

E. KARST LANDFORMS

Field Note E6. Wankoe Formation – Pinnacles outside the Study Area



Pinnacle near the Gourikwa Nature Reserve.

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This Field Note is about pinnacles (and other features) located at a site investigated by ME Marker and PJ Holmes, who published their findings in a paper published in 1999 (Figure 1).

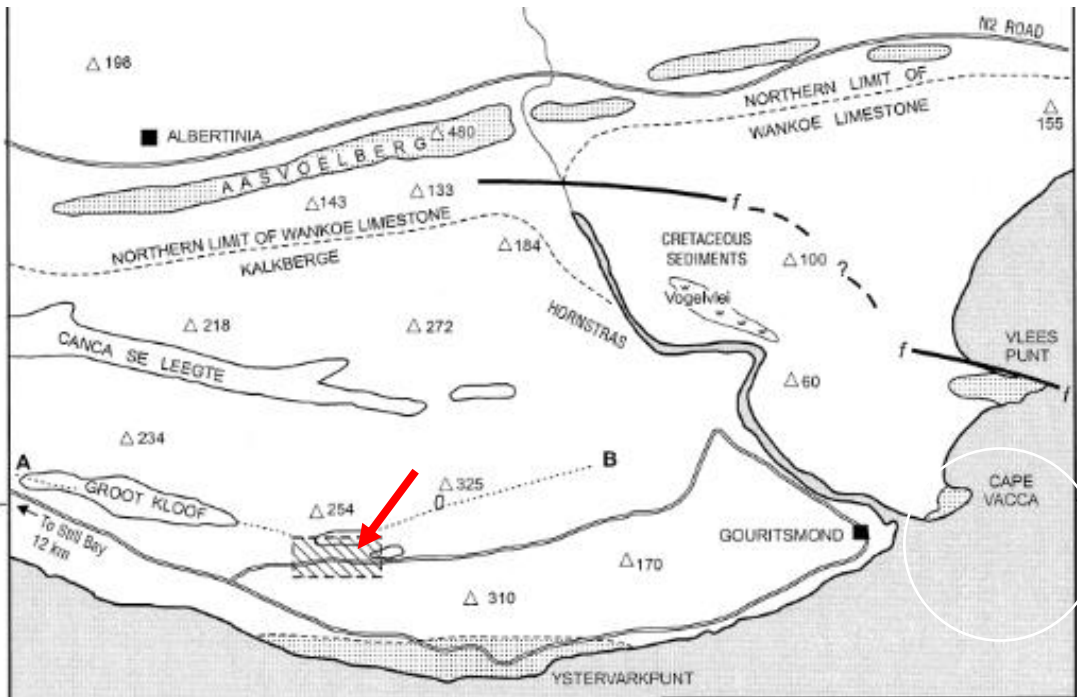
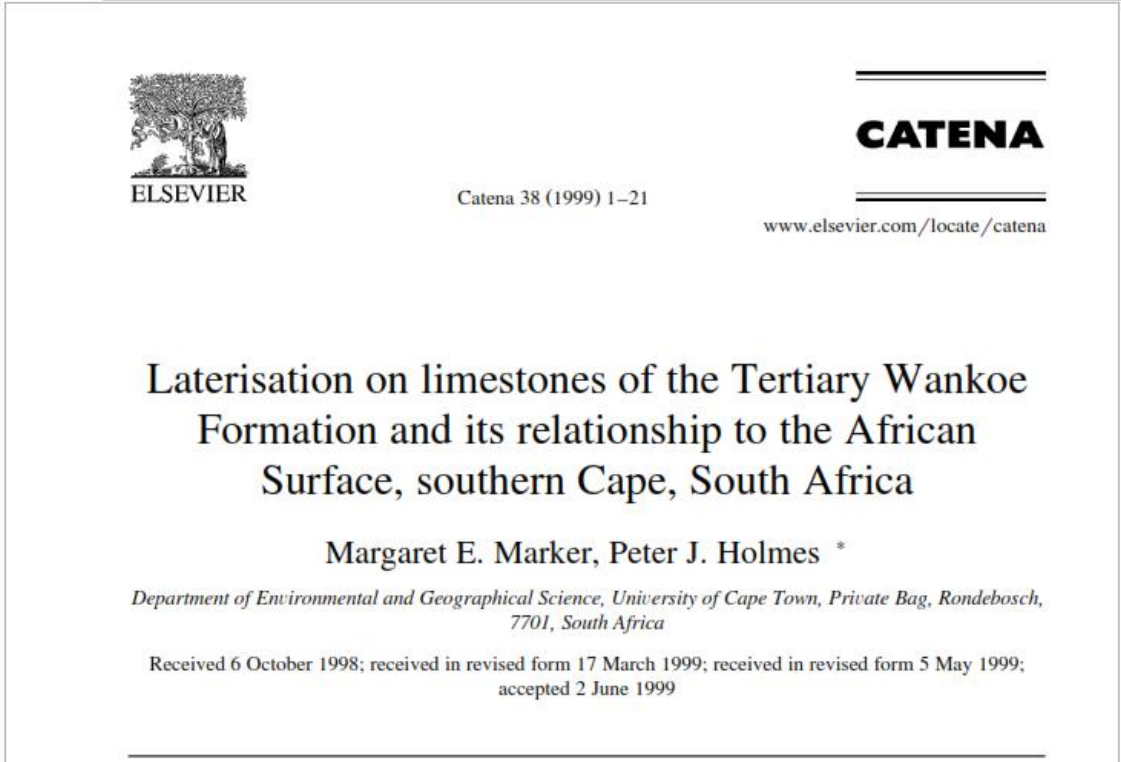


