



# CHS NEWS

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OCTOBER 2014

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## **MONTHLY MEETING**

**Mon, 3 November 2014 at 20:00** at The Athenaeum, Newlands  
(R8 for members and R20 for visitors)

### ***ISLANDS ON THE EDGE – A BOTANICAL RAMBLE ON THE ISLANDS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM***

David Davidson will tell us what he was up to after Chelsea this year. It's sure to be as interesting and entertaining as his previous talks.

## **NEXT OUTING**

**Wed, 19 November at 10:30:** Do the Hotel Verde Garden Tour – the Greenest Hotel in Africa! – with landscape designer, James Fisk, who gave us a very fascinating talk at our September meeting. This promises to be a carbon neutral (guilt free) experience. For some inspirational ideas for vertical gardens, take a look at the photos on the home page of [wallflore.nl](http://wallflore.nl).

At the Hotel's request, members are encouraged to stay after the tour to enjoy a delicious luncheon at the Hotel's restaurant. The menu can be requested electronically from Glenda (2MB pdf). Those who are keen must please do their own individual bookings.

Limited to 30 members. Please let Glenda have your name by no later than 14 October.

## **FINAL GATHERING OF THE YEAR**

This takes the form of our annual **CHS Christmas Party on Monday, December 1, at 7pm**

This splendid event gets better and better every year – and this year a nominal charge of R10 per member will go to purchasing the necessary compost and fertilizers needed for the gardens at the Vera School for Autistic Learners. Another deserving recipient will be chosen for our 2015 event.

The CHS will also provide all liquid refreshments to accompany the delicious contributions from you, the members.

As the Stewarts are away until 24 November, Jane Robertson has kindly volunteered to take bookings. She can be reached at 021-794-0208 or [janerobertson.mail@gmail.com](mailto:janerobertson.mail@gmail.com).

## **WELCOME TO ...**

... Reina Ambor, Lisa Vicini (Conradie) and Nell Kappers, who have returned to the CHS fold, as well as Clare Faure and Paul Odendaal, all of whom signed up at our recent Flower and Garden Show. We trust they will spend many happy years with the CHS.

## **COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Your Chairman is pleased to announce that the CHS Committee now has a full complement of members with Jane Robertson and Vicki Hitzeroth joining the ranks.

## **REPORT BACK**

### **October Plant Table:**

Neutrog has been around for a long time and we've been happily using it because their products are "organic". Jenny had recently attended a talk on their products and had this to tell us:

"Neutrog has Sudden Impact for roses and another one for lawns.

The one for lawns has a breakdown of 8:1:7 – so is still very high in nitrogen and has some phosphates and potash as well.

But, Sudden Impact is not purely organic like the original Neutrog, which is just chicken manure. They have added in organic chemicals to boost the nutritional level so the one for roses will make them and other flowering plants flower because they need more phosphates and potash and less nitrogen.

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So these two fertilizers – and I use that word because they are a mixture of inorganic and organic – can burn your plants if they are not used wisely and if you don't water them in very well afterwards – like your LAN, your Superphosphate and Sulphate of Ammonia. All those inorganic products are a bit risky and we tend to think of all the Neutrog range as organic, but not all of them are.

The other product, Rapid Raiser, has bone meal added to it. That's fine as bone meal is organic, it's natural, it's great and it will help boost the root system. I would suggest to use it in spring and autumn as a boost. So even if you can't get it under the roots, hoe it in on the surface and all that goodness will go down."

*Ornithogalum*:

Chincherinchee: when all the other bulbs are finished, these smaller ones are still around. Darling was covered in them, but this is the bigger one (top) more commonly seen up around Clanwilliam.

The pregnant onion (2<sup>nd</sup> from top): has a green bulb on the ground. Lovely flowers and very tall.

*Choisya ternata* (centre)– Mexican orange blossom:

"A rounded, bushy plant with abundant shiny, rich green leaves compound leaves with three leaflets about 4 to 8cms long. Clusters of small, very heavily scented, white flowers on branch tips appear in spring. Very tidy and dense, good in coastal settings and can be used in much the same way as Murraya (Orange Jesamine).

