



After



Before

THE ROSES' WILDLIFE GARDEN

Paul De Luca and Belgro Horticulture bring nature and the built environment closer together alongside the 15th green.

For the last 11 years, Robert and Doreen Rose have lived in their magnificent house in Highgate Village, overlooking the 15th green and what previously was a somewhat nondescript duck pond. Eventually, Robert Rose got it into his head that this duck pond needed upgrading. While chatting with Linda De Luca of Random Harvest, the indigenous plant specialist in Muldersdrift, Robert discovered that her brother, Paul, was experienced in working with ponds and dams.

"It wasn't a pretty duck pond. In fact, it was more of an eyesore. Once we decided to do something about it, we set the wheels in motion straight away. Thanks to Reg Bernstein, our estate General Manager, things moved along really quickly. Reg saw

the Trustees and within a few days we had permission to go ahead," Robert explains.

The project was started on the 1st of February 2011 and was finished within 5 months. Paul De Luca took over the concept and ran with it. "When Robert briefed me, I don't think he had a clue what the final result was going to be. Before we started, their garden was confined to the surrounds of their house and the wild area beyond their garden was quite degraded. Our job was to bring nature and the built environment closer together. That's not always easy. Sometimes nature needs a bit of a nudge," Paul adds.

The nudge involved bulldozers and a total re-structure of the landscape. A series of ponds was created. These



had to be properly lined to contain the water. The right pumps and pipes had to be incorporated and a rocky link was added to allow the water to tumble down from the top pond to the ponds below.

The plants and trees, grown and supplied by Belgro, were selected from species that naturally occur in the Witwatersrand, Pilanesberg and Suikernosta regions.



During



During

"The result is that the Roses can now step out of their formal garden into this wilder environment where nature is king," Paul comments. As the plants grow and mature, the birds, insects and smaller mammals will establish themselves.



After



After



For each type of habitat, different birds are attracted and the mixture of woodland and wetland has already brought many new visitors to see what's happened here.

"We believe that Dainfern has fantastic potential and I'm hoping more residents will join in and embark on similar projects around their homes, even if they are on a smaller scale," Robert concludes. 