

OVERBERG GEOSCIENTISTS GROUP (OGG)

Newsletter #7: 30 April 2025

(OGG – Reg. No. 275-138 NPO)

April Newsletter #7 Highlights

- Successful completion of the *International Gold Presentation Series*
- Cape Town celebrations of the life & contributions of Charles Darwin
- Iconic Table Mountain scenery, geology and history excursion.

The *OGG & University of Melbourne Gold Series* presented by 8 knowledgeable and experienced Gold and Wits geology experts has run its course. Attendances were excellent, geologists and students from across the globe participated, the content and quality of presentations outstanding, discussions intense and informative, and proposals for follow-up work far-reaching.

The *Gold-series* presentations are all available on YouTube links (see p-2). A summary of the main observations, 'models', key takeaways and proposed follow-up is in preparation and will be circulated for interrogation and comment. Our thanks to the Experts (academic and industry), interested parties and students that shared information and experiences, collectively contributing to the success of the event.

OGG Presentations & Breakfast Program (May & June, 2025)

Date (2025)	Speaker	Topic	Venue/Mode/Time
Thursday 15 May, 2025	Dr Jeannine McManus (Vogelgat Nature Reserve Manager)	<i>Experiences of contrasting approaches to wildlife conservation in Sri Lanka and South Africa</i>	<i>In-person + Zoom RSA 11h00 Onrus Manor</i>
Thursday 5 June 2025	Dr James Blignault (Environmental Economist)	<i>The economics of restoring degraded ecosystems</i>	<i>Zoom Presentation RSA 11h00 Onrus Manor Breakfast Meeting</i>

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82172892738?pwd=M1NWUkJFYzhqdTJ2Qk0yZ3BrV2srZz09>
Meeting ID: 821 7289 2738; Passcode: Overberg

OGG Breakfast Meetings & Presentations – These are held at Onrus Manor from 09h30, with breakfast at 10h00 & presentations (in-person & Zoom) at 11h00 on the first Thursday of the month. Participants are requested to please confirm their attendance at the breakfasts for catering purposes.

OGG Membership Annual Fee Reminder - R250.00 per person

For those who have not yet paid, a reminder that OGG 2025 Annual fees are due. Bank details are shown below. Our thanks to Members who have paid their 2025 Subs and made generous donations:

STANDARD BANK ACCOUNT NAME: OVERBERG GEOSCIENTISTS GROUP NPC
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 10168933800 TYPE: CURRENT ACCOUNT
BRANCH CODE: 051001 SWIFT ADDRESS: SBZA ZA JJ



OGG YouTube Presentations

All previous OGG presentations are available on the links below:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-MPMaHidsW1jR8f-KMmPX8ANZGA-OYna>

All about Gold: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-MPMaHidsW2tZEqv06FmiLjubVejMGhh>

Diamonds: https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-MPMaHidsW09ljwvl7VCUINBd5l_-VwH&si=ddgs1KfuDYuSF1PW

OBITUARY – 15 April, 2025

Dr Peter Nixon - *Diamond geologist and Lesotho kimberlite expert.* Attached is a short document by Dr Graeme Pearson, a more comprehensive Obituary will follow.

Articles & YouTube Presentations of Interest

World-class Graaff-Reinet Centre has biggest collection of Karoo fossil species - (DM, 6 April, 2025)

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2025-04-06-graaff-reinet-fossil-centre-worlds-biggest-collection-unique-species/>

The fossil technician of Sterkfontein Caves (DM, 21 April, 2025)

<https://search.app/rMfpQQHNXjCBArP7>

How a Volcano froze the tiny Island of Monserrat in time (YouTube, 14 mins)

<https://search.app/EW6QiRpb1UXDx8ZG7>

Goreme National Park and the Rosk-sites of Cappadocia, Turkey

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/357/>

Why Geological Maps Are the Best Investment – (ZME Science, 15 April, 2025)

<https://search.app/NVvmSqYHBeD98PCq9>

Cape Town water recycling project 'should not be privatised' - (MoneyWeb, 17 April, 2025)

<https://search.app/tMr9NAbiB6X6APxQ8>

CHARLES DARWIN & Dr JOHN HERSCHEL - CAPE TOWN MEETINGS

Tuesday evening, 29th April - Darwin Talks at the Waterfront Aquarium:

<https://www.quicket.co.za/events/311489-charles-darwin-speaker-evening-at-the-two-oceans-aquarium-featuring-professors/#/tickets>

17 May, 2025 at 11h00 - **Hot Contact Zone in Seapoint, Cape Town.**

Presenters: Dr John Compton - Talk on Darwin and Geology

Ian Glass – Short Talk on Dr John Herschel.

