

K. WEST VALLEYS

Field Note K2. The West Renoster Valley

There are seven valleys in the area between the Kars River in the west and the De Hoop Vlei in the east. They form a continuous line of valleys, separating, the Outer West Hard Dunes from the Inner West Hard Dunes – the two sub-parallel ranges, west of De Hoop Vlei.

These valleys are, from west to east: the West Renoster Valley, the East Renoster Valley, the Rietfontein Valley, the Matjesfontein Valley, the Ou Werf Valley, the Hooge Krans Valley and the Patryze Valley (Figure 1). [The valley names were given by the author after the names of the (old) farms on which they are located, or adjacent farms]. Some of the valleys are enclosed; none of them drains into a river. The access to the valleys is only possible from the farms to the west of the Outer West Hard Dunes.

The valleys are briefly described below and in detail in the following field notes.



Figure 1. Satellite image of the area west of De Hoop Vlei, showing the West Hard Dunes ranges and the valleys between them [all names were given by the author]. Arrows point on: green - Kars River; white – De Hoop Vlei. Valleys: 1 – West Renoster Valley; 2- East Renoster Valley; 3 – Rietfontein Valley; 4 – Matjesfontein Valley; 5 - Ou Werf Valley; 6 - Hooge Krans Valley; 7 - Patryze Valley. The total length of the valleys is ~20 km.

The West Renoster Valleys was named after the adjacent farm Renosterfontein. It has an elliptical shape and is quite flat. It is surrounded by hills of the Wankoe Formation (Hard Dunes). The valley can be accessed from the west and the north (Figures 2 and 3).

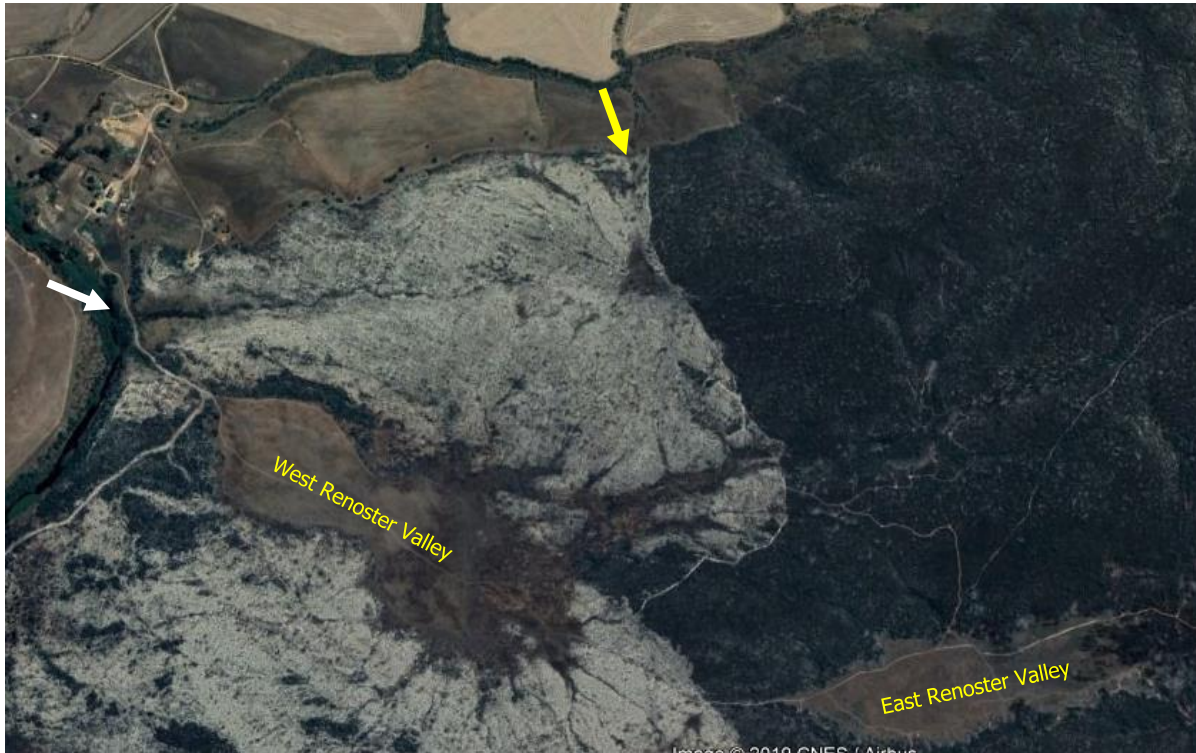


Figure 2. Satellite image of the Renoster Valleys and their surrounds. Arrows point to: white - the roads into the valley via Renosterfontein Farm and the Kars River; yellow – the road from Soutpansvlakte Farm.

