



CHS NEWS

JANUARY 2015

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NEXT MEETING

Mon, 2 February 2015 at 20:00 at The Athenaeum, Newlands
NB: R10 for members and R20 for visitors

Loubie Rusch of Making KOS fame will be looking at a few

South African indigenous food plants and some of the ways to use them in order to get inspired to grow and eat them.

Loubie has worked as a Landscape Designer for the past 30 years, and has in the last couple of years extended her interest in indigenous plants to include exploring the edible ones.

She says: "Despite that we live in such a rich Floral Kingdom, there are virtually no indigenous ingredients available commercially". She is actively working to redress this by working with individuals as well as with community gardens and organisations, (such as OZCF, Tyisa Nabanya, Seed, Food and Trees for Africa, Abalimi Bezekhaya) to introduce the idea of getting to know and grow indigenous food plants.

Loubie is also working towards recording some of her endeavours in print, to extend the message beyond what she currently achieves through her Facebook page called Making KOS.

NB: She will bring some of her produce which you can purchase, so bring more than your R10 entrance fee!

NEXT OUTING

Sat, 28 February 2015 at 10:00: Take a walk through the Stellenbosch Botanical Garden with Curator, Martin Smit who says "the Victorias and waterlilies should be at their peak" at that time. Limited to 25 members. If you need, or can offer, a lift, please advise when giving your name to Glenda **before 24 Feb.**

REPORT BACK

December party:

The food at our year-end party was as delicious as usual. In fact, so tasty that there were requests for the recipes of two dishes. For those who requested them, here they are:

Sabina's Apple Tart with Cinnamon Pastry

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Sift together: | 2. Mix in: | 3. Add: |
| 240g Flour (500ml) | 175g Soft Butter | 1 beaten egg |
| 12g Corn Flour (25ml) | | 50g chopped nuts |
| 100g Icing Sugar (200ml) | | 5ml Vanilla |
| Cinnamon (10ml) | | |
| Baking Powder (10ml) | | |

Knead into a ball with your hands. Wrap in greaseproof paper and leave in freezer for a couple of hours till hard. Remove and divide into two. Grate half the dough into a deep pie dish. Cover the bottom completely distributing dough evenly. (I use a rectangular Pyrex dish).

On top of the dough spoon the following mixture, which I cook, flavour, taste, cool and then use:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2x 410 g tins unsweetened pie apples | 75g Seedless Raisins (125 ml) |
| 75g Castor Sugar (60ml) | Pinch of Salt |
| 75g Brown Sugar (60ml) | |

Grate remaining dough evenly over the top of the mixture.

Bake at 165°C for 45 min (325°F).

Serve hot or cool and dust with icing sugar – and whipped cream!

President: Anne Bean, **Chairman:** Michael Tuffin, **Hon Treasurer:** Henry Diesveld, **Hon Secretary:** Glenda Thorpe

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Geraldine's Aubergine Caviar (from *Sumptuous* by Marlene van der Westhuizen)

2 medium aubergines
2 tbs olive oil
4 salad onions finely chopped
3 cloves garlic peeled and finely chopped
juice of 1 lemon
2 tbs flat-leaved parsley
250 ml crème fraîche
sea salt and finely ground pepper to taste

Prick aubergines all over with a fork and rub with olive oil. Roast at about 200C for about 15/20 minutes till completely tender. When cool cut in half and scoop flesh into bowl. Add garlic, salad onions, lemon juice, parsley and crème fraîche and gently fold together. Season to taste. Leave some hours for flavours to soften and blend.



Members of many years, Beth and Grace

Josephine and Janet enjoying the sumptuous meal.

Cherise, Errol and Joy with their winnings for the evening

NB: If you have a plate, dish or hat that you left behind at the party, please collect it from Melanie on the 2nd.

2015 MEMBERSHIP

The time for renewing your membership is the end of February. Please wait for your February issue of CHS News, which will include a form with all the necessary details. Cash payments may be made at the March meeting.

ARE YOU A BEEKEEPER?

The results of Tlou Masehela's PhD thesis were published at the end of last year and below is his list of plants for the western Cape.

"Plants important to South African beekeepers as honey bee forage (adopted from 2011-2013 beekeeper survey)

WESTERN PROVINCE (Beekeeper home province. Some species may not occur here, but beekeepers are moving hives to those species from this province.)

