

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

**Newsletter:
April 2014**

News Editors: Ed & Merran Silberbauer

**THE BATTLE OF BETTY'S BAY
ROUND 613**

The next attack takes place on Sunday 4th May 2014, from 9am to noon
VENUE: As before, Lakeside Drive off Porter Drive.

TALKS

Saturday 19th April. Reducing the risk of future fire disasters in the face of climate change in the fynbos biome by Tessa Oliver. This is the Easter weekend and we hope many weekenders will join us, as we are vulnerable to fires. In the Nivenia Hall at 6p.m.

Saturday 17th May. Professor Ansuya Chinsamy Turin, a paleobiologist at UCT will speak on **“The Evolution of Birds”** also in the Nivenia Hall at 6p.m.

Saturday 21st June. Dick Stroh will talk on the **Helderberg Fire Record**, a comprehensive account of the terrain before, during and after fires.

At all talks a voluntary collection will be taken and there will be liquid refreshments. Please check the posters for possible changes of venue.

Contact Merrilee 028 272 9314.

WALK

Please note that there will be NO walk in April .

DISCLAIMER

All participants in BotSoc events do so at their own risk. Whereas those in charge will do everything possible to ensure the safety of all participants, they cannot be held responsible in the event of unforeseen mishaps.

REPORT ON HACK NO 612

A very good attendance considering the awful terrain and hot berg wind. Mainly chainsaw work and there were many machine guns and targets galore. The light brigade was involved mainly in keeping the chainsaw drivers free of having to doctor the stumps of the fallen enemy. A very efficient field force but the thick bush , dodder and heat caused the entire army to look somewhat

bushed by the tea break. Next month, back there again!

A multinational group of hackers gathered for tea and sandwiches, Swallows Tony Cunningham from Australia, Peter Rondi from Canada and Sue Fielden with visiting cousin Paddy Jerman both from the UK. Increasing the number of nationalities was one of our regular hackers, Karin Smith who hails from Sweden and we welcomed Jean Sparg from Plettenberg Bay recently settled in Kleinmond. Others enjoying Louise Digby's sandwiches were Pieter de Waal, Barbara Jenman, Peter & Merrilee Berrisford, Jan & Betsey Joubert, Tom Dreyer, Frik Potgieter, John Whitehead, Lewis, Caroline, James and Ed Silberbauer. Merran Silberbauer made the tea.

Ed Silberbauer, Convenor.

PRINGLE BAY HACK NO 93

On Sunday 30th March 2014 the Hack Group removed Rooikrantz and Australian Myrtle on the public property and adjacent erven along Point Rd between Hangklip Road and High Level Rd.

The hackers present were Frik Potgieter, Edward Silberbauer, Tom Dreyer, Sue Fielden, Sue Folb, Penny and Neil Berens, Charles Hector, Carol Wilson, Andy James, Natalie and Daniel Swartling and John Whitehead.

The very welcome mid-morning coffee and sandwiches were provided by Marion and Ian Cushny.

The next hack will be on Sunday 27th April 2014.

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. The hack stops at 11:30. Everyone who would like to help rid Pringle Bay of alien vegetation will be welcome. 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 ON THE DUNES

When one has a home on the seafront, you are faced with a daunting task if you want to create a garden. The beach sand is limey with the residue from sea shells (high pH) and does not hold nutrients, let alone water for long, because there is virtually no organic matter in it. The sun and wind leach the moisture from plant and sand (note I do not say soil).

I will mention in this article some plants which can survive these conditions. However I urge you to only start planting after Easter when the winter rains are beginning, and the days are cooler. You will have to purchase as much compost as you can afford, and you will need to water regularly in order to give the plants a chance to establish themselves. Once the plants look settled in you can wean them off the water, and trust nature to do the rest. **PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT IT OFTEN TAKES TWO YEARS FOR THE PLANTS TO "TAKE OFF" ESPECIALLY THE TREES.** Regular feeding with organic food does help things along.

All the plants itemized below can handle the salt in the wind which often does more damage to the plants than the wind itself.

Firstly I suggest that you plant **WINDBREAK TREES**, making sure to “frame your view”. *Tarchonanthus camphorates* (wild camphor), *Brachaeleana discolor* (wild silver oak) and *Sideroxylon inerme* (milkwood) seem to work best, near to the beach.

