

From the frying pan into the fire for flamingos

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DESPERATE Roodepan residents have threatened to make flamingo spitbraais and fry flamingo fillets in an attempt to get the Northgate development up and running.

The Concerned People of Roodepan have called for a speedy resolution to the proposed Northgate housing development near Kamfer's Dam, fanning which angry community members are prepared to eat the city's famous feathered friends.

Spokesperson for the campaign Nolan Markgraaff believed the development would go a long way towards providing employment, improving infrastructure and boosting the economy.

"The Roodepan community and surrounding areas are tired of sitting on the sidelines and of being the forgotten community while the politicians are like hungry wolves. Once again they only find the road to Roodepan during an election campaign.

"A lot of promises are being made and we demand to see what our politicians are going to do.

"How is the area being uplifted when the community is not being heard and feedback is lacking?"

He requested that a webcam be set up to capture and show the world how the community was suffering due to starvation and neglect.

"When residents and poor pensioners have a problem with their telephones, they have to pay R30 for taxi fare to travel to Telkom at the mall."

Markgraaff was of the opinion that the privileged were making decisions while the interests of the community were being ignored.

"Those living in their comfort zones do not live in Roodepan. They watch flamingo chicks being fed while our children are starving."

He explained that while the

HOW TO ENJOY FLAMINGO

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WHILE the taste of flamingo meat is questionable, boiled flamingo meat and roasted flamingo tongue was actually a delicacy in ancient Rome.

Flamingo meat is also sold comparatively cheaper to chicken at markets in Mumbai.

An average bird is said to produce about one kilogramme of meat and as a rule, the flesh is said to be rather pungent and not particularly tasty. Only the feathers are pink and not the meat, and grape juice is added for colour while cooking.

The webpage www.jamesoheim.com contains an actual 2 000-year-old Roman recipe of boiled flamingo:

1. Scald the flamingo with the feathers still on.
2. Wash it and remove the feathers and other parts not meant for eating.
3. Stuff it with greens, celery

leaves, etc. and tie it to keep its shape. Coat it in lard.

4. Boil the bird in a pot of water with salt, oil, and a little vinegar.

5. Put the half-cooked bird in lard.

6. Boil the bird in a pot of water with salt, oil, and a little vinegar.

7. Put the half-cooked bird in a saucepan and brown in oil. Add a bunch of leeks and coriander. Add a little broth. Cover and continue cooking.

8. To add colour, pour in some grape juice, thickened by heating.

9. Crush some spices - pepper, cumin, coriander, laser root, mint, and rue. Moisten them with vinegar.

10. Add dates and some of the juice from the sauce pan. Stir this back into the sauce and simmer.

11. Add flour and cook until thickened. Strain and pour the sauce over the bird.

Apparently the recipe works just as well for parrot.

community supported nature conservation and preservation of flamingos, impoverished individuals were willing to kill the birds for food.

"It is becoming a matter of favouring either the flamingos or the people of Roodepan. Some very angry people in Roodepan will eat the flamingos, instead of starving to death."

The organisation has requested the public to join them in their quest and have called for conservationists, politicians and developers to hold a public meeting.

"The people on the doorstep of the project should know more than the international community yet they have not met with the people of Roodepan. At least then they can appreciate its conservation value. Right now it has no value to the jobless and hungry people," Markgraaff added.

Executive Director of BirdLife South Africa, Mark Anderson, warned that the lesser flamingo was a protected species.

"Anyone who kills them without a permit will be prosecuted and liable for a fine or even a jail sentence."

He added that the flamingos at Kamfers Dam were foraging in heavily polluted water.

"Recent water quality analyses conducted by the Save the Flamingo Association revealed exceptionally high levels of total coliforms bacteria in Kamfer's Dam's water.

"These are usually an indication of pathogens in the water, such as hepatitis, cholera and other diseases, so the public is advised not to eat any birds that originate from Kamfer's Dam and not to come into contact with the dam's water."