

**KOGELBERG
Branch of the Botanical Society of SA**

**Newsletter:
February 2013**

News Editors: Ed & Merran Silberbauer

**THE BATTLE OF BETTY'S BAY
ROUND 599**

The next attack takes place on Sunday 3rd March 2013, from 9am to noon
VENUE: As for last month. **East** of the gate to the property "Peter John" where the road which used to go through to Hangklip and Pringle Bay now ends.

TALKS

Saturday 16th February 2013 at 6p.m. THERE HAS BEEN A CHANGE OF VENUE TO THE COMMUNITY HALL PRINGLE BAY. As you enter Pringle Bay, pass the camera and the hall is on your right. Rachel Saunders will talk on "**Flower hunting in southern Namibia and Namaqualand**". Rachel, a microbiologist, and her husband Rob, a horticulturalist, collect, cultivate and export worldwide indigenous seeds through their business Silverhill Seeds.

At all talks a voluntary collection is taken and liquid refreshments are served.

Regretfully the April talk has not been confirmed. Please read the next newsletter and watch for the posters in the villages.

Contact Merrilee: 028 2729314.

WALK SATURDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2013.

The walkers will leave the parking area of the Harold Porter Gardens at **8.30a.m.** (which is earlier than usual). Proceed to Jock's Bay and walk round the coast to return via the greenbelt. For further information please contact Barbara 0082 337 9244 or Betsey 028 272 9761.

REPORT ON HACK NO 598

After 17mm of rain during the night it looked as if the hack would be a washout. A washout it certainly was not – 50 hackers true and bold climbed into the lower dune area of the Blesberg sowing huge destruction amongst the rooikrans. The supply of weapons only just made it.

With 50 years of hacking behind us, we are still at it – a wonderful tribute to Denys Heesom who started the whole show going on Sunday 3rd February 1963. The tea and sandwich ladies

Christine and Louise were unphased by the huge gathering and did us proud. The aftermath took place soon after tea. A truly glorious occasion held in the Nivenia Hall which the curator of the Harold Porter Botanical Garden lent us use free of charge. A special thank you to Bernie Carolus.

A toothsome spit braai, wonderful salads and refreshments were well received by our honoured guests which included her worship the Mayor of the Overstrand, and the President of BotSoc S.A. and of course the honoured hackers, past and present. A friendly and enjoyable gathering, the climax of which was the presentation by President Ted Oliver of an Honorary Life Membership of the Botanical Society of S.A. award to Merran for her contribution to the running of the Kogelberg Branch. We now have three Life Members in our midst – Jill Attwell, Avril Nunn and Merran.

Christine Dreyer made the sandwiches and Louise Digby assisted by daughter-in-law Mandy made the tea. Amber Digby (9) and Matthew Lake(10) accompanied them. From the bushes emerged:- Peter Rondi, Tony Cunningham, Pieter de Waal, Tom Dreyer, Jill Attwell, Karin Smith with friend Cilla Nystrom Larsson, Barbara Jenman, David Bossenger, John & Andrea Benn, Allan & Helene Heydorn, Frik Potgieter, Jan & Betsey Joubert, Caroline Joubert, John McNaught Davis, John Whitehead, Malcolm Pollard, Carol Wilson, Jane Dowie Dunn with son Bill and grandchildren Jared, Jade and Jethro, Neil Blackshaw, David & Jane Hofmeyr, Maarten & Hilary Mauve with son and daughter visiting from overseas, Charlyn Vosloo, Denis Sifris, James Myhre, Peter Digby, Caroline, Lewis, James and Ed Silberbauer. Photographing the 50 year milestone hack was Melanie Silberbauer.

Ed Silberbauer. Convenor.

PRINGLE BAY HACK NO 81

On 27th January 2013 the Hack Group again attacked the Australian Myrtle growing in properties along Peak Road. Considerable progress was made.

The hackers present were Ed Silberbauer, Tom Dreyer, Frik Potgieter, Sue Fielden, Carol Wilson, Neil and Penny Berens, Ian Cushny and John Whitehead. The mid-morning coffee and sandwiches were provided by Marion Cushny and Connie Lee. Connie was staying in Pringle Bay for a short period and it was great to see her at the Hack.

The next hack will be on Sunday 24th February 2013.

As usual we will meet on the pavement opposite Drostersgat, in Central Avenue, Pringle Bay, at 08:30 and will then proceed to the hack site. Everyone who would like to help rid Pringle Bay of alien vegetation will be welcome. The hack stops at 11:30. Hacking tools are provided. Contact John at (028) 273 8807 or Ian at (028) 273 8589, or just turn up at the meeting point.

John Whitehead, Convenor.