Figure 1. The front page of a paper about the site, published in 1999 (top) and a locality map (site indicated by an arrow) shown in the paper (bottom).

The site is located in a small depression, ~40 km west from Gouritsmond on the road to Still Bay, and ~10 km west of the gate to the Gourikwa Nature Reserve on that road, at an elevation of 240-250 m asl (Figure 2).

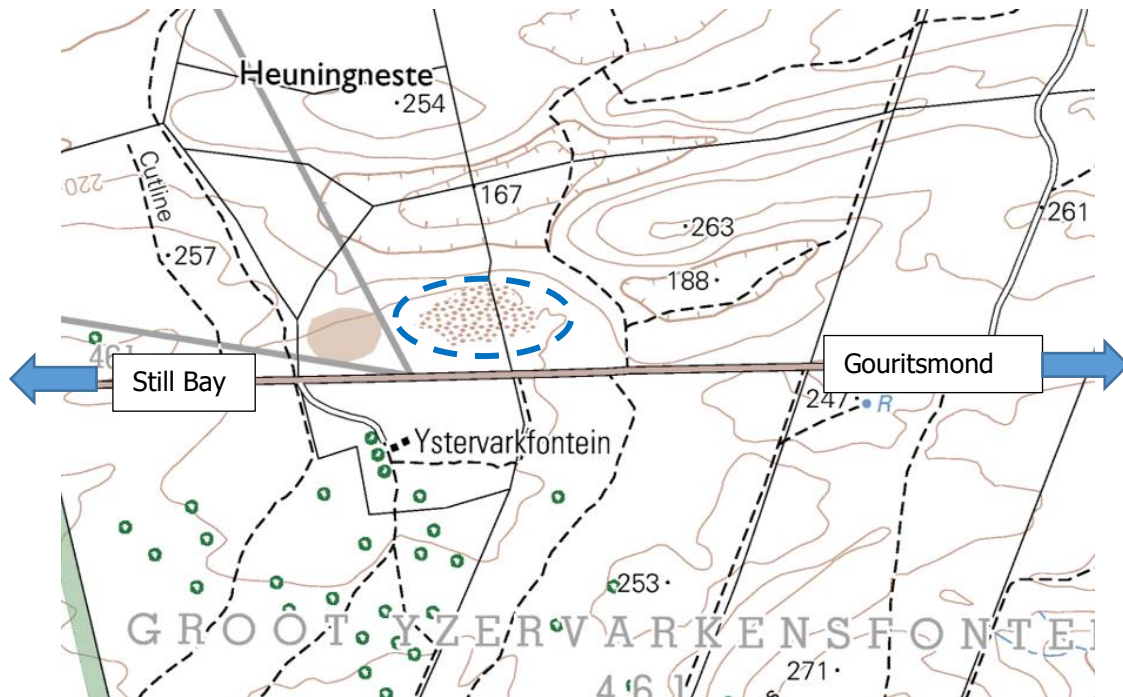
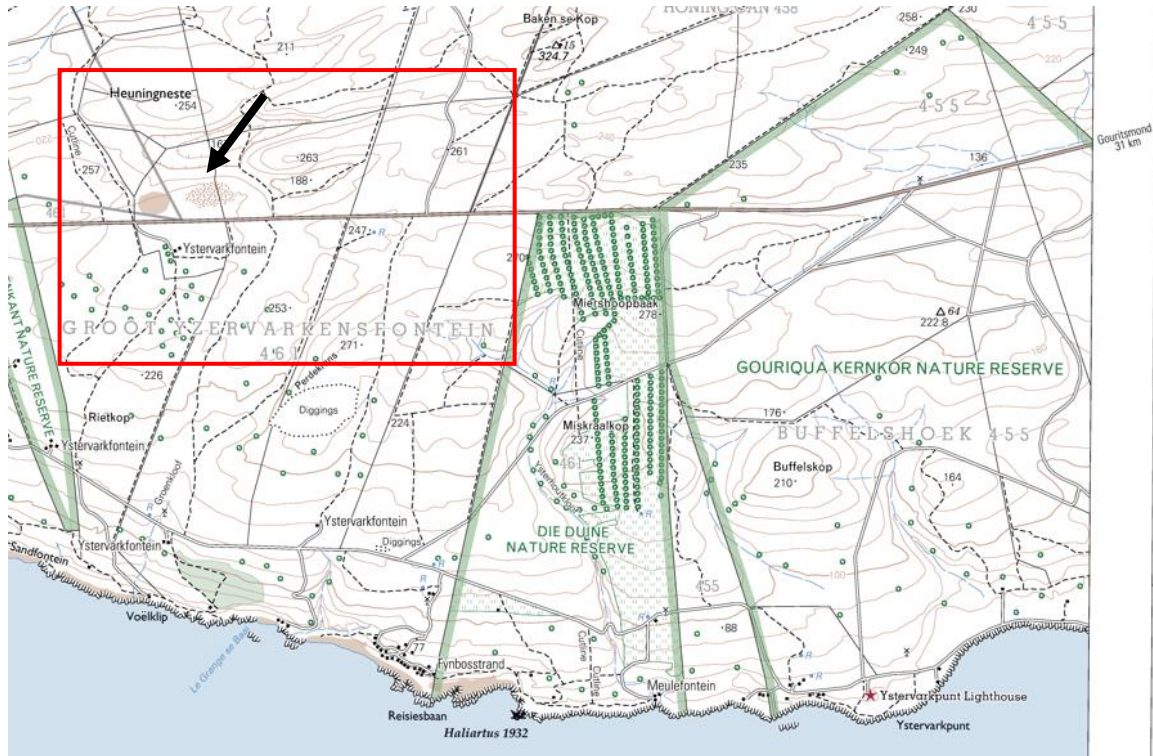


