

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

**Newsletter:
October 2013**

News Editors: Ed & Merran Silberbauer

**THE BATTLE OF BETTY'S BAY
ROUND 607**

The next attack takes place on Sunday 3rd November 2013, from 9am to noon
VENUE: Wheeler Road from Porter Drive towards the Lakeside chapel.

TALKS

Saturday 19th October Bryan Havemann will talk on his life in conservation and especially his years in Rwanda as Project Manager for the Akagera National Park in Rwanda and CEO of Akagera Management Company, working with African Parks and the Rwanda government to lead the rehabilitation of Akagera. Bryan now works for NCC(Nature Conservation Corporation) as the Conservation Development Manager. **Venue Nivenia Hall. At 6p.m.**

Saturday 16th November. Michael Markovina "Crook, Line & Sinker" the overexploitation of and illegal fishing in the Indian Ocean and Africa's great lakes and the consequences.

Saturday 14th December in the morning at 10a.m. The Cape Leopard Trust Boland project.

At all talks a voluntary collection will be taken and at evening talks there will be liquid refreshments. Please see the posters for any possible change of venue for the talks or contact Merrilee 028 272 9314.

WALK SATURDAY 19TH OCTOBER

Amida Johns will lead a walk to the Palmiet valley to see the yellow *Aspalathus*, also a special protea and, hopefully, the Caledon Bluebells. Meet at HPG at 9am or at the Office Kogelberg Reserve at 9.15am. Those with Wild cards should bring them. Contact Merrilee Berrisford 028 272 9314.

REPORT ON HACK NO 606

At last; the capricious and uncooperative weather cleared up sufficiently for the hardened and battle worn troops to plough into the leucadendrons and remove large stands of rooikrans both large and small. Heavy but rewarding work. We have been stymied on three occasions by bad weather since June, making rooikrans 30 % ahead of the game so far this year. Next hack. All that rooikrans between Wheeler road and the Kleinrondevlei. We will be skirting Lakeside Church, so muffle the arms in that area!

Emerging from the thick bush for life supporting tea were:- Maarten & Hilary Mauve, Barbara

Jenman, Pieter de Waal, Frik Potgieter, John Whitehead, David Bossenger, Tom Dreyer, John & Andrea Benn, Caroline and Lewis Silberbauer who brought Paul Perpeet a wood technology student from Munich who is doing a 6 month practical in the Cape, and Ed Silberbauer. Christine Dreyer made the sandwiches and Merran Silberbauer the tea.

Ed Silberbauer, Convenor.

PRINGLE BAY HACK NO 88

On Sunday 29th September 2013 the Hack Group again concentrated on Australian Myrtle, Rooikrans and pine trees on the public reserve bordering on Carla Road. Progress was made but more hacks will be necessary. The hackers present were Frik Potgieter, Sue Folb, Penny and Neil Berens, Ian Cushny, Jan Joubert, Chris Berens, Tom Dreyer, Andy James, Ivan Staegmann and his grandson and John Whitehead. The mid-morning coffee and sandwiches were provided by Marion Cushny.

The next hack will be on Sunday 27th October, 2013. As usual we will meet on the pavement opposite Drosters Centre, 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.

FYNBOS GARDENING THE SUMMER GARDEN

The Festive Season is the time when we would love our gardens to be full of colour and to look really pretty, so that our visitors can enjoy the garden as well as the beach. Unfortunately this time of the year the weather is not only hot and dry but often the South Easter blasts us unceasingly. Most of the showy Fynbos has flowers during the winter and spring months. Here are a few suggestions as to how to maximize the use of the garden during the summer months.

First and foremost one needs to plant trees to create a windbreak. Be careful not to obscure the view, but rather use the trees to create “rooms” in the garden, and to “frame” the best views. After years of experience I have found that the “wild camphor” or *Tarchonanthus camphoratus* works best in the dry areas, and can withstand our wild salt-laden winds. One could also use the “wild olive” *Olea europea subspecies africana* and the “wild plum” *Harpephyllum caffrum* to create a change in heights and textures. All these trees either provide shelter and/or fruit for the birds. Should one wish to create a more formal look in the garden plant *Rhus crenata* as a hedge. This shrub/tree has small clear green leaves and although it is slow to get established is easy to clip to the shape wished (the birds also enjoy the seeds) I have used this to create “rooms” in the garden, between the trees, so that one can always find a spot out of the wind.