For more details, contact Chris de Coning (083 448 5889; musca.crux@gmail.com)

NB: See also the images (at end of the Newsletter) and attached article of the successful Charles Darwin celebrations (April, 2025) held around Cape Town, including the Sea Point Contact..

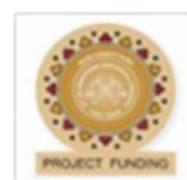
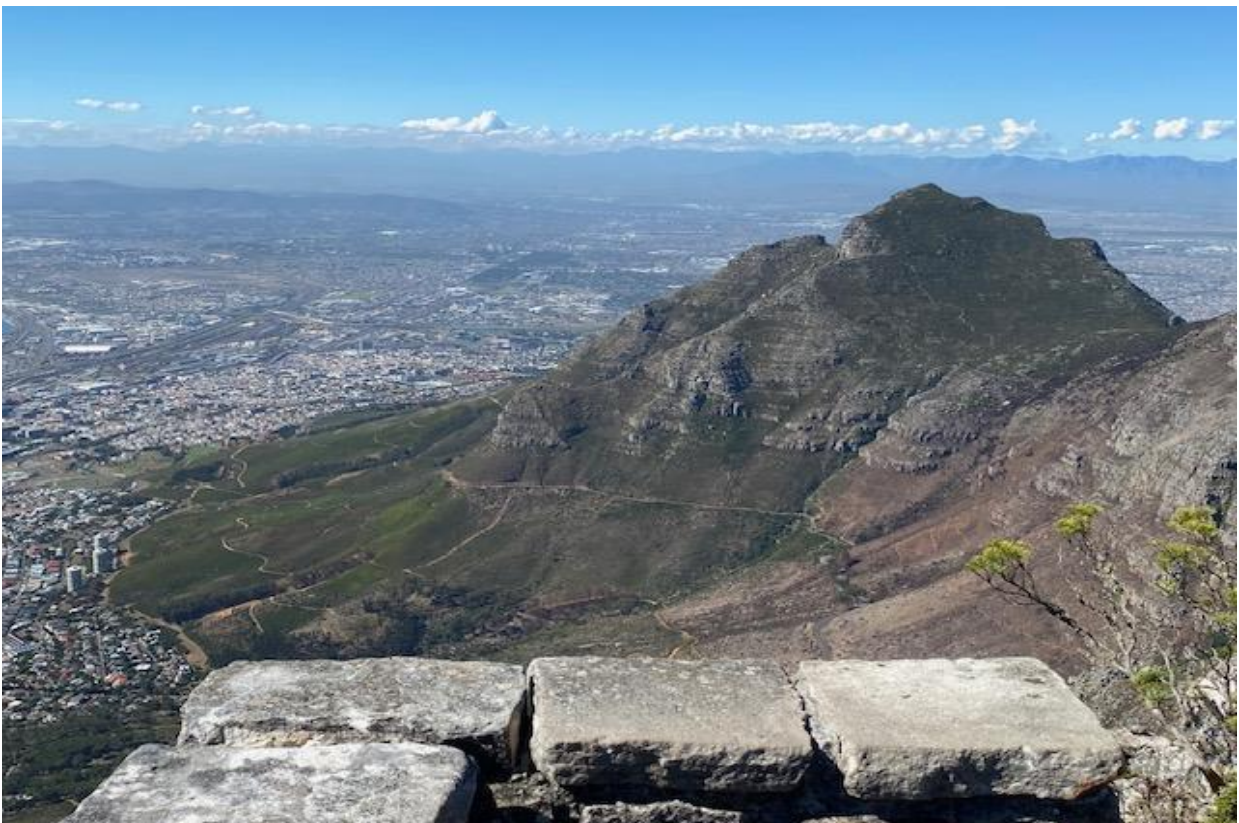


