

LOWER SILVERMINE RIVER ESTUARY - HISTORY

The Silvermine River has its source at several seeps above the dam in the Silvermine Nature Area and from seeps on the back of Kalk Bay Mountain – you can see the waterfall in winter from Ou Kaapse Weg. It is one of three pristine rivers in the Western Cape – the other 2 being the Lourens River and the Els River. You can get from source to sea on the Silvermine. It used to wander all over the lower Valley. When the railway bridge was built it became necessary to build dykes to stop the flooding in what is now the Silvermine Wetlands and to keep the river from wandering down as far as where the lighthouse is now. In 1969 there was a plan to build a Fish Hoek by-pass road, and the plan included canalising the river. Because of increasing development and the proposed canalisation of the river, The Silvermine River Society was formed in 1985. The group worked hard to remove and control alien vegetation along the banks of the river. In 1987 they produced a document showing how the river, rather than being canalised, could be preserved by formatting a flood control measure and maintaining a wetland aspect to the area. Preliminary work commenced in 1998 and major construction in 2000. Here are some before and after photos. Routine maintenance is now carried out by the Riverine Rovers (see below).



Silvermine River 1992



Silvermine River 2002



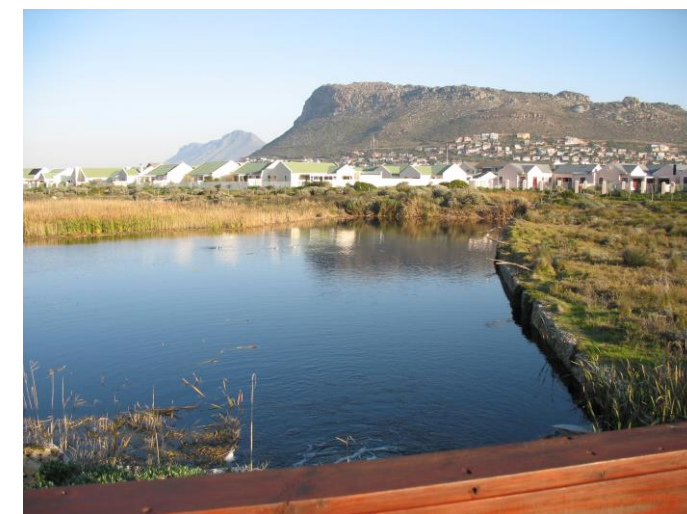
Boardwalk 2002



Boardwalk 2006



1st Gabion Pond 2002



1st Gabion pond 2006