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Monthly Report September 2025

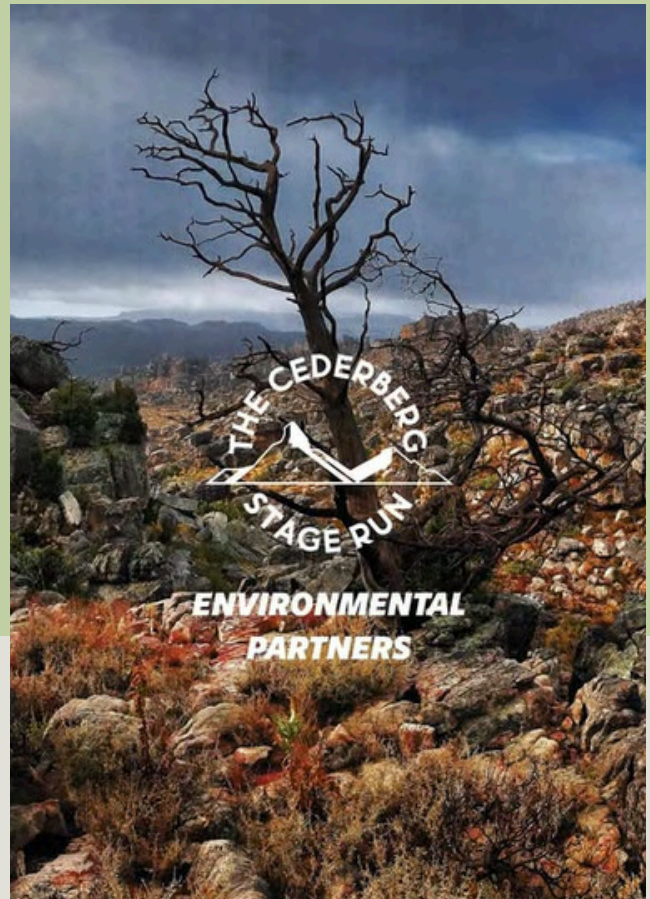
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The Aonijie Cederberg Stage Run

The Cederberg Stage Run, a multi-stage trail running event and the first of its kind, was held over three days — 5th, 6th and 7th September — in the area around Kromrivier Cederberg Park in the Southern Cederberg.

Over three unforgettable days, runners had the chance to explore diverse terrain, from ancient sandstone formations to remote valleys and the rugged landscapes of the Cederberg Mountain Range.

For this event, participants could choose to run solo or team up with a partner.

The stages comprised the following distances:

- Day 1: 35 km
- Day 2: 24 km
- Day 3: 9 km

As part of the Cederberg Stage Run's commitment to giving back to the Cederberg Wilderness Area, the organisers partnered with Sustainable Ceder and the Cape Leopard Trust. A portion of each entry fee was donated to these two organisations.

Aonijie South Africa, a world-renowned trail running brand, also came on board. For the month of August, 15% of all Aonijie online sales were donated to the Cape Leopard Trust and Sustainable Ceder.



Fig 1. Day one featured Andre Gerber (right) preparing for the race, Dawie Burger alongside Race Director Rodney Long, and an insightful presentation by Jeannie Hayward of the Cape Leopard Trust(left). Photo Credit: Barbara Cole Photography

We are proud of our board member and avid trail runner, André Gerber, who had the opportunity to take part in the event in support of Sustainable Ceder.

On the final evening of the event, we were invited to give a talk alongside the Cape Leopard Trust at the Kromrivier Homestead, where all the runners gathered for a hot meal after a long day on the trails.

It was a privilege to partner with the Cederberg Stage Run and Aonijie South Africa, and to be part of such a unique event. We look forward to joining again next year. A big thank you to everyone who supported us and for the generous donations made to both organisations.