* Listed invasive exotic. ^ Indigenous, but could be problematic in some provinces

Main Forage Category: Exotic Forage		
Scientific Name	Common Name	Flowering Period
Sub Forage Category: Forestry (Eucalyptus) includes formal plantations and other stands		
Eucalyptus camaldulensis *	River red gum	Aug-Jan
Eucalyptus cladocalyx *	Sugar gum	Dec-Mar
Eucalyptus conferruminata *	Spider gum	Sep-Mar

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<i>Eucalyptus diversicolor</i> *	Karri gum	Sep-Apr
<i>Eucalyptus / Corymbia ficifolia</i>	Red flowering gum	Sep-Apr
<i>Eucalyptus gomphocephala</i>	Tuart gum	Nov-May
<i>Eucalyptus grandis</i> *	Saligna gum	Sep-May
<i>Eucalyptus / Corymbia maculata</i>	Spotted gum	Feb-Jun
<i>Eucalyptus melliodora</i>	Yellow box gum	Aug-Feb
<i>Eucalyptus paniculata</i>	Grey ironbark gum	Aug-Oct
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	Black ironbark gum	Mar-Sep
<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i> *	Forest red gum	Aug-Nov
<i>Eucalyptus viminalis</i>	Manna gum	Feb-Jun
Agricultural crops		
<i>Allium cepa</i>	Onion	Nov-Jan
<i>Brassica napus</i> var. <i>oleifera</i>	Canola	Jun-Sep
<i>Brassica</i> sp. (Broccoli)	Broccoli	Apr-Nov
<i>Brassica</i> sp. (Cabbage)	Cabbage	Jul-Aug
<i>Brassica</i> sp. (Cauliflower)	Cauliflower	Apr-Nov
<i>Citrus</i> spp.	Citrus	May-Nov
<i>Cucurbita</i> sp.	Pumpkin	Dec-Mar
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Carrot	Nov-Dec
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	Sunflower	Jan-Mar
<i>Macadamia</i> spp.	Macadamia	Aug-Feb
<i>Medicago sativa</i>	Lusern/Lucerne	Oct-Apr
<i>Magnifera indica</i>	Mango	Nov-Jan
<i>Malus domestica</i>	Apple	Sep-Nov
<i>Prunus</i> spp.	Prune/Plum	Aug-Nov
<i>Psidium guajava</i>	Guava	Apr-Dec
<i>Pyrus communis</i>	Pear	Sep-Nov
<i>Rubus idaeus</i>	Raspberry	Feb-Mar
<i>Trifolium</i> spp.	Clover	Jul-Sep
<i>Vicia dasycarpa</i>	Purple vetch	Mar-Apr
<i>Vitis vinifera</i>	Grape	Dec-Mar
Suburban plantings		
<i>Quercus robur</i>	English oak	Sep
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i> *	Brazilian pepper	Oct-May
	Suburban gardens	Jan-Dec
Weeds		
<i>Echium plantagineum</i> *	Echium/Bloublom	Jul-Dec
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	False dandelion	Feb-Apr
<i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i> *	Coastal Tea Tree	Aug-Sep
<i>Myoporum tenuifolium</i> *	Manatoka	Sep-Nov
<i>Prosopis</i> spp. *	<i>Prosopis</i> spp.	Oct-Jan
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i>	Wild radish	May-Oct
Main Forage Category: Indigenous / Natural Forage		
Scientific Name	Common Name	Flowering Period
Natural species or species groups:		
<i>Acacia karroo / Vachellia karroo</i> ^	Sweet thorn	Nov-Jan
<i>Agathosma</i> spp.	Buchu	Mar-Oct
<i>Aloe ferox</i>	Red aloe	Jun-Jul
<i>Aloe marlothii</i>	Mountain aloe	Jul

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Asparagus spp. ^	Wild asparagus	Sep-Oct
Carpobrotus edulis	Sour fig	Aug-Oct
Erica spp.	Erica spp.	Apr-Oct
Euclea spp.	Guarris	Jan
Euryops Virgineus	Honey euryops	Nov-Jan
Isoglossa eckloniana	Buckweed	Mar-Jul
Mesembs	Mesembs	Aug-Feb
Morella cordifolia	Wasbossie	Jan-Feb
Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata	Wild olive	May-Aug
Oxalis pes-caprae ^	Buttercup oxalis	Jan-Mar
Oxalis stricta	Common yellow woodsorrel	Aug-Oct
Protea spp.	Protea spp.	May-Dec
Scutia myrtina	Cat thorn	Mar-Jul
Searsia lancea	Karee	Oct-May
Searsia pedulina	White karee	Apr-May
Watsonia fourcadei	Watsonia fourcadei	Jul-Sep
Zygophyllum spp.		Mar-Apr
Vegetation units:		
	Coastal fynbos	Jan-Dec
	Mountain fynbos	Jan-Dec
	Strandveld	Jan-Dec
	Karoo	Jan-Dec
	Indigenous Forest	Jan-Dec
	Namaqualand & Renosterveld	Jan-Dec
	Bushveld	May

List does not indicate relative importance of species. Consult local nurseries for detailed bee-friendly planting advice."

