

"FRIENDS OF KIRSTENBOSCH"
NEWSLETTER – JUNE 2010
THE BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA
KIRSTENBOSCH BRANCH

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Dear Member

NEWS FROM THE KIRSTENBOSCH BRANCH OFFICE AT THE STONE COTTAGES:

**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE KIRSTENBOSCH BRANCH OF THE BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF SA WILL TAKE PLACE ON
TUESDAY 24 AUGUST 2010 AT 12 NOON IN THE KIRSTENBOSCH STONE COTTAGE (MIDDLE COTTAGE), CORNER KIRSTENBOSCH & RHODES DRIVES, NEWLANDS.**

In terms of the Constitution, serving member Mrs Janette Yeats has completed her term of office but is eligible for re-election. Nomination forms are available from the Branch office and must be submitted not less than 7 days before the meeting.

Notice of motions for consideration at the AGM must reach the Branch office 30 days before the meeting. Audited accounts will be available.

After the AGM there will be a talk by Dr Bruce McKenzie, past Executive Director of BotSoc.

Kirstenbosch Garden Fair : 20/21 March 2010

The 35th annual Garden Fair aimed for a colourful and pleasurable gardening experience in this the year of the World Cup! And a pleasant experience it was as the well oiled machinery of volunteers, Branch personnel and Kirstenbosch horticulturists (horts) led by Adam Harrower moved into gear to set the scene for this year's event.

The weather played its part as well and as the trumpeter's clarion call signalled the opening of the gates on a cool and misty Saturday morning the public rushed in with their wheelbarrows *et al* to claim their long awaited selection of plants - the colourful demonstration garden had to be re-stocked many times over!

The public - many of whom are repeat customers year after year - did not let us down despite the current economic situation and turnover exceeded the half million Rand mark over the weekend. Funds raised from this event will this year go towards up-grading and additional facilities at the Millennium Collections Nursery originally funded by Kirstenbosch Branch in the amount of R2,825m.

As convener I am, as ever, in awe of the dedication and goodwill of volunteers, horts, Branch and Kirstenbosch personnel who all come together in a voluntary capacity to make this event the success it has always been – without them it simply would not happen. I salute them one and all. *Janette Yeats*

Day Trip to Vergelegen Estate and Harold Porter Botanical Garden: members enjoyed a very interesting day trip by coach driven by ultra-competent driver Willem Esterhuysen of Gaffleys and led once again by volunteer Mrs Liz Ashton on Thursday 15 April. First stop was Vergelegen Estate in Somerset West.

This estate, originally owned by Willem Adriaan van der Stel, was bought in 1917 by Lord and Lady Phillips. Lord Phillips was the first president of the Botanical Society of South Africa when it was formed in 1913, and Lady Phillips was a great patron of the arts. She converted the cellar into a library to house her husband's vast collection of books. The estate manager guided the participants to view an enormous centuries-old yellowwood tree which is surrounded by a circle of younger yellowwood trees.

Next stop was a visit to the lovely Harold Porter Garden in Betty's Bay, followed by a fascinating visit to the nearby home of Robbie Thomas, who explained how he has managed to graft *Mimetes stokoei* with no botanical training, just sheer determination and hard work! (See article by Robbie in the June 2009 issue of *Veld & Flora*).

The British Museum in London has been featuring a South Africa Landscape, a joint project between the museum and the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew which aims to celebrate South Africa's rich biodiversity. It highlights the rich diversity of plant life from the Cape region, and the landscape celebrates the two institutions shared vision to strengthen cultural understanding and support biodiversity conservation across the world.

The South Africa Landscape can be seen there until 10 October 2010. Among the plants on display are spekboom, kokerboom, and gazanias. For more info, see the British Museum website www.britishmuseum.org.

Join the Kirstenbosch Plant Production Nursery Volunteers: there are a few vacancies available for volunteers – why not support your branch by joining a friendly group for 3 hours a week on a Tuesday morning from 9 am to 12 noon? You will meet interesting people, keep busy potting up seedlings (with a mid-morning tea/coffee break), and contribute enormously to growing plants for the display areas in Kirstenbosch and the Society's annual Kirstenbosch Garden Fair. No experience required!

Please phone the Kirstenbosch Branch office at 021-671 5468 or email: kbranch@botanicalsociety.org.za and we will get the ball rolling!

