



GROOTBOS

☆☆☆☆☆ PRIVATE NATURE RESERVE

Grootbos Nature Reserve hosts a large variety of different ecosystems. The majority of the reserve is covered in species-rich fire-prone fynbos shrub- and heathlands. Forests are patchily dispersed as shady islands in places not influenced by wildfires. In order to take effective measures towards the conservation of all those ecosystems for future generations it is essential to know as much as possible about them. This thesis approaches some basic questions related to one of the major elements of all natural ecosystems: the vegetation. The following questions were tried to be answered:

Which plant communities or vegetation units are present and how are they interrelated? (vegetation classification)

How can they be integrated in existing classification systems for the Fynbos Biome?

How is the vegetation related to certain environmental variables? (ordination)

How are the vegetation units distributed over the reserve? (vegetation mapping)

To what extent can the distribution of the vegetation units be related to the topography? (geostatistical analysis)

The book should not only address scientists, but also hobby naturalists, supporting them to enhance their understanding of the distinctive biological features of the Southern tip of Africa and to explore the nature of Grootbos with a more open mind.

The author

Martin Mergili was born in 1979 in Linz, Austria. After a technical education he started studies in Geography, Geobotany, Ecology and Geology at the Universities of Innsbruck (Austria) and Rovaniemi (Finland). He wrote the thesis "The Vegetation of Grootbos Nature Reserve" in order to complete his masters studies in Geography. The major research interest of Martin Mergili is numerical modelling (particularly GIS and remote sensing techniques) in geocology.