THE CAPE ORCHIDS

A record crowd was captivated by William Liltved's account of this Major Opus – The Cape Orchids which he and co author Steven Johnson spent almost 20 years writing. The incredible physical energy spent during the many mountain trips puts these two men among the mountain climbing heroes as well as botanical ones. Appalling weather, very often burnt veld and summer heat, all must have added to the discomfort. But as William said, it was always worth it! Apart from their beauty and unique shapes, orchids are one of the most diverse species where self-pollination takes place in certain species, and they appear to be able to grow in almost any type of soil. Semi desert, marshes or permanent water all support these plants. Tribute was paid to several people whose contributions were priceless, among whom were Dr Ted Oliver and Mr Louis Mostert. The former is almost legend in his own time in his field, the Ericaceae. The latter had a farm between Wolsley and Ceres. Part of this farm was kept in its natural state and never ploughed. The grazing sheep at certain times of the year appeared to enhance the growth of the wild plants, many of which were orchids. After he retired Louis settled in Kleinmond and contributed greatly by discovering several important orchids and other species, one of which an *Ixia*, is named after him. William Liltved began his scientific career as a marine biologist, a chance sighting of a few species of orchid during one of his outings in the western Cape, sparked what will become a major opus, as well as an important addition to the vast Cape floral literature.

William gave us some fascinating information as well as several illustrations of the many books written in former years. Long before the computer age, these books are works of art. The books written by Dr Harry Bolus whose monographs have inspired generations of botanists. Orchids of the Cape Peninsula, was published in 1888. This and his other books were published privately by Bolus. The quality and clarity of these virtually hand printed texts is astounding given the comparatively primitive state of printing in South Africa at this time. This new publication The Cape Orchids, celebrates the life and botanical work of this great botanist. Tribute was paid to the artist Fay Anderson who contributed several excellent illustrations, despite the damage done to her home and studio by a fire, which necessitated her having to re paint several pictures.

The Cape and its mountains are considered a biodiversity hot spot as well as a World Heritage site. Many factors including fire in fynbos, and the damaging consequences when fires are too frequent, habitat destruction through agriculture, urbanisation and invasive alien plants, all add to the problem. Many fire dependant species of orchid are rarely seen and are therefore poorly documented.

The excellent photographs of the bewildering array of shapes and sizes of these amazing plants, made this talk fascinating, and a good indication of the quality of this huge body of work.

Penny Palmer

FLOWER OF THE MONTH

A surprise to most people is that fynbos has an indigenous myrtle in the family *Myrtaceae*. Commonly known as the Cape-gum or lance-leaf myrtle, *Metrosideros angustifolia* is a fairly undistinguished shrub that can grow to form a small tree along mountain watercourses. The

collection creamy coloured flowers and later rounded capsules are similar in their appearance to the exotic eucalyptus, only smaller. An interesting article on the species Pacific islands connection was printed in the Veld & Flora June 2006 as a feature title "Fynbos Oddity". See Photo on page 240 BotSoc Guide No. 5.

Amida Johns.

AWARD OF HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP TO MERRAN

Honorary Life Membership is the highest honour available to members of the Botanical Society of SA; when Ted Oliver hung the blue-ribboned medal on Merran she became one of only fifteen in the country. The nomination from the branch was passed unanimously by Council in July and the AGM in September; somehow this was kept secret from Merran. She has rendered exceptional service to this branch making an all-round contribution sustained over many years; a very worthy recipient.

Merrilee Berrisford, Chairman.

CENTENARY BRANDED BOTANICAL SOCIETY CLOTHING

Kirstenbosch Branch has produced a wide range of items to mark the centenary of BotSoc which are available from the BotSoc's bookshop at Kirstenbosch. All are embossed with a stitched BotSoc logo, '100' and the words Botanical Society of South Africa. The items range from a picnic blanket to hats, T shirts, jackets, vests, scarf in sizes from toddler to adult, both for men and women. Prices from R59 (scarf) to R459 (mens softshell zip thru Hiking jacket). Contact details 021 762 1621 or email a.matthews@botanicalsociety.org.za

RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

Month	January	2012	2013
Rainfall mm		42,2	44
Temp, °C	Max	34	33
	Min	15,5	16

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/ AND/ OR STATUS OF MEMBERSHIP

If you change your address, wish to resign or change your status, please notify the Botanical Society Head Office on 021- 797 2090, as they print the labels and keep the records.

We do only the newsletter, e-mails and posting. To receive this newsletter via e-mail (and save the Branch the costs of printing, packaging and postage) send your address to merran@telkomsa.net

REMEMBER YOUR ARTICLES AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

The editors reserve the right to edit contributions.

Deadline for the next newsletter is Wednesday, 6th March 2013.

Please address all mail to : Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of SA, P.O. Box 93, Betty's Bay 7141. E-mail : merran@telkomsa.net no graphics please.