task that relies on favourable wind conditions, and it often requires multiple attempts to place it correctly, or it will drift back within days.

This annual task, while challenging, highlights the community’s dedication to preserving the natural environment and maintaining access across the lake. The floating bog is legally protected and cannot be broken apart, adding to the complexity of the task. Despite their best efforts, there are occasions when the bog gets stuck on obstacles like rocks, necessitating repeat efforts to clear the passage.



*Credit: Just Weirdness*



Near Franklin, WV, the sky was recently lit up by a stunning and rare phenomenon known as a "fire rainbow" or rainbow cloud. Despite their name, fire rainbows are neither fire nor rainbows, but are actually circumhorizontal arcs—bright, colorful bands that appear in the sky when sunlight passes through hexagonal ice crystals in high-altitude cirrus clouds. This mesmerizing display, with its brilliant pastel hues and flame-like appearance, only occurs under very specific conditions, making it a truly extraordinary sight to behold. 🌈🔥

📷 credit goes to respective owner





 **SA NAVY FESTIVAL**

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**4 - 6 OCTOBER**

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**SIMON'S TOWN**  
**10:00 - 17:00**

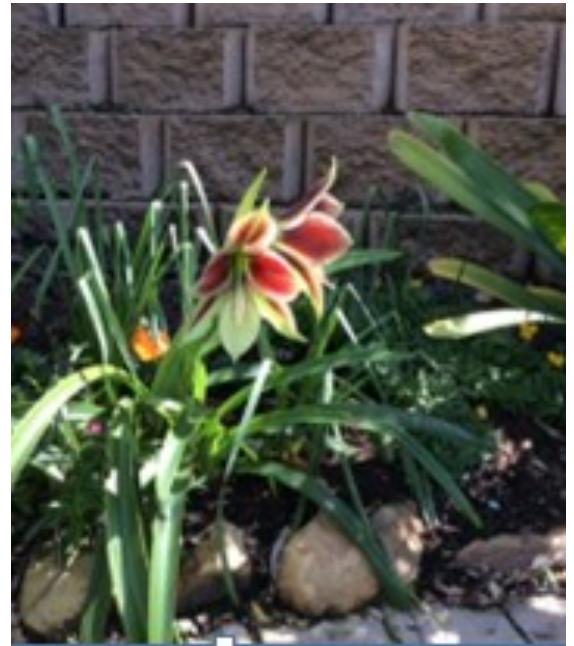
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**ENQUIRIES 021 787 4696**



**FREE ENTRY**





This is my beautiful Amaryllis Papilio,  
second flowering in five years

What an astonishing photograph. A little bird falls out of its nest, only to be caught by its mother, with the father providing support. Immense thanks to the Photographer for capturing this incredible moment.

*FB post*



**LEOPARD TOADS ARE BACK, PLEASE BE AWARE OF THEM  
WHEN DRIVING AT NIGHT**



Thank you to all for your contributions - Thursday 24th October is cut  
off date for the November issue - flickiwal@gmail.com

FW