Carol Poole, Project Coordinator: pollination and other ecosystem services projects at SANBI, says:

"Early next year, we are also bringing out a book "Beeplants of South Africa" by Martin Johannsmeier. This book will contain the nectar and pollen values of many, many plant species. So then gardeners, landscapers and farmers will be able to do some nice comparisons when deciding on what to plant – and choose the higher value species if they wish to support bees. Please keep an eye on the SANBI Bookshop catalogue for this important book.

As I am not a horticulturist myself, my best recommendation to people wishing to plant for bees would be that they consult a local horticulturist, landscaper or nursery, and these experts could then make use of the attached lists and their own local knowledge to make some specific suggestions of what could be planted in specific regions. We do hope that nurseries, botanical or gardening societies, and landscaping associations will run their own "plant bee-friendly plants" campaigns; and that botanical gardens, schools, city parks, landscapers and urban greening programmes will lead the way by showcasing their bee-friendly plants."

Why not send in your list of plants that attract bees in your garden to the Editor (details at the top of page 1), stating the suburb in which you live. These lists can then be published in future newsletters and a database of bee-friendly suburban flora built up.

WHAT TO DO IN THE GARDEN AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR

Creating colour in the shade

Shady areas can be notoriously difficult to garden in, and many shade-loving plants are all the same dark-green hue that tends to blur into nothingness in the shade. The good news is that Coleus loves the shade and it's anything but dull when it comes to colour.

Also known as painted nettle and Joseph's cloak, Coleus boasts attractive foliage that provides bright splashes of colour in shady garden areas - and it's very easy to grow.

Coleus varieties are available in shades of lime green, pink, yellow, dark purple, maroon, red and dozens of variegated colour combinations. The soft leaves of this remarkable shrub are velvety to the touch and many have attractive frilled or serrated edges.

Coleus grows best in indirect light or partial shade and the leaf colours tend to be most intense in those plants that grow in deepest shade. It loves rich, moist soil, so it's worthwhile working in plenty of compost or leaf mould prior to planting to feed the soil and improve its texture.

Coleus requires regular watering and the soil should not be allowed to dry out. Mulching the soil around these plants will help to conserve moisture. Feed coleus monthly with liquid fertiliser and pinch out the growing tips to encourage bushy, compact growth. If your Coleus starts to flower, this is usually a sign that the plant is stressed due to too little water, or temperatures that are too cold. Remove the flowers and either increase watering, or provide additional shelter for the plant.

Coleus shrubs also make excellent indoor plants. Pot them up with plenty of good quality potting soil and bone meal and place them in a spot where they will receive several hours of indirect light every day.

Perfect Pruning

Regular pruning is essential for a neat and healthy garden.

Here's why it's important to prune the plants in your garden regularly:

- Pruning stimulates new growth in plants. When you cut off old flower heads, the plant can concentrate its reserves on producing new stems, leaves and flowers
- Regular pruning improves the quality of the fruit and flowers produced by plants.
- Pruning is important to remove diseased or dying sections of plants.
- Pruning discourages the development of fungal diseases and insect infestations by improving air circulation between plants.
- Pruning encourages compact and bushy growth in shrubs and perennials.

Pruning techniques differ from plant to plant, but a few basic rules apply in all cases. Always use sharp, clean pruning tools – this will limit damage to the plant and prevent the spread of plant diseases. When pruning, make sure you always cut back into live, healthy growth. You can remove (entirely) any parts of a variegated plant that have reverted to plain green. Finally, remember to fertilise plants after pruning and then water well. This will allow the plant to grow with new vigour.

What should I prune right now?

- Perennials like lavender, daisy bushes, angel wings and diascias,
- Overgrown trees and shrubs,
- Climbers that have finished flowering,
- Hedges and topiaries,
- Roses and hydrangeas will benefit from a light summer pruning.

