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"Jan van Riebeeck as Pioneering Explorer and Conservator of Natural Resources at the Cape of Good Hope (1652–62)"

Pooley, Simon

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The first decade of Dutch VOC occupation of South Africa's Cape of Good Hope has been ill served by environmental historians. An examination of the daily journals covering the first decade of settlement proves fruitful for historians interested in the origins of European exploration, exploitation and conservation of natural resources at the Cape. This settlement is moreover a unique example of seventeenth-century Dutch settlers establishing a cornucopia of food plants in the absence of indigenous agriculturalists, experimenting with species imported from the VOC's many bases. The difficulty of establishing what they may have learned from the indigenous peoples is addressed.

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