To make the garden interesting establish shrubbery of differing heights and textures in front of the trees, in front of this establish smaller flowering plants and ground covers. For instance include among the taller plants ones that **flower in summer** like *Protea repens* (the summer flowering red variety), *L sp oleifolium*, *Aulax umbellate*, Salvia species, *Halleria elliptica*, *Polygala myrtifolia*, *Anisodonteia scabrosa*. In sheltered places you could pop in a plumbago for a contrasting blue.

In Wetter gardens you could plant *Agathosma odoratissima* (bree blaar boegoe), or *Brunia stokoei*. To the fore of these place lower growing plants like *Kniphofia tabularis* or *K. uvaria* (red hot pokers), Plant the lovely pink flowering *Orphium frutescens* in front they will make a good show for Christmas, pinch out the growing tips for a more compact bush. If you wish for a ground cover; try the yellow flowering ground hugging *Monopsis lutea*.

In Drier gardens: Plant here and there a clump of aloes for a change of texture and heights. *Felicia aethiopica* has blue daisies on and off all year, *Lessertia (sutherlandi) frutescens* has red pea like flowers and softly shaded balloon-like seed pods, *Crassula coccinea* has gloriously crimson flower heads at Christmas time, and a grouping of *Cotyledon orbiculata* (pigs ears/plakkies) will provide you with apricot colored bells. Choose plants with silvery colored leaves which will create a lovely contrast to the greens in the garden...even when not flowering. Other plants which should give your garden summer color..... Summer flowering *pelargonium* species, *Agapanthus africanus* with its strap like leaves to give a year round contrast in texture, *Erepsia anceps* (altydvygie), *Nivenia stoeki*, *Watsonia angusta*, *Watsonia schlechteri*, *Gladiolis nerineoides* (the lovely gold dusted nerine) Remember...porcupines love bulbs.....perhaps plant them in pots on your patio.

GOOD GRASS:*Buffalo grass* is drought resistant...mixed in with the indigenous fine kweek you get a softer lawn. Regular mowing means that the lawn does not become coarse.

BAD GRASS.....WATER GUZZLING KIKUYU Questions to barnacle@maxitec.co.za

Jenny B.

SNAIL vs HYDROPOWER

I am sure that many who came to this most interesting talk wondered what the possible connection would be. The answer was eventually revealed.

Professor Richard Fuggle spoke about an area in Tanzania, the Lake Tanganika area south of Lake Victoria. Beautiful and largely unexplored, some 2000kms away from the coast making delivery of oil to drive a small power station impracticable. Wood for charcoal to run the power station resulted in deforestation. For many years the Tanzanian government had been seeking ways to improve living conditions and uplift the people living there.

This area contains one of the world's largest wetlands and the third largest Ramesar site, 3.3m hectares in extent. The Malagarasi River flows through it to Lake Tanganika. Seasonal floods turn the river into a torrent with numerous waterfalls. Hydro-electricity seemed a good option. As Ramesar stands for conservation the question was how to meet the needs of the people while protecting the biodiversity. Already the area was under pressure from agriculture, hunting for bushmeat, logging with unauthorised sawmills, and cattle grazing. Threats to the river system were unknown, and the area is also a chimpanzee habitat.

Government's approach to the World Bank for a loan was not successful, but the Millenium Development Challenge felt good governance needed to be encouraged and made a non repayable grant available for a hydro powered development.

A team was sent out from the USA to explore an area of waterfalls where it was proposed to

build a 3m dam to divert some of the water to an open canal. However some strange geological formations were allowing the water to flow under and through the rocks. Exploration of pools and potholes was deterred by the presence of large crocodiles. Diving gear therefore had to be used. The geology was found to be of a fractured type rock consistent with parts of the Rift Valley.

The mystery of the snail now unfolds. A small silet fish never seen before was discovered in the Ingama Falls area. Another strange catfish has mouthparts adapted to suckering onto lichen rocks, grazing like a limpet in fast flowing water. The snail, fist sized with a thick calcareous shell and endemic to a small area, was only found in the subterranean cracks, not in open water.

