

U. SHORES

Field Note U12a6. Archaeology - Fish traps – Struis Point

There are twenty-eight sites of intertidal fish trap clusters along the Cape South Coast, eight of which are along the shores of the Study Area. They are (from southwest to northeast): Suiderstrand, Rasperpunt, Cape Agulhas, Struis Bay, Struis Point, Ryspunt, Skipskop and Breede River, containing in total >100 traps of all shapes and sizes (Figure 1). This Field Note is about the traps in Struis Point (Figures 2 to 5).



Figure 1. Satellite image (rotated) showing the locations of fish traps clusters in the Study Area. Arrow points to Struis Point.



Figure 2. Topography map of the Struis Point area.

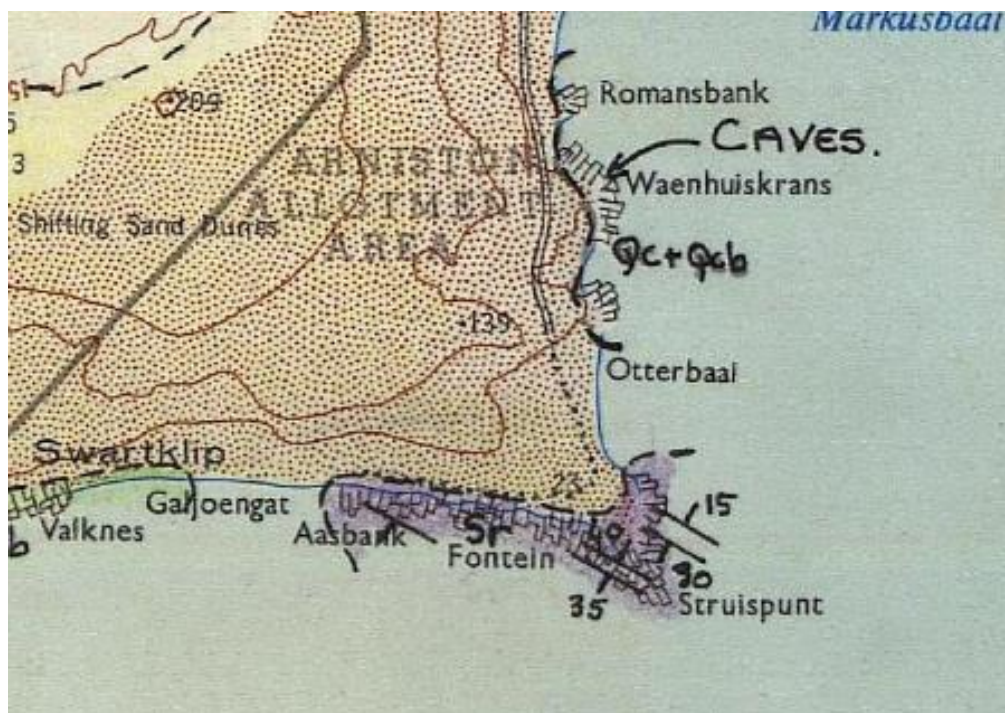


Figure 3. Geology map of the Struis Point area (J Malan, 1984). The rocky belt around the shore is of the Table Mountain Group Rietvlei Formation.



Figure 4. Topography map of Struis Point.



Figure 5. Struis Point. View to the south.

The fish traps in Struis Point can be clearly seen in low tide (Figures 6 to 11).



Figure 6. Satellite image of Struis Point. Boxes, indicating fish trap clusters (white – northern; yellow – southern) are enlarged below.



Figure 7. Satellite image of the northern fish trap cluster. The cluster is sheltered.



Figure 8. The northern fish trap cluster at low tide. Top – view to the SE. Bottom – view to the east.



Figure 9. Satellite image of the southern fish trap cluster. This cluster is subject to destructive wave and current action, and most of the walls are damaged.

