



Post: 22 Rustenburg, Pinelands, 7405 | Tel: 021-531-5713 | Fax: 086-514-0998  
info@capehorticulturalsociety.co.za | www.capehorticulturalsociety.co.za  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cape-Horticultural-Society/779615695489381>

## NEXT MEETING

**Mon, 1 August 2016 at 20:00** at The Athenaeum, Newlands.

R10 for members; R20 for visitors.

Megan Blatchford's passion for horticulture was evident in the top marks she attained each year while studying at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology and for which she was awarded the CHS Annual Book Prize for her 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years. Having completed her National Diploma at the end of 2014 with full distinctions, she was also awarded the Dean Medal at the CPUT graduation ceremony.

Prof Charl Laubscher nominated her to be part of the IPPS (International Plant Propagators Society) Student Exchange Programme and Megan was chosen as the successful candidate to visit Sydney, Australia for 2 weeks in May 2015. Her trip included visits to many nurseries, botanical gardens and reserves, and this will be the subject of her talk,

### ***GARDENING DOWN UNDER – impressions of an International Plant Propagators Society (IPPS) Exchange Student***

#### **Sale of Plants**

FOTAG will again be present at this meeting, selling plants for funds.

Please be sure you bring enough cash to support both our own CHS Nursery and the FOTAG plant tables and make the most of the bargains on offer!

## OUTINGS

**Sat, 13 August at 11:00:** Some of you may remember the garden Mary Muller created at Greystones in Constantia, which was renowned for its trees, shrubs, granite boulders and spectacular views of the Constantia Valley. Her son, Dirk (now a CHS member), moved into the house in 2010 and, because the garden had become an unkempt jungle, he has ruthlessly removed many trees to open it up to the sun.

The garden is on a south facing slope with dark acid soil, which favours Camellias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons. There are about 140 Camellias on the property, most of which were planted by his mother.

It will take over an hour to walk around this now much improved garden. It is very much a plant lovers garden so do not expect manicured lawns and herbaceous borders.

Limited to 30 members. RSVP to Glenda by 10 August 2016.

## WELCOME TO ...

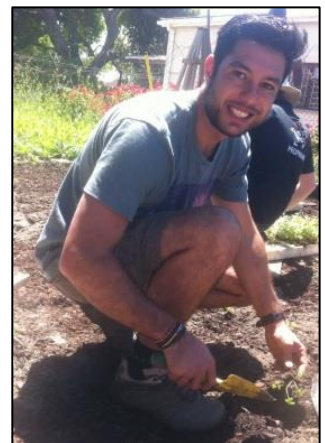
... Ann Gamble and Rosemary Nathan, who signed up as members at our last meeting, and Louise Badenhorst who has returned after a few years absence. We hope their association with us will last for many years.

## REPORT BACK

### **Annual Book Prize Presentation – conclusion**

Shain Butt, who attained 81%, the highest mark in the 2015 Horticulture BTech class, is our third recipient of this year's CHS Book Prize awards. He is living and working in Kenya, in the cut flower farm industry. Shain is the production manager growing 19 hectares of roses and *Alstroemeria*. Working on expanding his experience in the horticultural sphere he hopes to possibly run his own cut flowers industry in the future. Shain, pictured right, worked on a Community project at "Athlone homeless community housing. He says, "As the horticulture BTech class we prepared a garden for them that we had propagated at the university".

On hearing that he was being awarded this prize, Shain very generously decided to donate his prize to a worthy cause, preferably a primary school. The Committee decided that his R1000 prize would be presented to the Alpha School for Autistic Learners in Woodstock. The Principal, Nerina Kearns, says that "since its inception the school has catered for the previously disadvantaged communities and continues to do so, on a much larger scale". His donation will go towards the upgrade of their playground area which is, at present, very bare, with tar under the swings and jungle gyms and no plants to speak of.



### Woodstock Peace Garden

Who would have guessed that this piece of land, crammed full of trees, shrubs, fish, rabbits, chickens and ducks, existed just below the busy Nelson Mandela Boulevard (below, left)? This is the work of Bruce Beyer of Co-Creators who manages the Woodstock Peace Garden, which is a partnership between Co-Creators Landscaping, the Alpha School for Autism, which adjoins this property, and the Woodstock community.

<http://co-creators.co.za/peace-garden/> says, "This ubuntu project is aimed at making land accessible to all who care and to create awareness for autism and our environment. Co-Creators store their landscaping tools, plants, soils and rocks here. Autistic school children use the labyrinth (below, right), play and explore the natural environment here. And it provides a space where the Woodstock community can grow food gardens; a venue where they can engage fully in community spirit and social responsibility."



