

U. SHORES

Field Note U12a9. Archaeology - Fish traps – Skipskop

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, Arniston, Ryspunt, Skipskop and Breede River, containing in total >100 traps of all shapes and sizes (Figure 1). This Field Note is about the trap clusters near Skipskop.



Figure 1. Satellite image (rotated) showing the locations of fish trap clusters in the Study Area. Arrow points to Skipskop (also called Vinbekbaai).



Figure 2. Topography map the Skipskop area. Fish trap clusters area is boxed; box enlarged in Figures 3 and 4.

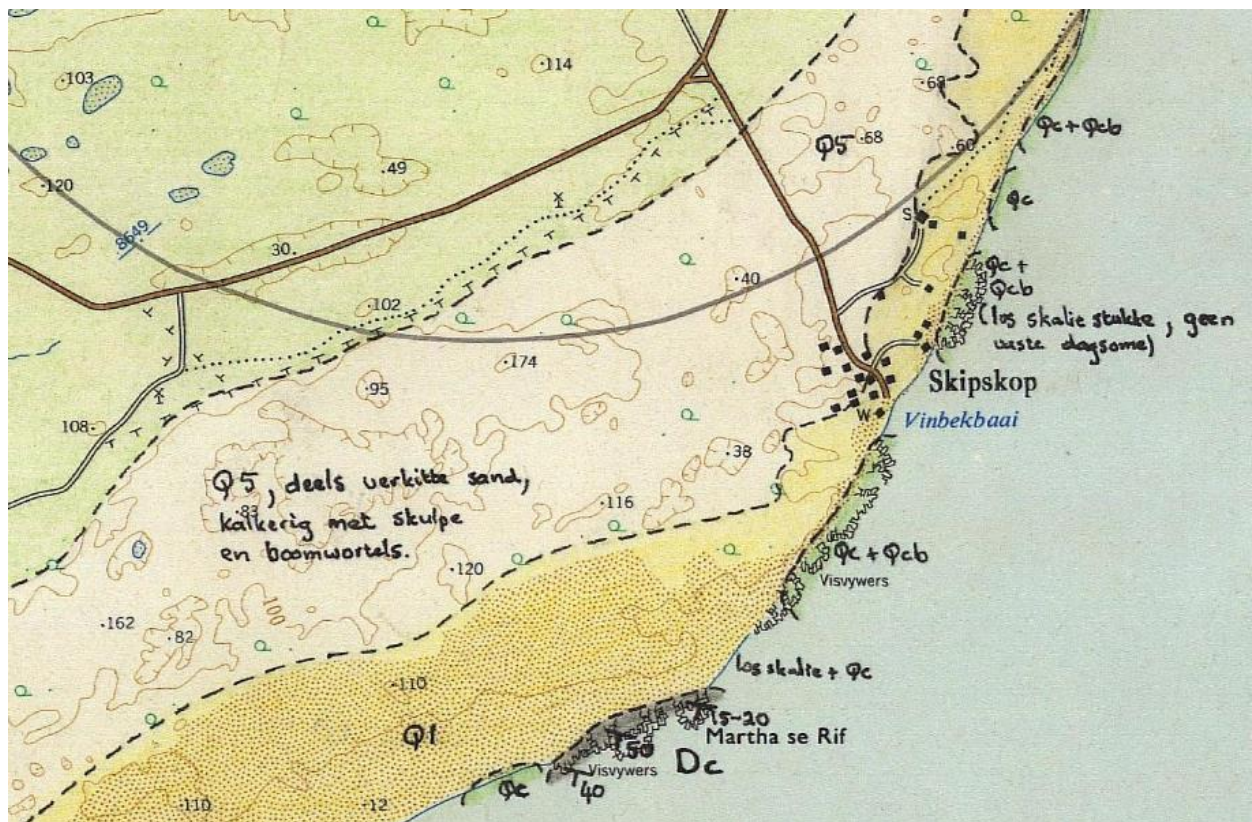


Figure 3. Geology maps of the Skipskop fish traps area: Top – Riversdale, 1:250,000, 1993; bottom - 3420CB field sheet, 1:50,000, J Malan, 1984. Dc – Bokkeveld Ceres Formation; Qw – Waenhuiskrans Formation.

Near Skipskop there are seven trap clusters, located along a ~6 km segment of the shore, containing ~45 traps in total (Figure 4). The author is unaware of any study of this series of clusters. The satellite images show the rocky belt and the traps built on it both exposed and covered, or partly covered, with sand. The clusters are described from the southwest to the northeast (Figures 5 to 11). As access to the Overberg test Range is denied, there are no ground photographs.



Figure 4. Satellite image of the Skipskop fish trap clusters (boxes, enlarged below, from southwest to northeast).

The clusters and individual traps are distinguished from satellite images (Figures 5 to 11).



Figure 5. Satellite images of Cluster 1. Top - the traps (arrows) are covered, or partly covered, with sand; bottom – the traps are exposed.



Figure 6. Satellite images of Cluster 2. Top - the traps are covered, or partly covered, with sand; bottom – the traps are exposed.