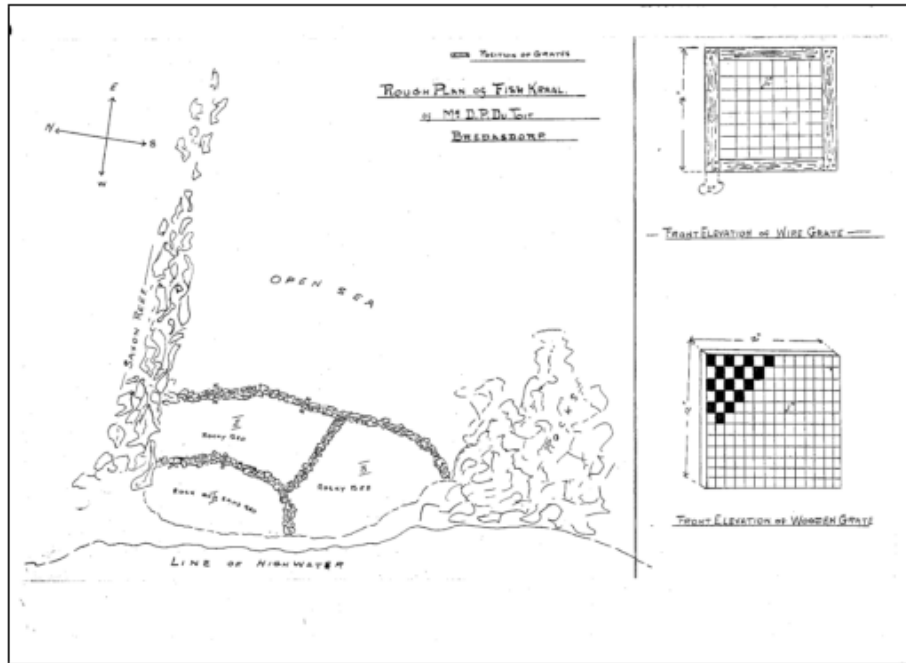


Figure 10. The southern cluster. View to the south.



Figure 11. Traps of the southern cluster. View to the south.

PJ Hine, who investigated the antiquity of the traps, found in the Cape Archives many plans and sketches for the construction of fish traps submitted to the Cape authorities (Figure 12).



Plan of Fish trap of P. E. De Kock. Cape Archives. PAN 55. K13/19.

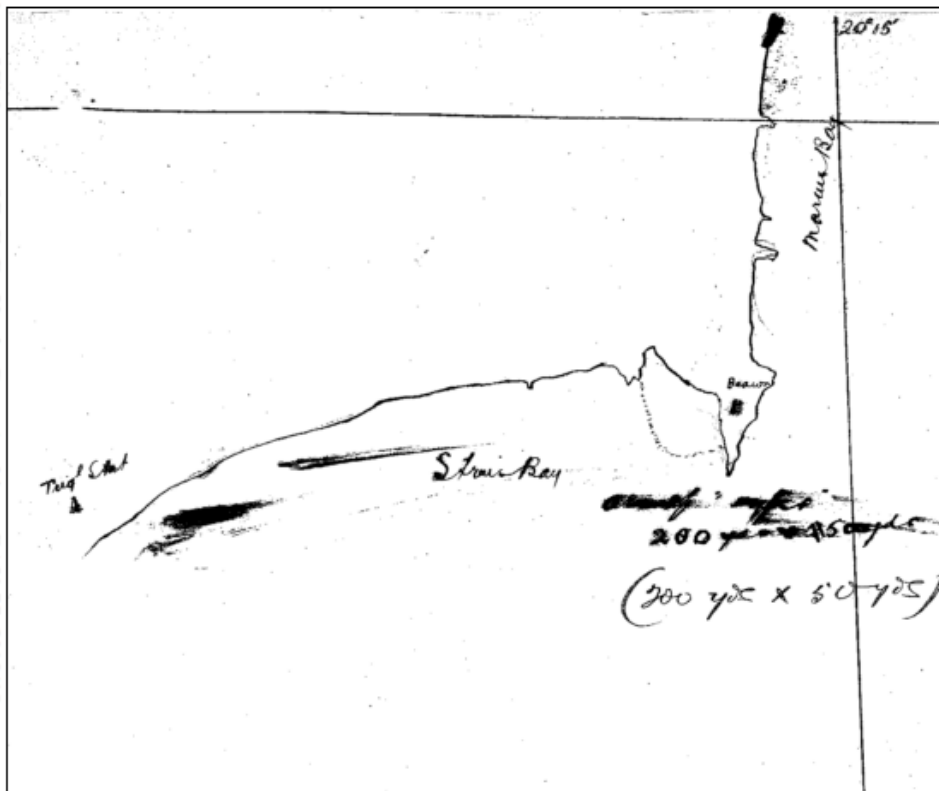


Figure 12. Top and bottom: proposed plans for fish traps in Struis Point, 1913, are kept in the Cape Archives.

Source: PJ Hine MSc Thesis, 2008.

[From the internet]: The Struis Point beacon was erected on 28 September 1871, due to the number of ships striking Saxon Reef just off Struis Point. This beacon used to have a large copper ball on top that reflected the rays of the sun to the ships at sea. It is of great historical importance as it is the only known one of its kind ever erected (Figure 13).



Struispunt beacon, by David Fox

Figure 13. The Struis Point beacon. Top – at high tide. Bottom – at low tide.
Source: The Internet.