An area on the property is divided into "plots" where the children can grow vegetables.

The donation for the Alpha School was handed over to Bruce Beyer during our visit (left). We look forward, in the near future, to hearing what improvements the school manages to implement in the playground for their learners.

### Gardens in the Land of the Long White Cloud

In June Melanie Stewart treated us to a whirlwind garden tour of New Zealand. We saw many beautiful plants and flowers, especially Rhododendrons and Vireyas, but there are too many to reproduce here. Here is a selection of some of the more unusual plants found growing in NZ.

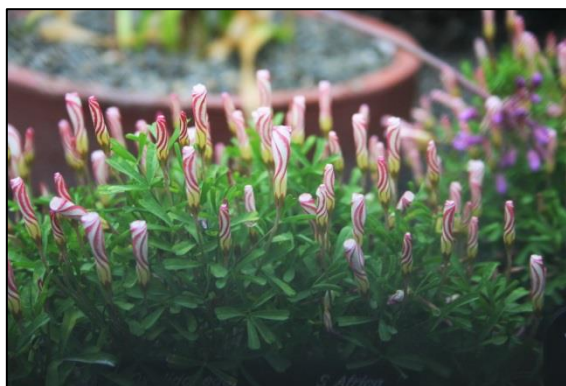
The vivid spring foliage of the Toon Tree (below, left) (*Toona sinensis* [syn. *Cedrela sinensis*]), a white-flowered deciduous Chinese tree up to 20m tall. Its most striking feature is its bright pink new spring growth". Also known as Flamingo tree / Toon Tree / Chinese Mahogany. This is probably the only hardy tree which is grown more often as a leafy vegetable than as an ornamental tree; Toona is a unique food crop; leaves and stems are used as salad and vegetable; it has an oniony taste and a glorious colour! As long as soil is well-drained, the Toona tolerates high or low soil pH, high salt, and established trees tolerate considerable periods of drought.



Pulmonaria (Lungwort)



Kalmia latifolia 'myrtiflora'



Clockwise from far left:

*Cyathea Dealbata*

*Oxalis*



*Clematis*, one of many

Dormant volcano Mount Taranaki has a ring plain of rich volcanic soil, patterned with hundreds of rivers and streams, many of which flow into the Tasman Sea.

### Growing Fuchsias

Our visit to Will's Fuchsia Nursery in May was very informative and Jane Pegrum passed on the following information to help us successfully grow and prune Fuchsias.

#### *Pruning of established plants:*

Prune when the weather cools, but not later than the end of June

Cut back so that branches are the same width as the pot (do not stick out over the edge)

Remove two-thirds of the year's growth, and all the leaves

Leave new shoots and cut just above them – about 5 - 10mm

Do not cut into old wood (brown rough bark)

Only feed when new growth appears

Dried seaweed chips can be applied after pruning, to encourage growth

An embroidery scissors is useful for pruning

If you'd rather not risk doing this yourself, Jane has a pruning service from May.

#### *Pinching – to encourage more branches and more flowers:*

Do this once the pruned plant starts to shoot or you have a small new plant

The rule of thumb is 1 – 2 – pinch: remove the growing tip after two sets of leaves

#### *Re-potting established plants:*

Re-pot when there is new growth (takes 2 - 3 weeks after pruning)

Put Bounce Back (has a new name) in the pot with the cutting

Jane uses compost from Tokai

Uses milled seaweed in the soil when re-potting

1 potting soil : 1 compost : 1 Tokai compost and add vermiculite

Place the plant in the soil with at least 70 - 100mm of the branches below the soil.

#### *Watering:*

Ensure there is good drainage

Spray with Multifeed after pruning and if the plant has wilted

The soil must be damp but not soggy

If you would like to know more about Fuchsias and how to care for them, contact Jane on 082-825-5549 or [jpegrum@vodamail.co.za](mailto:jpegrum@vodamail.co.za)

## July Plant Table



At this time of the year we don't have a huge variety of flowers, but there is a lot of interesting foliage and many different textures. This is where you should go out into your garden and see if it needs more "life" – maybe a variegated plant, maybe a grey leaf, maybe a dark red-leaved plant. Or something like this *Fuchsia triphylla* 'Firecracker' (left), originating from the mountainous regions of the West Indies. They are evergreen.