Soil: Slightly acid, humous rich and well drained soil.

Diseases: Foliage unaffected by insects.

Maintenance: Fertilise in spring. Trim after flowering to keep tidy/shape.

Comments: Named after Swiss botanist M.J.D. Choisy – early 1800s. Name of plant means "leaves arranged in threes". From same family as Citrus – hence common name." Author: Bob Saunders [[gardensonline.com.au](http://gardensonline.com.au)]

*Murraya exotica* (2<sup>nd</sup> from bottom): pollinated by night flying insects in their natural habitat. Fragrance will waft in through an open window. Think about planting scented shrubs close to the house.

*Ammi visnaga* (bottom) "is a species of flowering plant in the carrot family known by many common names, including bisnaga, toothpickweed, and khella. It is native to Europe, Asia, and North Africa, but it can be found throughout the world as an introduced species. This is an annual or biennial herb growing from a taproot erect to a maximum height near 80 centimeters. Leaves are up to 20 centimeters long and generally oval to triangular in shape but dissected into many small linear to lance-shaped segments. The inflorescence is a compound umbel of white flowers similar to those of other Apiaceae species. The fruit is a compressed oval-shaped body less than 3 millimeters long. This and other *Ammi* species are sources of khellin, a diuretic extract." From wikipedia

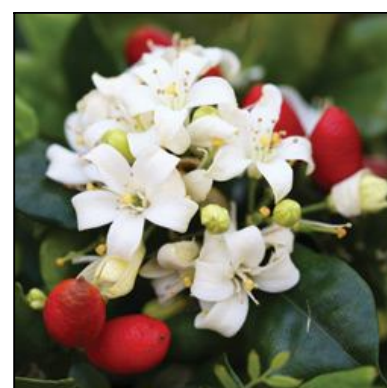
Other plants brought to the table:

*Dombeya rotundifolia* – Wild pear: leaves are like sandpaper with bunches of white flowers, which turn golden-orange as they get old. Originates from Natal, across into Botswana and Namibia. Good small garden tree.

*Burchellia*: sunbirds love them. From the forest areas of Eastern Cape. Seems to need water.

*Hermannia*: comes in yellow or orange – makes a lovely low groundcover.

Bearded Irises



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## FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

Although the showing of plants was quite small, the quality was tremendous. So to all those who did show their plants, thank you very much.

And also thank you all those who helped in so many ways – in setting it up, putting up posters and taking it all down afterwards, doing all the trophies and doing all the accounting – we thank you all very much indeed.

Financially we were down about R1500, which is not too bad at all. The idea of the Show is to show what we can do and I think that worked well. Thank you all very much indeed.

*Rod Stewart*

The Chapmann Trophy for the Most Spectacular Exhibit on Show was awarded to Jenny Scarr for her *Coelogyne mossiae* – an orchid (right), in case you didn't know.



## PLANT SALE

An enormous big, big thank you to everyone who grew plants. The standard was so high – absolutely fantastic and a wonderful range of plants. When all the sums have been totted up we've made about R9000.

One of the best things for me is that we appealed to a whole lot of new people; a lot of people from all the races, which is wonderful. It was just marvellous. Thank you very much and don't forget to keep slipping and potting up!

*Melanie Stewart*

## COLLECTOR'S CORNER

John van der Linde is our resident Clivia grower/hybridiser/specialist and produces the most beautiful specimens for his Clivia collection. Here are some tips on how to propagate and care for these plants (published by the Cape Clivia Club):

Clivias like dappled shade or early morning/late evening sun, but not full sun. They need sufficient light and good circulation or air and will not flower well if they are too overhung by dark foliage. Clivias do not do well in very windy conditions. If you have *C robusta*, *gardenii*, *nobilis*, *caulescens*, *mirabilis* (all pendulous type flowers) and *miniata* (open flowered type) in your garden, it is possible to have flowers blooming for 10 months of the year.