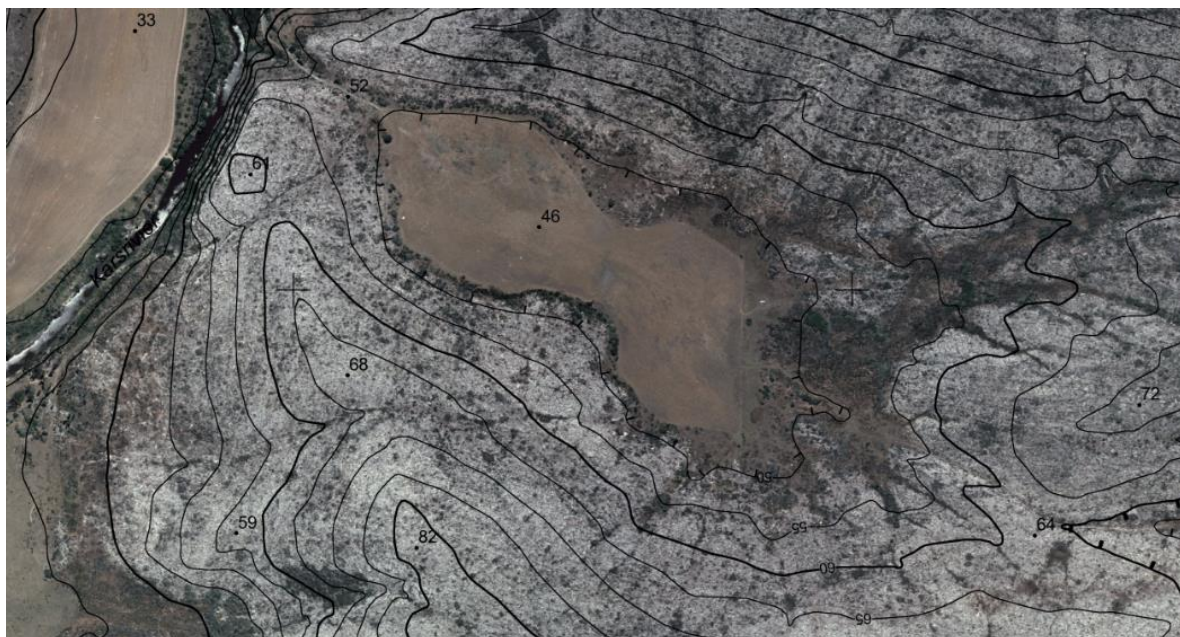


Figure 3. Topography map of the hills around the West Renoster Valley.

The valley floor is covered with low grass. After heavy rains a periodical vlei is formed at the lowest part of the valley (Figures 4 and 5).



Figure 4. Satellite image of the West Renoster Valley. The eastern part is a field of low dunes (red sand).