Indigenous:

*Podalyria sericea* (below): grows to 1m, flowers from May to August

*Felicia echinata* – from Mossel Bay to Port Alfred

*Felicia amelloides* – from Stilbaai to Eastern Cape. Seeds itself.

*Impatiens* – white form (possibly *sylvicola*)

*Euryops pectinatus* – from Gifbaai to Cape Point

*Lachenalia quadricolor* and *L. bulbifera* (below): you don't have to do anything with them in the summer and come the first winter rains, up come the leaves, rapidly followed by the flowers

Exotics:

*Calceolaria* – winter annual

Bromeliad – *Billbergia nutans* from South America

*Salvia leucantha* (extreme left)

Rosemary – light pink

*Ruellia*

*Irisene* – grown for the red foliage colour

*Thryptomene* (below left) – Erica-like plant from Australia

*Paphiopedilum gratixianum* (below right) – a species slipper orchid: grows on granite and non-calcareous rock faces in Vietnam. If you want long-lived flowers, orchids are the answer.

## New Honorary President

As was reported at our AGM earlier this year, Anne Bean, who has been our President since 2002, felt she could not continue indefinitely and asked that the Committee find a worthy successor. We have found one – someone who has worked tirelessly for many years to put the Cape Floral Kingdom on the map and won many awards for his efforts, winning yet another Gold Medal this year at Chelsea. David Davidson, well known to all of us, had the title of President bestowed on him at our July meeting. David said that it was most unexpected and he felt very honoured and privileged to have been asked. He promised to do everything in his power to keep the name of gardening and horticulture high and would support the CHS in every way that he could.

Congratulations to David and our thanks to Anne for her many years 'in office'.



### Donation to Seawinds

For the past couple of years the profits from the CHS Christmas Party have been donated to a deserving cause. This year we chose the little Village Heights Community Centre, in the informal settlement of Seawinds (between Vrygrond and Lavender Hill). The R600 purchased a wonderful bakkie-load of compost from Super Plants in Tokai, which they delivered for us for free. As a further donation, the CHS added two enormous bags of fertilizer, which is being used in conjunction with the compost and is now resulting in some very healthy growth. (Photos clockwise from top left: Offloading the compost; Melanie showing the youngsters the seedlings and plants she had brought; the children planting the veggie seedlings; part of the Community Centre garden.



The children at the Centre range in age from new-born babies to teenagers, and all live in the surrounding shacks. They are encouraged to help in the garden, learning about the rewards of growing one's own vegetables. The youngsters have also been attempting to grow indigenous trees in large truck tyres, but the drought and wind have proved too much for some of these.

If any members have vegetable seedlings, fruit trees or unused garden tools, they'd be very welcome. Melanie will deliver them to the Centre. Contact her at 082 550 2618 / 021 788 2840.

### JOURNAL OF A HAPHAZARD GARDENER –JULY/AUGUST 2016

The CHS meeting in July, when we were entertained by David Davidson's talk about this year's Chelsea Flower Show, set me thinking about topics for this month's journal. One thought was how current fashion can dominate the thinking of gardeners and horticulturalists. This year flowers are delicate pastel shades. Another favourite idea is providing a special place of peace and contemplation in the garden. There is also the urge to create larger and ever more voluptuous flowers. Pansy flowers (below, left) are enormous compared to the violas, their parents. Each year at Chelsea many new cultivars are introduced as a result of experimentation in hybridization. (I was also particularly struck by a throwaway remark made by Mr Davidson about how lucky they were that each year they could store the equipment needed to construct the Kirstenbosch exhibit in a barn on a farm belonging to an English friend. One tends to forget about all the planning and hard work that is needed to produce the final product).

The topics this month are, therefore: colour, hybridization and planning and hard work in the garden.



Jenny Scarr, in her discussion about the plants on the members' table, suggested one way to introduce more colour was the use of variegated foliage. On examining our garden, I discovered many variations of the colour green (left), but that route is a copout. My first idea was to discover what colourful indigenous foliage plants I could find; so off I went off to the Kirstenbosch Nursery. I discovered some lovely cultivars of the Protea family: 'Red Devil', 'Ruby Pearl', 'African Gold' and 'Jester'. (This last one was particularly pretty, but expensive at R110.00). They all have *Leucadendron salignum* as part

of their parentage. Its popular name is Common sunshine cone bush and it is widely distributed from Port Elizabeth down to the Western Cape. *Salignum* grows in a variety of soil types and altitudes and so is ideal for hybridization. Here are some pictures of similar Proteas (next page, left) growing in a nearby garden. I have planted Safari sunset in my garden which I bought on a sale earlier this year but it is too young to have its picture taken. I wasn't sure of the meaning of cultivar and discovered it's the result of selective breeding to cultivate plants with specific characteristics. There is a distinct difference from the wild varieties and this is why they are given special names like 'African Gold'.