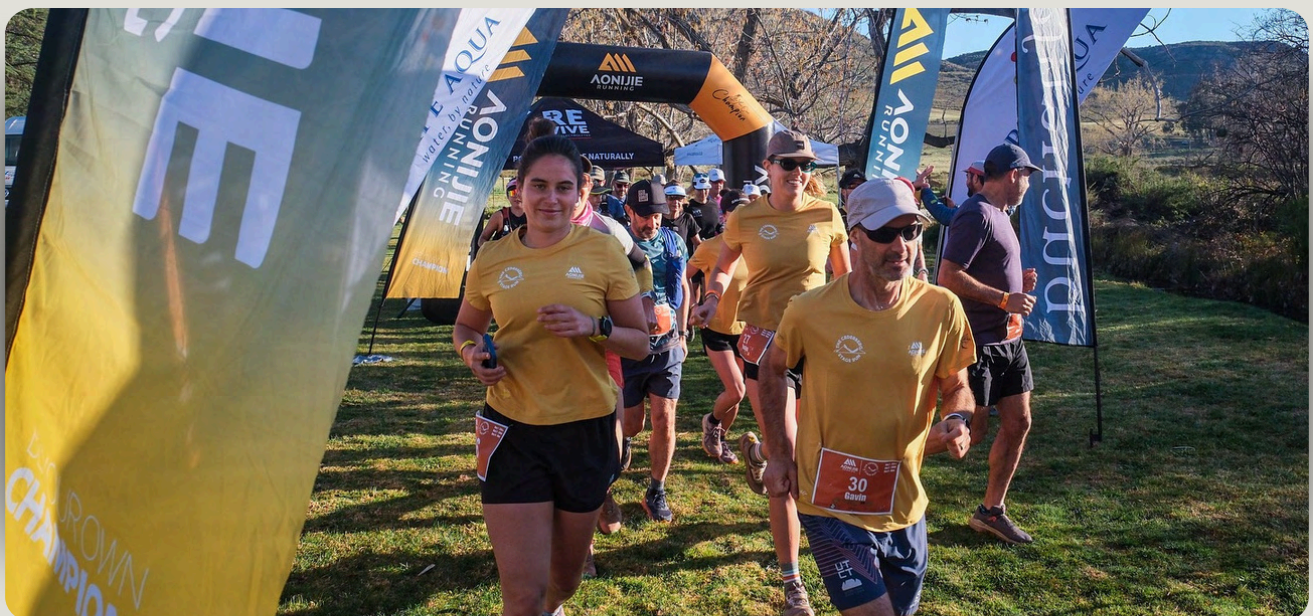


Fig 2. Around 58 trail runners took part in the Cederberg Stage Run. Photo Credit: Barbara Cole Photography



Fig 3. Dr Lynn J.Quick (left) and a group of students conducting new palaeoecological research.



Fig 4. A pollen trap has been placed in a grove of Clanwilliam Cedars above Driehoek Farm.

Unlocking the vegetation history of the Cederberg

This September, we had the privilege of supporting [Dr Lynn J. Quick](#) and a team of Spanish and South African researchers and students during their week in the Cederberg Mountains, where they carried out new palaeoecological research in collaboration with CapeNature. Sustainable Ceder will also be assisting in checking the cedar pollen traps on a monthly basis, contributing directly to the ongoing monitoring of the species.

Contribution from Dr Lynn J. Quick:

New pollen traps were installed in the Cederberg to learn more about how plants leave their “fingerprints” in the environment and to better understand how modern pollen is incorporated into palaeoecological records.

The traps are located at key wetland spots where we’ve recently taken sediment cores which will be used for new palaeoenvironmental reconstructions and to provide key ecological insights into the vegetation dynamics in the Cederberg. Another trap has been placed in a grove of Clanwilliam cedar trees above Driehoek Farm. By checking the cedar trap every month and the wetland traps once a year, we’ll be able to see how much pollen different plants – especially the cedars – release into the air and how this builds up over time.

This approach will allow us to assess background pollen deposition, track seasonal variation and evaluate how many cedar grains are actually captured in the record, providing crucial context for interpreting long-term vegetation histories.¹

¹ Information provided by Dr Lynn J. Quick, September 2025.



Fig 5. Peter Slingsby (above).



Fig 6. Peter Slingsby (left) and Johan Groenewald (right) - Photo Credit: Tracks4Africa.

Book Launch: Cederberg - The Book by Peter Slingsby

Sustainable Ceder had the honour of attending the launch of Cederberg: The Book by renowned cartographer Peter Slingsby. His latest work captures the history, legends and unique magic of the Cederberg.

Peter's maps have really helped us understand the cedar populations of the region, building on the aerial and field survey he and Dr Jasper Slingsby carried out in 2014. They not only show us where the trees grow and how many are left, but also lead hikers to some of the last remaining clusters of Clanwilliam Cedars, offering a special opportunity to experience these iconic trees in the wild.

We are very grateful for Peter Slingsby's maps, which we use every day and which play such an important role in our work in the field.



Fig 7. Young cedars in the wild.



Fig 8. The Illegal Plant Trade Coalition will take place in Abu Dhabi on the 9th of October 2025.



Fig 9. Wooden bracelets made by the local community in the Cederberg.

Wooden bracelets for the Illegal Plant Trade Coalition

We had the pleasure of being introduced to Dr. Carly Cowell, who serves as Director of Conservation Policy and Practice at Botanic Gardens Conservation International in the United Kingdom.

During her recent visit to the Cederberg, she noticed the wooden beaded bracelets in our shop, handcrafted by local children from the Cederberg. Dr Cowell kindly enquired whether the local community could produce 200 bracelets for the launch of BGCi's illegal plant trade campaign, taking place in October in Abu Dhabi.

We went in search of 5,600 wooden beads in the specific green and blue shades that match the logo of the Illegal Plant Trade Coalition and managed to find the perfect colours. With the help of ladies from the local community, we were able to complete 200 bracelets in time, which are now on their way to the UK.



Fig 10. 200 wooden beaded bracelets were made by the local community, each with a handwritten tag.



Fig 11. Local residents came together at Cedarwood Park-Durbanville to plant 5 cedars in celebration of Arbor Week.