Figure 7. Satellite images of Cluster 3. Top - the traps are covered, or partly covered, with sand; bottom – the traps are exposed.



Figure 8. Satellite images of Cluster 4. Top - the traps (arrows) are covered, or partly covered, with sand; bottom – the traps are exposed.



Figure 9. Satellite image of Cluster 5 when the traps are covered, or partly covered, with sand. Image taken during misty conditions.

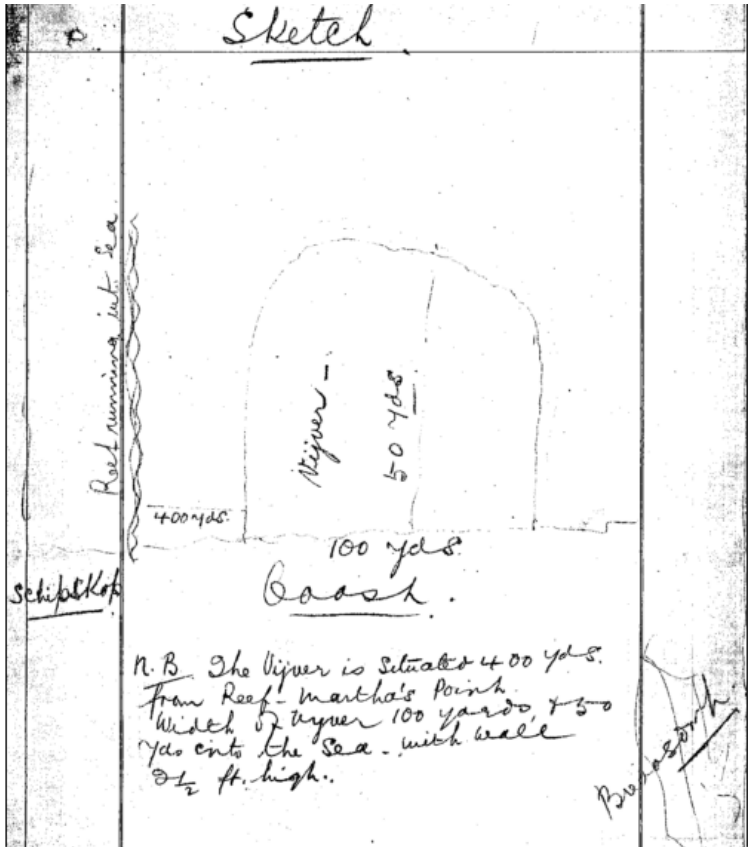


Figure 10. Satellite image of Cluster 6 when the traps are covered, or partly covered, with sand. Image taken during misty conditions.



Figure 11. Satellite image of Cluster 7 when the traps are exposed. Image taken over a misty shore.

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).



9. Plan of Fish trap of G. De Wet at Marthas Point, Skipskop. Cape Archives. PAN 55

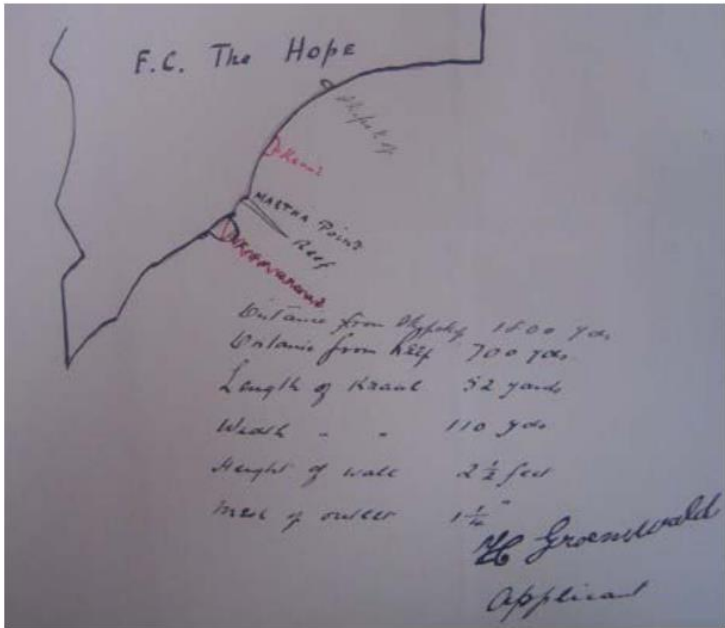


Figure 11. Plan of fish traps of H. Groenewald Cape Archives. PAN 54. K13/5.

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

Source: PJ Hine MSc Thesis, 2008.

This series of fish trap clusters and the formations which constitute the rocky belt will be studied when permit is granted by the OTR. Two ground photographs are shown below (Figure 13).



Figure 13. Top and bottom: Skipskop shore.
Source: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/skipskoppers/photos/>

Skipskop was a fishermen village for generations (Figures 14 and 15). It was abandoned when the OTR was established.



Figure 14. Oblique aerial view of Skipskop.
Source: www.denelotr.co.za



Figure 15. The village of Skipskop.
Source: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/skipskoppers/photos/>

Read about the village and its community in Appendix Y.