So in this unique area the question of biodiversity vs development arose. Are these creatures at the beginning or the end of their evolutionary process? DNA has proved them to be at the start; they cannot be allowed to become extinct. The agreement for funding has been signed. More study is now needed by engineers to find another site for a suitable dam. At the moment plans are on hold.

Andrea Benn.

SATURDAY 31st AUGUST WALK WITH AMIDA

After days of wild weather the rain mostly held off, the wind didn't. Five intrepid Benn's (Andrea, John, a granddaughter from the UK, a son with his son) and one Berrisford followed Amida up the Palmiet Valley. As always, Amida found plants to intrigue. There was a *Lebeckia*, a small yellow flower with its keel twisted making life difficult for the pollinator, an unexplained phenomenon. *Protea cordata* with its heart-shaped leaves and brown, ground-level flowers were common. Most memorably, on new veld, were stands of waving stems topped with clusters of white flowers, a *Struthiola sp.* which at dusk, Amida said, perfumed the valley.
Merrilee Berrisford

KIRSTENBOSCH BIENNALE

The Biennale exhibition of Botanical Art, held at Kirstenbosch was the most successful to date. Kogelberg Branch member, Margaret de Villiers of Hermanus, was awarded gold as was Lynda de Wet, who although not a member of our branch lives in our area. Another exhibitor had been a member of our branch- Julie Wilson while paintings by both Vicki Thomas (one of the judges) and Ibraime Hull of H.P.G.(his was the new strelizia) were on display. Congratulations to all.
Eds.

AVRIL'S LUNCH

In June, Avril Nunn, one of Kogelberg Branch's most stalwart members, now ninety years old, moved to Bridgewater Manor in Somerset West. Avril joined the original Betty's Bay Wildflower Society and was instrumental in the change to a branch of the Botsoc of SA. She's been branch chairman, a keen hacker, fierce opponent of unfriendly developments and in 2005 was the second member of the branch to be awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Society.

Avril's companions from her committee days met to say goodbye and thank you at a lunch at Louise Digby's house in Betty's Bay where Lynn Hanekom and Merran Silberbauer helped set up and everyone provided delicious food. Avril was driven to Betty's Bay by past chairman, Pauline McNaught Davis; Avril looked very happy back in Betty's Bay. Avril and her old friend, fellow nonagenarian and Honorary Life Member, Jill Attwell were both presented with BotSoc SA Certificates of Appreciation "for exceptional service to the Kogelberg Branch."

This is part of the thank you Avril emailed afterwards: "It was so lovely to see you all, to know we all have the same aims for our Society, the same love of our environment and the treasures we find at all seasons in all parts of our Floral heritage.
Merrilee Berrisford.

BRANCH CONVENTION, AGM AND GALA DINNER, SEPTEMBER 2013

The Branch Convention lasted all day; the AGM was early that evening and the 100th Birthday of BotSoc SA Gala Dinner the following night.

Mike Harper, the Chairman of the BotSoc Council ended the Convention with, "The Society is in incredibly good shape" which will be good news to all of you. There was a really good, positive spirit amongst participants; conservation is now back as the main focus of the Society. Vice-Chairman, Jeffery Manuel, who used to work in the old Conservation Unit of BotSoc and is now Deputy Director Land use and Environmental Management at SANBI, gave an excellent presentation of a draft, "Conservation Strategy for BotSoc SA" both at the Convention and AGM. When discussing "improving the ecological integrity of the landscape" Jeffery commended the Overstrand Municipality for recognising fifty years of hacking at Betty's Bay with the Grant-in-Aid". Later, in a discussion on outcomes of the proposed strategy, Mike Harper said that the fifty years of hacking at Betty's Bay had made a real difference. President Ted Oliver mentioned the fifty years of Betty's Bay Hack Group in his address to the AGM and Mike Harper mentioned it twice in his address at the Gala Dinner. You can see that once again I was a very proud participant at all the events. Well done the hackers! At the Convention, in a short report on the branch, I highlighted the Hack 50th celebration, mentioning the Mayor's presence and the Grant-in-Aid; the award of Honorary Life Membership to Merran; and the celebration of the 100th birthday of BotSoc and Kirstenbosch.