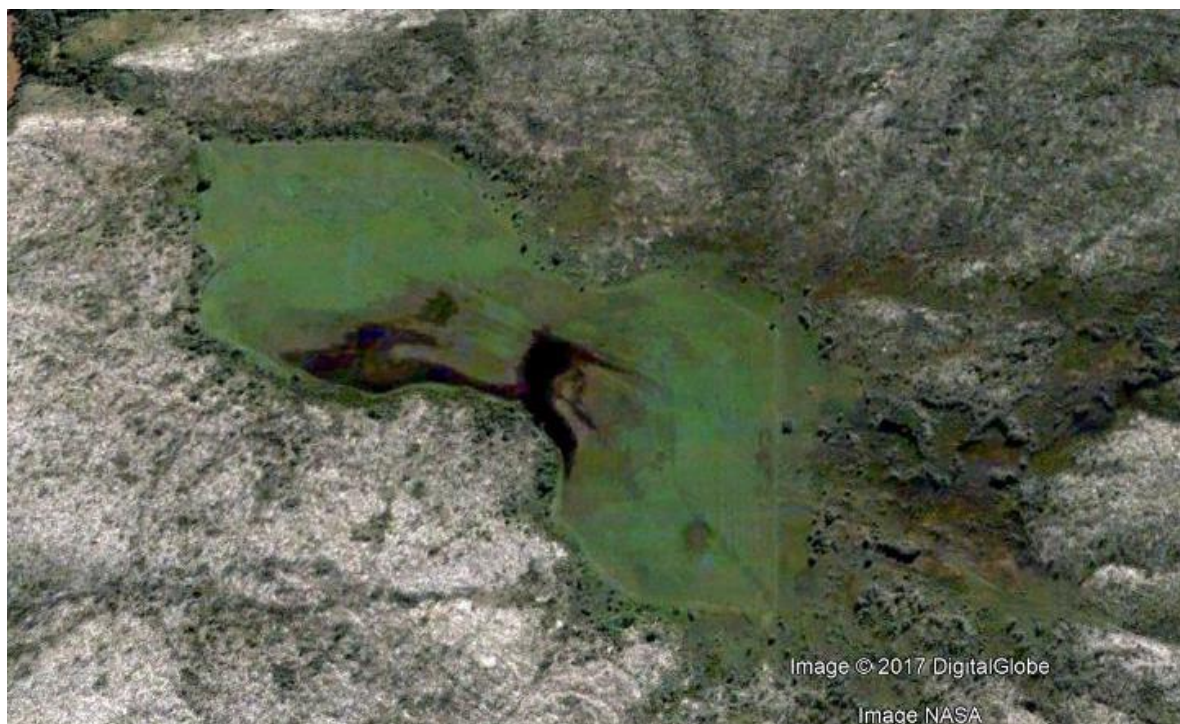


Figure 5. Satellite image of the West Renoster Valley, showing the vlei, which was formed after heavy rains (2005).

The calcrete-capped Hard Dunes around of the West Renoster Valley peak at ~50 m above the valley floor (Figures 6 and 7). On the east, the hills (separating it from the East Renoster Valley) are lower. On the west the hill, which separates the valley from the Kars River, is only 5 m above the elevation of the valley floor.

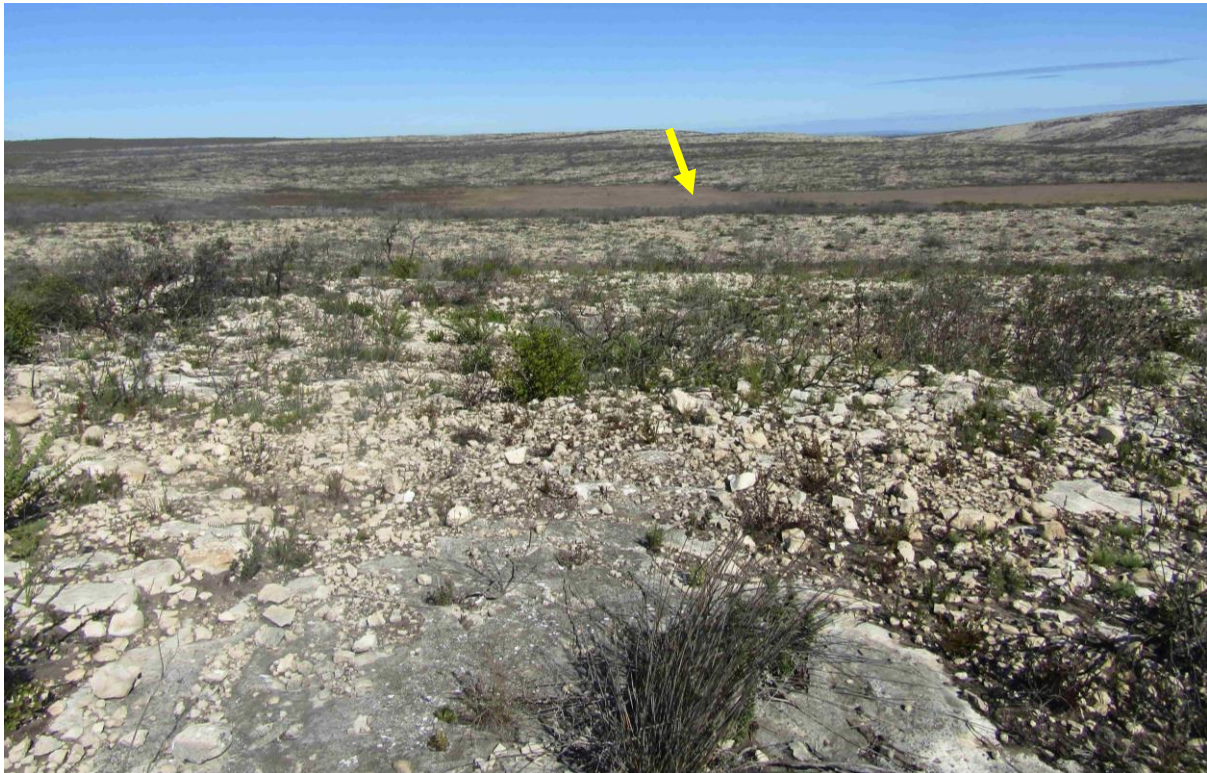


Figure 6. View to the south on the West Renoster Valley (yellow arrow).