Table Mountain on an iconic day - 10 April, 2025



View from upper Cable Car station north to Robben Island, with Devils Peak to the left of image



View east across Lions Head to the Hottentots Holland Mountains





View south to Cape Point and the Cape of Good Hope



Information board and map showing some of the 650 Ship-wrecks around the Cape of Storms coastline over the past 400 years



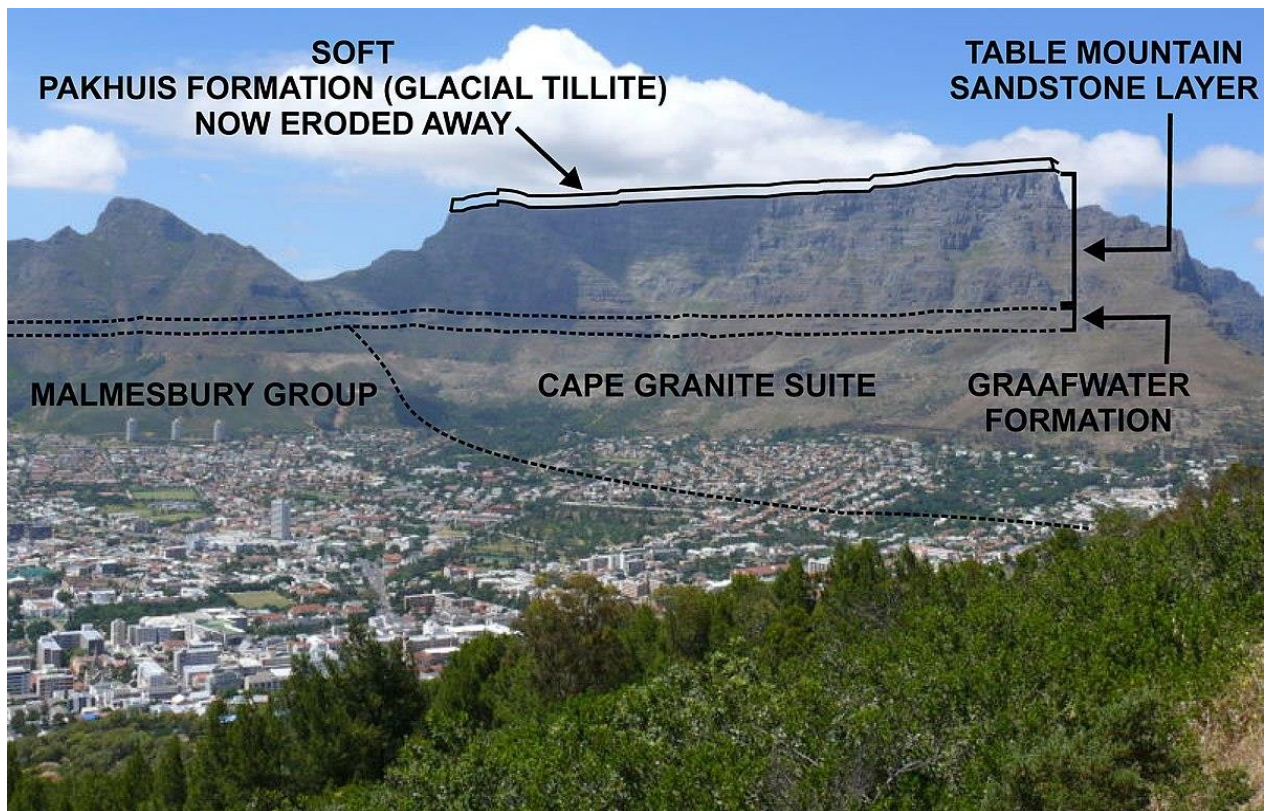


Table Mountain Geology

The geology and rocks of the Western Cape, and in particular Table Mountain and surroundings, are well exposed and you don't need to be a geologist to recognise the different rock-types that underlie this famous mountain. Layers of hard quartzitic sandstone form the prominent upper cliffs and were once contiguous with those on the eroded remnants of Lion's Head and Devil's Peak. Below and along the immediate coastline wave-washed exposures of ancient metamorphosed (baked) sediments of the *Malmesbury Group* and prominent large rounded outcrops of the intrusive *Cape Granite* are apparent:

