

Toktok Talkie

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In this new weekly column, Toktokkie muses about the desert environment and its biodiversity, be it to increase awareness and questions concerning the Namib's creatures, its ecological processes, the functions and services of nature, uses and abuses, and environmental management, all in relation to human development. Toktokkie is your fitting guide. Tenebrionid beetles (also called darkling beetles, colloquially toktokkies, because some species tap their bodies on the ground to communicate) come in many shapes, sizes and colours. Different Namib species fittingly illustrate various concepts of desert ecology. Children like to talk to these beetles as they go about their business. Children do not need a column to know what toktokkies are telling them, but some adults require interpretation. The icon shows the common Namib species *Zophosismoralesi*, aptly, Moral from a Darkling Beetle.