The Botanical Society Bookshops at Kirstenbosch: the following books are available at the Botanical Society bookshops at the Visitors Centre (Gate 1) and the Garden Centre (Gate 2):

Filmer's Spiders: An identification guide for Southern Africa by Martin R. Filmer revised by Norman Larsen, R135,00. This fully revised and updated book features all 63 spider families that occur in this region. A revised layout, now featuring full-colour photographs throughout – many of them new and diagrams of diagnostic features make this a quick and easy guide for use in the field. This handy format book will appeal to anybody wishing to gain insight into the daily lives of spiders.

Dig it: A straightforward, no-nonsense guide to gardening in South Africa by Scott Attfield, R250,00. This book will tell you everything need to know about planning a garden, preparing the soil, choosing plants, planting and caring, there are plenty of colourful photographs to illustrate each chapter. The pages are filled with inspiration and practical ideas that will get you down and dirty in the garden in no time.

My First book of Southern African Wildlife, Concept by Erroll Cuthbert, R190,00, It introduces young people to a selection of southern Africa's most commonly seen and fascinating wildlife species. Divided into three sections, the book features mammals, birds and reptiles. Striking full-colour illustrations are accompanied by brief descriptions in four languages, and there are visual clues to the diet, size and habitat of each creature.

***A Climate for Life – Meeting the Global Challenge* Special Price: R150,00.** It focuses on the global challenge of climate change and what we can do now and in the coming decades to dramatically reduce risks to human health, economic prosperity, and the planet's irreplaceable biodiversity. Ten chapters cover the foremost climate issues.

Evita's Kossie Sikelela by Evita Bezuidenhout, R150,00. This delightful cookbook proves it- a unique collection of mainly South African recipes and some others, lovingly presented. It includes recipes for diabetics and vegetarians, Halaal and kosher dishes. Cooking for little ones, picnics or Christmas - Evita's cookery is delectable magic.

Enquiries: Bookshops Tel. 021-762 1621/762 6466 fax 021-762 0923 email: kbranch@botanicalsociety.org.za. Also see our website www.botanicalsociety.org.za

Kirstenbosch Craft Market: the market which takes place at the Stone Cottage grounds, corner Kirstenbosch & Rhodes Drives, Newlands, is currently in the winter recess of June, July and August, and will re-open on Sunday 26 September 2010. Hours are 9 am to 3pm and proceeds from stall rentals go to the Kirstenbosch Partnership Fund. Dates are 31 October; 28 November; and 12 and 19 December 2010. Many overseas tourists visit the market either on their way to or from Kirstenbosch Garden.

A Kirstenbosch crafter recently received a phone call from a lady in Germany who had bought her craft on a previous visit and wanted to know the dates of the market so she could coincide her visit to Cape Town when the market took place!

NEWS FROM KIRSTENBOSCH BOTANICAL GARDEN:

Wednesday Talks at Kirstenbosch presented by Room to Grow, Sanlam Hall, Kirstenbosch at 10:30

- 9 June:** 'Chelsea 2010' by David Davidson, Award winning Designer/Creator Kirstenbosch Exhibit
23 June: 'Colour in the Garden' by Monique McQuillan, Horticulturist Kirstenbosch, Herbaceous Borders
7 July: 'Water Working Wonderfully' by Donovan Gillman, Room to Grow
21 July: 'An Artist in the Garden, Moses Tladi and the South African landscape' by Angela Lloyd, Speaker and Author
4 August: 'Creating Garden Rooms for Outdoor Living' by Paul Paarman, Soul Gardens by Paul Paarman
18 August: 'Herbalicious' Exciting, Indulgent Romantic Spice up your life with inspiring herbal delicacies by Marcel Waters, President Cape Herb Group
1 September: 'Cycads and Ferns' by Phakamani Xaba, Horticulturist, Kirstenbosch
15 September: 'Spiders' by Norman Larsen, Arachnologist and Photographer
29 September: 'Wisley Through the Years' by Linda Dolan, Plant Lover/RHS retiree

Enquiries: Cathy Abbott, tel. 021-465 6440/072-201 2535 cathya@wol.co.za.

Please note that this programme is subject to change or cancellation without prior notice.

Tessa van Rooyen has retired and Catherine Gribble is the new branch secretary. We wish Catherine every success and many happy years at Kirstenbosch Branch.