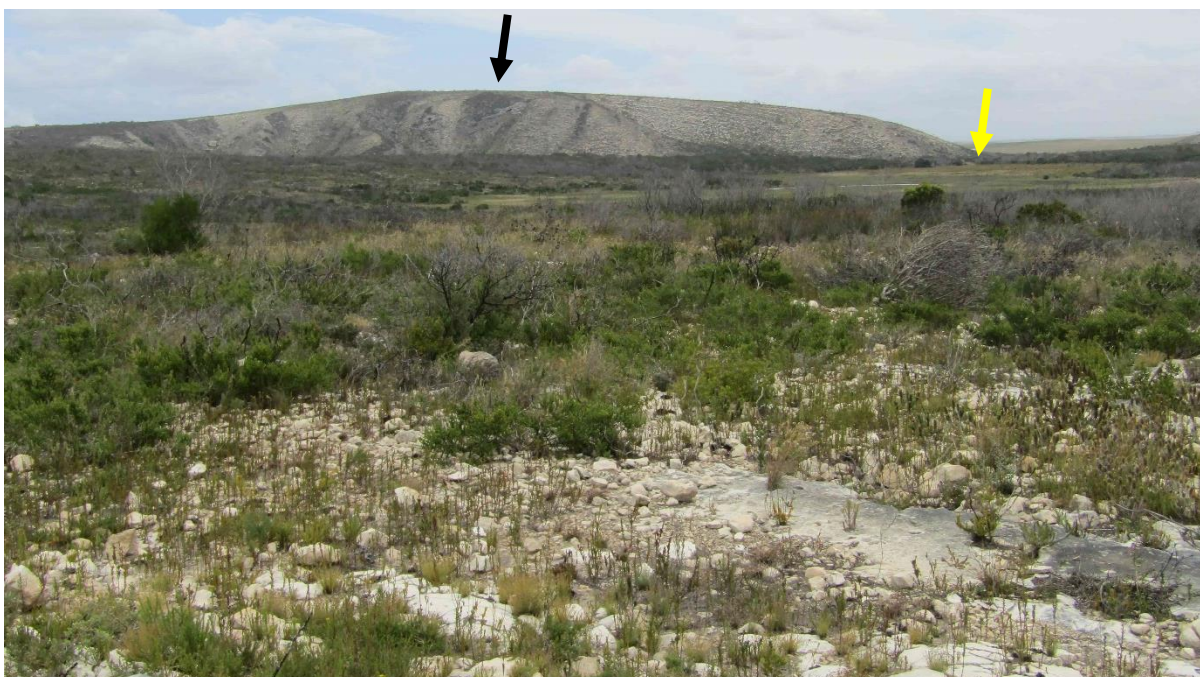


Figure 7. View to the west on the West Renoster Valley from the low hill, which separates it from the East Renoster Valley. The yellow arrow points to the sill at the west end of the valley. Black arrow points on the Bredasdorp Hard Dunes.

Except for the eastern section, the West Renoster Valley floor is flat (Figures 8 and 9).



Figure 8. The floor of the valley is flat. View from the northwest end to the southeast.



Figure 9. The floor of the valley is flat. View from the southeast end to the northwest. Arrow points on the Bredasdorp Hard Dunes.

The floor of the valley consists of soils and pebble / boulders of quartzite and quartz as well as calcrete chunks (resulting from the disintegration of the rocks around the valley) in the western section and of red sand in the eastern section (Figures 10 and 11).



Figure 10. Soils and rounded and sub-rounded quartz and quartzite clasts as well as calcrete clasts from the hills around the valley, comprise the floor of the western part of the valley.



Figure 11. Low dunes of red sand comprise the floor of the eastern part of the valley.

The presence of well-rounded pebbles and chunks of ferricrete on the floor of the valley may indicate that it is a small gravel terrace (see Chapter C).