Figure 2. Topography maps showing the location of the site (arrow in the red box), near the Gourikwa Nature Reserve (arrow). Red box at the top enlarged at the bottom. Site in the ellipsoid.

During the two decades which passed since the publication of the paper, thick vegetation in the area grew to obscure most of the features described by Marker and Holmes (Figures 3 and 4).



Figure 3. The depression in question in 1999, covered with no or thin vegetation (top, photo taken from the paper) and in November 2021 (bottom).

Satellite images illustrate the vegetation growth during the years (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Satellite images of the site. Top – 2005; bottom - 2021.

The spectacular cluster of tall pinnacles, shown by Marker and Holmes, could not be located by the author, as it is probably obscured by the dense vegetation (Figure 5). (Another possibility is that the pinnacles – or some of them - were destroyed or removed by machinery, which was used to excavate sand).



Figure 5. Top - M Marker next to a pinnacle cluster (photo taken from the paper). Bottom – pinnacles at the site.

Some pinnacles are partly or totally obscured by bushes (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Top and bottom: pinnacles are obscured by bushes. There is a pinnacle in the yellow box at the top photograph (shown in the front page of this Field Note).

Some pinnacles are solid (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Top and bottom: solid pinnacles.

Some pinnacles are hollow (Figure 8).



Figure 8. Top and bottom: hollow pinnacles.

A large (~1.5m x 1.5 m) block of the Wankoe Formation calcarenite was also found (Figure 9).



Figure 8. Top and bottom: Wankoe Formation block.

Pinnacles are rare features. This is the only site outside the Study Area the author is aware of, where such pinnacles can be found.

There are other features in this depression. One of them are calcrete lumps and the other are pebbles and Stone Age artefacts.

Several calcrete lumps are hidden in the bush (Figure 10).



Figure 9. Calcrete lump.

Well-rounded pebbles as well as angular stones are found on the depression floor (Figure 10). They were used for tool making in the Stone Age.



Figure 10. Pebbles and stones on the floor of the depression. An explanation for the presence of pebbles and stones on top of the Wankoe Formation – one of the fewest points on the south coast - at this elevation above sealevel, is still to be proposed.

The depression is strewn with artefacts and would-be tools of the Stone Age (Figure 11).



Figure 11. A random collection of Stone Age artefacts from the floor of the depression.