Celebrating Arbor Week

In celebration of Arbor Week this month, residents of Durbanville Garden Club invited us to plant Clanwilliam Cedar trees in Cedarwood Park, a public park located in Durbanville, a suburb of Cape Town. In collaboration with Ward 103 Council, Friends of Cedarwood Park, The City of Cape Town and Friends of Durbanville Parks, five Clanwilliam Cedars were planted to raise awareness and bring the community together.

We would like to thank Spiro's Mega Mica, Stanler Farms and participating residents who made this initiative possible. A special thanks goes to David Howard, a local resident who has been caring for the park and will now help look after the cedar trees.



Fig 12. Gerhard Fourie (left) ward councillor and chair of Subcouncil 7 and David Howard (right) planting a cedar.



Fig 13. The Cedar Guardians and local planters from Sustainable Ceder.

Tree planting this month

We're nearing the end of our 2025 planting season!

We would like to thank our dedicated and passionate local planters, the Cedar Guardians, students, volunteers, and everyone who made an impact on our mission this season — and a special thanks to those who sponsored a tree.

Date	Location	Trees Planted
15.09.2025	Waterval Kloof (Above Driehoek)	227
20.09.2025	Below JeepTrack/Tafelberg	4
29.09.2025	Welbedacht	640
30.09.2025	Welbedacht	640
	TOTAL	1511

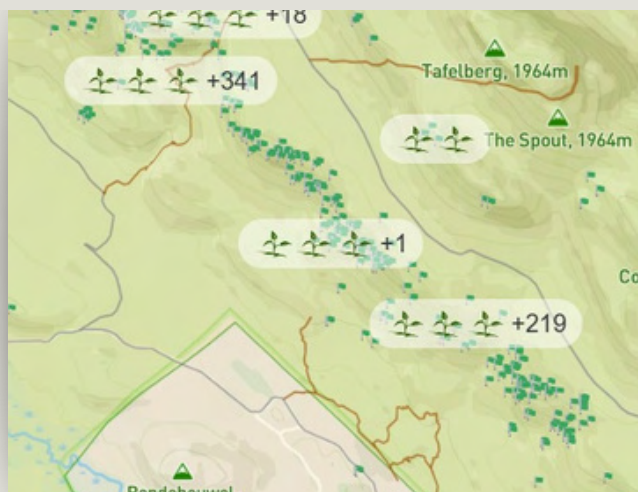


Fig 14. Map of the area planted this month as indicated on the [EarthRanger App](#).



Fig 15. While half the team focuses on planting the last trays of the season, the others will begin seed harvesting.



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With Thanks to Honest Chocolate

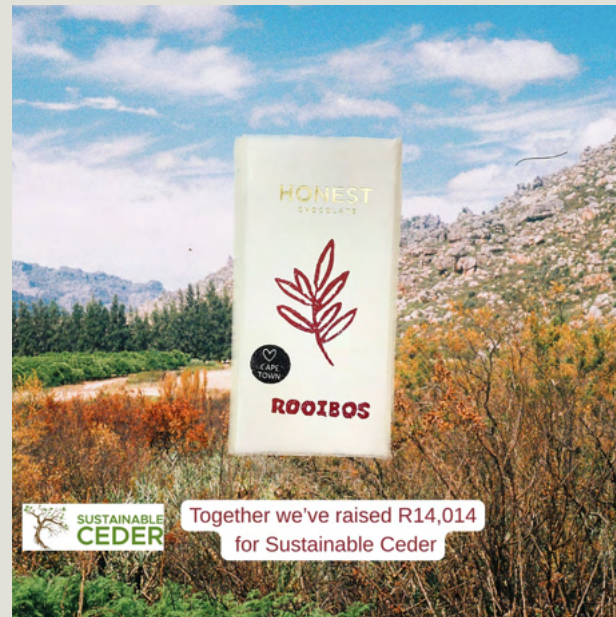


Fig 17. Special thanks to Honest Chocolate for their ongoing support.

Further News

Clanwilliam Flower Show

The annual Clanwilliam Flower Show took place from 29 August to 7 September 2025 at the Flower Church in Clanwilliam. Sustainable Cedar was invited to give a talk at the Ou Tronk Museum during the show. The theme of this year's exhibition was "Critically Endangered," and Sustainable Cedar contributed with a cedar tree display.

About seven months ago, we collaborated with Honest Chocolate, a handcrafted chocolate company based in Cape Town, when they reintroduced their Love Cape Town Rooibos slab.



Fig 16. Sustainable Cedar display at the Clanwilliam Flower Show 2025.

For every Rooibos sold, they donate R2.00 to Sustainable Cedar. To date, Honest Chocolate has raised R14,014 for Sustainable Cedar, while also supporting SANCCOB and the Cape Leopard Trust.

We are so grateful for their ongoing support and the meaningful role they play in helping us make a difference.

Planning ahead

Over the next two months our focus will shift to seed collection across the Cederberg to ensure strong genetic diversity for future plantings.