I spoke of how our donation of Afrikaans Flower Guides had been especially welcomed by Afrikaans speaking staff at Harold Porter and local school heads. The chairman commented that this indicated the value of publications in languages other than English. We are now giving the Guides to the seven Groen Sebenza incubants * and two students at Harold Porter I ended by saying we could not have our monthly programme without the contributions of many; it is the big Kogelberg team that gives the branch its vitality.

Jeffery Manuel's Conservation Strategy proposal is available, I am not attaching as it has a number of photographs but if anyone is interested I can forward it. The three components of the Conservation Strategy were suggested as being Conservation itself, Education and Outreach. It is hoped that there is going to be a new staff member appointed at Head Office who will be the co-ordinator of conservation efforts of the branches and that there will be money available to

kick-start these projects.

The auditor, Richard Browne reported that the Society is financially sound. The chairman and treasurer spoke about a proposed change to Membership funding which was discussed. Membership recruitment and retention efforts by branches and the head office have resulted in an overall increase in members since last year.

The last item on the agenda of the Convention was “Honours and Awards Awareness”. Ted Oliver explained that this Committee has been reinstated and consists of John Rourke, Abri Meiring and himself. Details of this year’s winners of medals were announced and will be in Veld and Flora. A new award has been created, the Centenary Gold Medal to be presented at the Gala Dinner

There were four outstanding matters at the AGM: the announcement that Ted Oliver was not standing for a further term as President; there had been no nominations for President but it is believed that a very suitable candidate is likely to agree to be the next one. Abri Meiring gave a warm and appreciative speech of thanks to Ted (I later publicly thanked him for being an active supporter of Kogelberg Branch). Then there was the unanimous vote of approval for the awarding of Honorary Life Membership to Dr Eugene Moll and Dr Bruce McKenzie (Ted said there have been only fifty Honorary Life Members, starting with the widow of Pearson when she left Kirstenbosch. Our branch has three). Third item of note was the carrying of a proposal by Janette Yeats that the current constitution which is seen to be flawed be reviewed. Toni Xaba and Richard Boon have retired from the Council; Frank Webb of Lowveld Branch and Andrew Blackmore from KZN were nominated and will serve on the Council. Frank’s contributions to the Convention indicate that he will be an asset to the Council. Andrew is highly recommended; he has two masters degrees both in subjects pertinent to BotSoc’s mission.

For me, the highlight of the Gala Dinner was the presentation of the Centenary Gold Medal to Emeritus Professor Brian Huntley and Dr Ernst van Jaarsveld. Abri Meiring gave glowing citations, the medals were presented by Ted Oliver; both men were greeted by very enthusiastic standing ovations. Kogelberg Branch is privileged to have had both of them as speakers at our monthly talks.

I think the many celebrations and projects for the Centenary have injected this very positive spirit into the Society. I came away feeling the days had been well-spent and of course, proud to be a member of Kogelberg Branch.
Merrilee Berrisford, Chairman.

*Groen Sebenza incubants are new matriculants or new graduates who are employed for two and a half-years to gain skills in the green industry. This job-creation initiative is funded by the Development Bank of SA; SANBI oversees the project.

ANTARCTICA – A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY”
a fund-raising talk by Andrew Schofield

We have all enjoyed Andrew’s DVDs of Betty’s Bay and the Whale Coast, but none of them

prepared us for the feast of photography brought to a warm and cheerful Crassula Hall on a cold Saturday night. Andrew wowed us with stills, videos and speeded up movie shots which gave us a fantastic impression of the workings of an ice-breaker in thick pack-ice.

Invited to travel on SA Agulhas II on her 3 month maiden voyage as the ship's ornithologist, Andrew seized the opportunity to experience everything that 3 months in Antarctica could offer. Braving the Roaring 40's, the Furious 50's and the Screaming 60's on the ship's passage due south, his photographs of the might and fury of the Southern Ocean were daunting.

