

Hotel Verde expands environmental initiatives

Hotel Verde near the Cape Town International Airport has embarked on several interesting outdoor initiatives to consciously acknowledge and manage the impact of their operations on the environment and local community, and to further reduce their carbon footprint.



One such initiative is bee-keeping - that of the Cape honeybee (*Apis mellifera subsp. capensis*) typically found in the winter rainfall regions of Southern Africa.

Significant international attention has lately been paid to bee populations, which have been declining for years - attributed to a combination of factors, namely, parasites, pesticides, genetically engineered crops, pollution and loss of habitat.

The lives of humans and bees are intricately linked - one out of every three bites of food we eat is made possible by bees and other pollinators. Bees are not only vital to us humans but also for the planet - we require animal pollination for 85% of flowering plants - these bees are producing fruits and seeds from pollination that feed just about everything from larks to aardvarks.

Beehives in wetland

In March, Hotel Verde constructed two beehives that house over 60,000 bees. They are suitably located within the wetland area - water being a vital component for the bees survival - a little away from the hotel and guests so that neither are disturbed and because they always follow the same flight path, one that is unobstructed.

The area is teeming with indigenous life - with flowers, shrubs and trees planted by Airports Company of South Africa, while the beautification project by Hotel Verde, including some 130 endemic indigenous trees, has created a perfect

environment for the bees. The pedestrian walkway and cycling track with its landscaped adjoining strip situated all along Michigan Street allows for convenient public and guest commuting whilst minimising the impact on the bees.

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