

Parkhurst Park Clean – Up 2025, 5th Avenue Park, Parkhurst.

Press Release

PRABOA (Parkhurst Residents and Business Owners Association) organised the neighbourhood's second park clean up for 2025. A total of eight clean ups are planned for 2025. In advance of every Parkhurst Park clean up, PRABOA extends an invitation to like minded networks, partners and volunteers to join in. Our communication for this clean up was designed by Lauren Wilshire who is a local resident and a poster making wizz. We were joined by Bubele Africa, our local river clean-up crew who arrived prepared with their waders, PPE and tools.

The Parkhurst clean-up on the 13th of April, at 5th Ave Park, was not only successful but also informative, due to the involvement of Jozi Trails and Being a River. All participants were invited to join a skills and knowledge sharing process about invasive vegetation, safety and best practices related to cleanups, as well as water quality testing. With help from Jozi Trails director, Jaco Louw and environmental coordinator, Sam Brown, we learnt about the removal of alien vegetation and the planting of indigenous trees. One of the things that we found interesting, is to remove the seeds from the highly invasive Bugweed plant before cutting it down. The flower heads and seeds should be put into a separate bag and stored for a few weeks until they die off and then they can be thrown away or composted. Jaco also recommended indigenous trees that can be planted and Sam showed us how to remove alien weeds properly.

We appreciated the help from a local resident whose gardener kindly mowed the grass which made the park more accessible for walkers. Another resident also sponsored the removal of several bags of rubbish. Most of which contained plastic and other debris from the park and stream banks.

The sun was shining, and the water was flowing strongly through the streams bordering 5th Ave Park. A perfect morning for the inaugural session of Being a River – an emerging initiative to explore our city's water resources through citizen science and creative arts.

The team from Bubele Africa and local volunteers took time out from their clean up work to learn about water quality testing. Water samples were taken from the Braamfontein Spruit and a tributary stream. Dr Teresa Dirsuweit, from the Department of Geography at UNISA, facilitated the testing process. Being a River will continue to do regular water quality monitoring at the same sites, as part of WaterCAN's RiverWatch programme. Look out for news of the results from WaterCAN in a few days' time.

Vicky O'Brien mentioned that The Bubele Africa team played an important role in reducing the amount of plastic and other debris along this part of the Braamfontein Spruit.

After heavy rain, the surge of stormwater leaves a mantle of plastic and other debris along the banks of the stream.

After the citizen science activity, participants flowed into Being a River's creative conversation process, developed by Sally Clark and Rachel Adatia. It included a reflective experience of tuning in to the natural sights, sounds and smells of the park, and sharing our thoughts and feelings. What brings us joy? What makes us despair? Why do we care?

Reflecting on the morning, Rachel Adatia said “It’s a relief to see the trees and bushes free from the plastic that the stormwater draped over them.”

Sally Clark added, “It was good to sit and talk to members of the team informally about how these kinds of public places are important for all our wellbeing.”

Pauline Borton reflected that "With regular testing, we can help to monitor the health of our streams. Working so closely with the water, it is important that Bubele team members are aware of the potential risks of polluted water and how to take necessary safety precautions."

Together with other community groups and organisations, Being a River aims to work towards a healthy Braamfontein Spruit that people enjoy and treat with care. It is part of the global network Diamonds on the Soles of our Feet – inspiring connection with nature through learning with the heart (see ecolink.net.za)
The Parkhurst community spirit was certainly evident on Sunday and the saying “every little bit helps” was clearly visible. For those wishing to get involved in future activities please contact Pauline at support@parkhurst.org.za

Authors/ contributors:

- Rachel Adatia
- Sally Clark
- Vicky O’Brien
- Pauline Borton

Read more about it in Naziya Easthorpe’s article in the Rosebank and Killarney Gazette in print and online:
<https://www.citizen.co.za/rosebank-killarney-gazette/news-headlines/2025/05/12/clean-up-on-5th-avenue-park>

Link: <https://parkhurstvillage.com/>