We laughed at the Crossing the Line ceremony where all new travellers were inducted as OAF's – first they were doused with icy seawater, then King Neptune broke an egg on each person's head, Mrs Neptune rubbed flour into it, then a toilet seat was placed round the person's neck and he was then covered in fermented kitchen scraps! Finally the Nurse, armed with a huge syringe, squirted a concoction of chilli vinegar and garlic into the traveller's mouth! What a hard way to become a member of the "Order of Antarctic Fellowship".

After rough seas and being stuck in the ice, the Agulhas arrived at the German Neumeyer Base, where personnel and provisions were dropped. The voyage continued east, along Antarctica's north shore to Penguin Butka, from where polar fuel and supplies and personnel to the SANAE base were dropped by helicopter for a 14 month stint, and scientists and staff returning to SA were collected. Andrew was offered a few days at the base and found it fascinating. His description of garbage and human waste management was interesting. Every nation that has a base in Antarctica is required to remove every single piece of garbage in sealed containers, with recyclable waste suitably marked, and human waste, including used water, also shipped out from this pristine continent.

All through the voyage Andrew was identifying, counting and photographing birds. He saw Snow Petrels, Storm Petrels, and Antarctic Petrels; South Polar Skuas and Prions, and every conceivable type of Penguin from the little Adelies and Chinstraps to Gentoos, Kings and Emperor Penguins. Penguin nurseries with 700,000 birds were not unusual. He saw Leopard Seals, Fur Seals and Elephant Seals, whales of every description from massive Blue Whales to Minkes, as well as Fin, Humpback and our own Southern Right Whales.

On one occasion, the ship passed an ice-shelf with a line of holes in it. Asked by some of the students what had created the holes, our intrepid traveller (who is very quick-witted), told them that they were excavated by Greater Antarctic Mole Rats! He then e-mailed his wife Simmy to send him some photos of our SA Mole Rats, huge teeth well displayed. The students were completely taken in by the story, and it was only some days later when they asked Andrew what the Mole Rats ate, and he replied "Penguins" that someone "smelt a rat" and called him on the story. Told with Andrew's inimitable sense of humour, this had the hall roaring with laughter.

With personnel transferred, polar fuel delivered and waste collected, it was time for the Agulhas II to head north once more. She made her way through the South Shetland Islands, past Bellinghausen and many other islands, to South Georgia and up the fjord to Grytviken. Here Andrew celebrated the memory of Ernest Henry Shackleton, and mourned the thousands of whales killed every year at this Norwegian whaling station – the beach here is littered with

innumerable whale bones. Here, too, he saw a pair of South Georgian Pintails, which are carnivorous ducks!

We were treated to stunning photographs of the natural beauty of the White Continent, from ice shelves to snowfields, from icebergs to million-year old lakes; and as it was a Botsoc talk, we also saw photos of the plants that grow so far down south – a miniature tree, a species of grass, and a variety of lichens which cling to the rocks.

Few of us will ever venture down to Antarctica, but the talk that Andrew gave to a good crowd of 80 people was the next best thing, and was greatly enjoyed by all members and friends.

Funds raised are to be donated to the Betty's Bay Hack, to celebrate their 50th anniversary, and to thank them for their tireless battle against the aliens.

Judy New.

FUNDRAISER THANK-YOUS

Saturday 31st August's Fundraiser at Crassula Hall was another great social event in Betty's Bay. As always there is a team deserving our thanks. First, a very big thank you to Andrew Schofield for giving his time and an excellent presentation; then to Judy New for organising the speaker, the tickets, the wine; to Sally McConnell and the gang who provided warm and tasty food. The Ayama wine was specially good and was all donated by Chris & Judy New and Michele & Attilio Dalpiaz, the New's Italian 'family' and successors at the Paarl farm - a huge thank you to them. Thank you to Clipclop (Chris and Fiona Berens) who again donated a gifts for the speaker and others. Members were barmen, they lugged along gas heaters, displayed hack tools (funds raised will buy new ones) and performed all sorts of useful deeds. The final amount is approaching R5000.
Merrilee Berrisford.

RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

Month	September	2012	2013
Rainfall mm		106,7	186
Temp, °C	Max	30	33 (bergwind!)
	Min	7	6

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 November 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.