Malmesbury Group (> 550 million years) – These metamorphosed foliated and sheared dark grey mudstones and lighter coloured sandstones, occur on Signal Hill and lower slopes of Devil's Peak, and are very well exposed at the famous Sea Point Contact visit by Charles Darwin in

Cape Granites (~540 million years) – The robust coarse-grained granites, characterised by large white feldspar crystals, shimmering flakes of black mica and grey glassy quartz, represent the foundation for most of the Table Mountain Chain, including outcrops at Boulders, Chapman's Peak and Lion's Head.

The Table Mountain Group (<520 million years) – these resistant, durable silica (SiO₂) rich rocks dominate the iconic mountain with the exposures comprising 3 formations:

Graafwater Formation: This distinct Basal layer (~25-65m thick) consists of sandstone and mudstone in red and purple hues;

The Peninsula Formation: This ~700m thick unit comprises light grey, stacked units of extensive repetitive packages of sandstone beds comprising pebbly sandstones layers, that form the bulk of Table Mountain;

Pakhuis Formation: Found on the top of Table Mountain, this is an ancient ice-age glacial deposit (~440my) identifiable by glacially deposited pebbles of quartzites and sandstone in a finer matrix of ground-up rock.



Table Mountain History

The Khoi and San people named the mountain *Hoerikwaggo* or *Mountain in the Sea*. It's history dates back over 30,000 years, with evidence of habitation in the Stone-Age from hand axes found in Kirstenbosch Garden. A sacred place for the Khoi and San people who believed their god (Tsui or Goab) lived there.

Beyond its towering peaks, table and valleys, Table Mountain has been an intrinsic part of the socio-cultural fabric of the greater Cape Town region for centuries. This natural landmark has played a role in shaping communities, influencing local identities and acting as a cultural development anchor for indigenous and wider contemporary cultures. Its social impact has been immense.

The first European to see the Cape was *Bartolomeu Dias* in 1448. *Vasco da Gama* spotted it in 1497 and in 1503 Portuguese navigator *Admiral Antonio de Saldanha* did the first recorded climb of Table Mountain. *Saldanha* named the mountain *Taboa da caba*, meaning Table of the Cape. In 1652 the Dutch led by Jan van Riebeeck colonized the Cape, establishing Cape Town a re-supply centre and port, built houses, and brought in slaves.

Since then, many people from around the world have climbed the mountain. The now famous Cable Car opened in 1929 making the summit and spectacular 360degree vistas accessible to millions; over 22 million people have used the cable car, which was renovated and reopened in 1997.

The flat top mountain (elevation: 1,084.6m) is often covered by a white "table cloth" due to the orographic effect of the common south-easterly wind directed up the mountain's slopes into colder air, where the moisture condenses to form the "table cloth" of cloud. Legend attributes the phenomenon to a smoking contest between the Devil and local pirate, *Van Hunks*. When the table cloth is seen, it symbolizes the contest is in progress! The mountain gained National Park status in 1998, and the Cape Floristic Region was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2004.



Charles Darwin Celebrations : Cape Town & Sea Point Contact
(April 2025)

See the images below and attached excellent document titled *A GRAND TRIBUTE TO A CURIOUS MIND* by *Sieqi and Irene Juhnke (21 April 2025)*, which as the authors conclude – ‘From the creaking deck of the *Oosterschelde*, to the *Simon’s Town Jetty*, from the ancient rocks of *Sea Point* to the theatre stage, the event was a living tribute to the power of curiosity, courage, and continuity. It reminded all present that the seeds of world-changing ideas can be sown anywhere—even on a windswept shoreline at the southern tip of Africa’.



Petre Pins, Lucy Darwin, Mike Bruton, Steve Sack and Andrew Darwin at the Sea Point Contact (Info & Images - John Rogers)



New City of Cape Town plaques installed by a Team led by Councillor Nicola Jowell, Philip Smith, David Hart and Christoffel Smalberger (Info & Images, John Rogers)