Clivias appear to thrive in nature without any assistance from us. This is also true of garden Clivias, provided they are growing in well drained, compost rich soil and remain pest free. But putting them in a pot requires an altogether different approach because growing mediums do not always provide the necessary nutrition. It is, therefore, advisable to add bone meal when potting or repotting and follow a regular feeding programme to supplement missing trace elements and other essential growth stimulants.

Propagation can be done by removing "suckers" or off-shoots, once there are about eight leaves. When replanting suckers, do not over-water as this will cause rot. Suckers can be removed at any time of the year, except when they are about to flower.

Plants are also easy to grow from seed. If the flowers are pollinated, the seed will develop and the berries containing them will take about nine months to change colour to red (from an orange flower) or yellow (from a yellow flower). They can then be harvested. Inside the berries are the seed, which must be removed and cleaned to avoid fungal disease. All soft tissue must be removed.

The seed should be sown by pressing them into a bed of seedling mix so that approximately 50% of the seed rests just below soil level. Keep the seed moist and in a shady spot.

After about one year, the plants can be taken from the seed trays and planted in small pots for a further year. Thereafter they can be planted in the garden or larger pots.

Watering once a week or fortnight is enough in summer. They should never be over-watered for extended periods. It is also advisable to water your plants in the morning, allowing them to absorb both moisture and nutrients during the day. Because excess water will have evaporated by nightfall, the risk of possible attacks by bacteria and fungi will also be reduced.

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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

- ⊗ 10 YEARS ON: In October 2004 a tree was planted in honour of Margherita Blaser's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on 14 October. At the time, this tree – a *Nothogafus moorei*, which was supplied by Adam Harrower of SANBI – looked very spindly and hardly able to hold its own. But it has proved us wrong! The tree is now more than twice Adam's height (right – arrow indicates the tree) and looking quite robust.
- ⊗ James Fisk told us how to make our own compost with Bokashi: It is a microbe that is available in a bran form. All waste – all scraps, coffee, wine, pizza, bones, etc – goes into a bucket; sprinkle with a handful of Bokashi and it eats everything up. In a barrel, layer it with cardboard, then green material, then brown material and a layer of Bokashi (kitchen muck) and seedlings can be planted in it immediately. After about 8 – 10 weeks, the soil deep down is pitch black. There is no odour. It's the best thing, he says.
- ⊗ Arderne (FOTAG) appeal: Lisa Conradie is looking for *Juncus lomatoxyllum* for the ponds. If you have some to spare, please call her on 071-358-3321. Planting up of the beds with the many donated plants and regular maintenance of the gardens continues. If you are interested in seeing a progress report, you can request it from Glenda (.pdf document).
- ⊗ Jim Holmes of Cape Seed and Bulb says: "We have now opened a small sales area in our nursery, so that people can come and shop around. We put out items that are looking good eg. Sinningia, Scadoxus and Rhododendron (below) etc. The Nursery is located on the R310 (Baden Powell Drive) as you turn off from the N1 towards Stellenbosch. We are 5 kms from the turn on the right at Top Shell Park. Open from 9 am till noon from Monday to Friday. It is best to call first (072-507-0030)."



## DATES TO DIARISE

### ❖ Elgin Open Gardens – 1/2 and 8/9 November:

All information regarding the gardens can be found on [www.elginopengardens.co.za](http://www.elginopengardens.co.za). Contact Barbara Know-Shaw on 021-844-0154 / 078-021-2101.

### ❖ Constantia Open Gardens – 14 November from 14:00 – 17:30 and 15 November from 10:00 – 17:00:

All information about the five gardens can be found on <http://opengardensconstantia.wordpress.com/> (can you spot a current CHS member in the photo of 1994?). Pre-bought tickets are R50, but R60 on the day. Plant sale and tea garden. Contact Gail on 021-712-5668.



(Photographs: Henry Diesveld, Google Images, Errol and Jenny Scarr, Jim Holmes, Michael Tuffin)