Shrubs that can also grown to form a **GOOD HEDGE** are the Rhus species. I prefer to use *Rhus crenata* because it has tiny fresh green leaves and can be trimmed to form a neat hedge or be kept in shape by trimming. For security you can plan the multistemmed *Carrissa bispinosa* (num num), the thorns will keep out intruders of the two legged kind, but the baboons love the fruit. This small tree / shrub is most attractive with its fresh green leaves, white star like flowers and red fruit. I prune one of mine to create an umbrella shaped small tree, under which I plant shade loving shrubs.

FOCAL PLANTS: The striking *Aloe thraskii* (coastal aloe) has a tall single trunk and bears beautiful yellow/gold flowers. *Aloe arborescens* will thrive and provide winter colour in the garden and nectar for the sunbirds.

HARDY SHRUBS: Pioneer plants like *Chrysanthemoides monilifera* (bietou) and *Metalasia muricata* (blombos) will establish themselves naturally. You could select a few to provide shelter for the plants you bring in, but take out those that are growing in inappropriate places. These plants tend to take over so remove them once your other plants are established.

Other shrubs you can buy are *Polygala myrtifolia* (2m) or the dwarf *polygala* easily available commercially. *Coleonema species* (confetti bushes) and the delightful *phylica ericoides* which forms small dense rounded bushes (1m) covered with white flowers. *Pelargonium cucullatum* (pink flowers), *Salvia africana-lutea* with brick coloured flowers beloved by the sunbirds, *Salvia africana-caerulea/ S chamelaeagea* (blue flowers) These plants need to be trimmed back after flowering or they get “leggy” Some of the common restios also do well in the dune sand.

GROUND COVERS: *Cotyledon orbiculata* (plakkies) , *Pelargonium capitatum*, *Geranium incanum*, *Hermannia angularis*, *Gazania rigens* (spreading varieties) both the grey leaved and the green leaved varieties, *Osteospermum* (try taking a few cuttings of the succulent one that is covered with masses of white daisies and which grows just above the high water mark, particularly in Betty's Bay)

HERBS FOR THE KITCHEN grown in pots and which can cope well with the conditions are: Rosemary, Lavender, Mint (under a tap), oreganum, even chives and parsley if you give them some protection.

A FYNBOS GARDEN IS NOT A NO MAINTENANCE GARDEN. Generally speaking it is wise to prune after flowering, to prevent the plants from becoming straggly. Some plants will swamp others and need to be cut back strongly, an exception to this are the dense compact plants, Trees can be pruned to shape and in this way you can keep them under control. Trees like the wild camphor tend to seed themselves in damp places but the seedlings are easy to remove

when small. Keep your eyes open as you wander and enjoy your little bit of nature. Your garden needs to be managed...not manicured, and you will enjoy all the “visitors” in the form of birds and little animals that make your garden home.

Jenny B.

MEMBERSHIP: A MESSAGE FROM HEAD OFFICE.

BotSoc members gain free entry to all SANBI National Botanical Gardens in SA, but are required to present a valid membership card at the entrance. In addition, members may be required to provide proof of identity. BotSoc membership cards are not transferable. Remember to renew your membership before it expires. If you don't receive your new card within a month, please contact the Head Office at +27 (0) 21 797 2090. New membership and renewals can be paid by cheque, credit card or online at www.botanicalsociety.org.za . Three accounts are sent via post and/or email, through the month in an effort to inform our members of their renewal date and methods of payment. Please renew membership on receipt of the first account in order to enjoy continued free entry to NBGs. **Please note that a non-refundable entry fee will be payable (to SANBI) by members not in possession of a valid BotSoc membership card.**

BRAAI FOR CONSERVATION

Briquettes and charcoal made from Invasive Alien Material are produced by Safari and stocked by Penguin Place, Betty's Bay. For more information go to www.safaribraai.co.za, or e-mail:- info@safaribraai.co.za.

Jan Joubert.

RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURES

Month	March	2013	2014
Rainfall mm		41,5	67,6
Temp, °C	Max	32	39
	Min	14	14

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 Tuesday, 6th May 2014

Please address all mail to : Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of SA, P.O. Box 85, Betty's Bay 7141. E-mail : merran@telkomsa.net no graphics please.