Excerpts from Stodels' January newsletter (www.stodels.com)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

PISTACHIOS

The pistachio has a long and interesting history. Native to the Middle East, pistachios are one of the oldest flowering nut trees. Recent archeological evidence in Turkey suggests that humans were enjoying them as early as 7,000 B.C. Flourishing in hot climates, pistachios spread from the Middle East to the Mediterranean, quickly becoming a treasured delicacy among royalty, travelers and common folk alike.

Legend has it that the Queen of Sheba decreed pistachios an exclusively royal food, going so far as to forbid commoners from growing the nut for personal use. Nebuchadnezzar, the ancient king of Babylon, had pistachio trees planted in his fabled hanging gardens. And in the first century A.D., the Emperor Vitellius debuted this prized nut in his capital city of Rome. According to Moslem legend, the pistachio nut was one of the foods brought to Earth by Adam.

The pistachio's high nutritional value and long storage life also made it an indispensable travel item among early explorers and traders. Along with almonds, pistachios were frequently carried by travelers across the ancient Silk Road that connected China with the West.



Pistachio trees are wind-pollinated, with one male tree producing enough pollen for 25 nut-bearing females. Female trees produce their first nuts at about age five and can bear fruit for up to 200 years.

Originally from Western Asia, but known for thousands of years throughout the Mediterranean, the pistachio has been cultivated commercially in the English speaking world in Australia, New Mexico and in California where it was introduced in 1854 as a garden tree. The pistachio is one of two nuts mentioned in the Bible and these days another delicious, nutritious nut to snack on and benefit from.

Here are seven health benefits of pistachios that may make you want to include them in your diet on a regular basis.

Heart Health

Pistachios have been shown to reduce LDL ("bad") cholesterol and increase the good HDL cholesterol after only a short period of regular consumption. High in antioxidants such as vitamins A and E, they fight inflammation, protecting blood vessels and reducing risk of heart disease. Even a moderate intake of pistachios has been shown to increase levels of lutein, an antioxidant well known for protecting against oxidized LDL, reducing heart disease.

Diabetes Help

Eating pistachios may help to prevent Type 2 diabetes. 60 percent of the recommended daily value of the mineral phosphorous is contained in just one cup of pistachios. As well as breaking down proteins into amino acids, phosphorous aids glucose tolerance.

Healthy Blood

Pistachios are an incredibly rich source of vitamin B6. Vitamin B6 is essential to make hemoglobin, the protein responsible for carrying oxygen through the blood stream to cells, and is also shown to increase the amount of oxygen carried.

Nervous System

The vitamin B6 so abundant in pistachios has wide-ranging effects on the nervous system. Messaging molecules called amines require amino acids to develop, which in turn rely on vitamin B6 for their creation. Furthermore, B6 plays a crucial role in the formation of myelin, the insulating sheath around nerve fibers that allows optimal messaging between nerves. Furthermore, vitamin B6 contributes to the synthesis of serotonin, melatonin, epinephrine and gamma-aminobutyric acid, or GABA, an amino acid that calms the transmission of nerve impulses throughout the nervous system.

Eye Health

Pistachios contain two carotenoids not found in most nuts. These carotenoids, called lutein and zeaxanthin, function as protective antioxidants, defending tissues from damage from free radicals. They have been linked with a decrease in the risk for developing age-related macular degeneration, which is the leading cause of visual impairments and acquired blindness in the United States.

Immune System

A healthy immune system requires adequate intake of vitamin B6, which pistachios abound in. A surfeit of vitamin B6 can retard brain activity as well as decrease the effectiveness of the immune system for fighting infections. Vitamin B6 found in pistachios also helps the body make healthy red blood cells, and helps maintain the health of lymphoid glands, such as the thymus, spleen and lymph nodes, ensuring the production of white blood cells that defend the body from infections.

Skin Health

Pistachios are a great source of vitamin E, a powerful fat-soluble antioxidant, essential for maintaining the integrity of cell membranes and often recommended for healthy and beautiful skin. Vitamin E does an excellent job protecting the skin from UV damage, providing daily defense against premature aging and skin cancer.

[November 3, 2014 – <http://gosouthonline.co.za/potent-powerful-pistachios/>]

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- Do you like the contents of the CHS News?
- Do you find the subject matter of our monthly speakers of interest?
- Have you enjoyed the places you've visited each month?

More about this next month.

DATES TO DIARISE

⊗ **Kirstenbosch Plant Fair – "Feast of Fynbos":** 18 and 19 April 2015

(Photographs: Glenda Thorpe, Google)