There are also many *Lachenalia* hybrids. On sale at the meeting was the very pretty red *Lachenalia bulbifera* (above, right) which grows in beautiful profusion on the grass verge near us. Another hybrid (above, 2<sup>nd</sup> from right) – this yellow variety with its variegated leaves grows in our garden. Apart from brilliant reds, oranges and yellows, *Lachenalia* come in delicate greens, blue and pink. They seem to like growing in pots. They love the sunshine and a well drained soil. The bulbs need to remain dry when dormant and they propagate themselves with no trouble. You see *Lachenalia* in their wild state when walking on the mountain. They are one of the first flowers one sees after the first rains of winter.

At Starke Ayres Nursery I found two lovely foliage plants. One was *Salvia officinalis* 'Tricolor'. It is a cultivar from the common sage and has grey-green leaves with white margins with gorgeous pinkish purple stems. The plant comes from Southern Europe and so should be suitable for local conditions. The other find was *Coleus* 'Hipster luca' which has delicate red variegated leaves.

In my own garden there is *Aloe arborescens* 'Kranz aloe' (below, left) which has turned red-leaved in some sections. (It is easy to cultivate and is a good plant to pot for the CHS plant sale. Cut off some pieces and pop them into a pot containing compost and bone meal and it will reproduce easily.)

Other interesting foliage plants are *Crassula capitella* subsp. *thyrsoiflora* (below, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left)) and *Crassula rubricaulis* with red-rimmed leaves; *Echeveria* x *hybrid* (below, 2<sup>nd</sup> from right) which flowers in the winter; *Kalanchoe waldheimii* 'Ghost plant' which is perfect for a hanging basket with its drooping orange-red flowers in winter.

When researching for the names of plants in my garden I discovered two useful sites. One was [www.lulusgarden.com](http://www.lulusgarden.com) which helped me identify *Sedeveria* 'Sorrento' (below, right) with its rose-coloured leaves. The site also introduced me to *Echeveria* 'Black prince' and the fascination horticulturalists have with producing 'black'-hued flowers. Another such plant is *Aeonium arborescens* 'Zwartkop' with dark red flowers. The other site was [www.finegardening.com](http://www.finegardening.com)

Other references used were:

Pienaar, Kristo **A to Z of garden flowers in South Africa**

[www.plantzafrica.com](http://www.plantzafrica.com)

Now I must be off to plant some ground covers with variegated foliage which I found on my visits to the nurseries. They are *Ajuga* which can be planted under trees and has blue flowers; *Altemanthera* which need good soil and grows in sunny areas and semi shade, and *Lamium* 'Silverstripe' which also grows in sun or shade.



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### Grazing in the garden – by Marion Whitehead

"When my nutritional therapist friend Beatrice Rabkin asked me to identify a plant in her garden that she'd been told was edible, I was surprised to find it was the wild creeping foxglove, *Asystasia gangetica*, a common plant used widely as a groundcover. It grows quite rampantly in my small shady garden, smothering everything else if I don't keep it in check, even climbing up into my Jasmine and trying to stage a takeover.

I searched the internet for confirmation, first going to our local website [www.plantzafrica.com/plantab/asystasiagan.htm](http://www.plantzafrica.com/plantab/asystasiagan.htm), which said it is indeed edible and consumed by some people locally. Searching a little further afield, I found that in parts of Asia, it's grown as a crop and the tender leaves and stems are picked and eaten stir-fried or boiled, much like a spinach (<http://avrdc.org/tropical-violet-asystasia-gangetica/>). What's more, it's very nutritious as the leaves are extremely high in beta-carotene, vitamin E, ascorbic acid, iron and riboflavin. Lower amounts of folic acid and calcium are found, and the protein value is given as 3.7%. The leaves are said to have anti-asthmatic properties. I found more medicinal uses for it on [http://uses.plantnet-project.org/en/Asystasia\\_gangetica\\_%28PROTA%29](http://uses.plantnet-project.org/en/Asystasia_gangetica_%28PROTA%29).

In Africa, an infusion of the plant is used to ease pain during childbirth, and the sap is applied to sores, wounds and piles. Embrocations are used to treat stiff neck and enlarged spleen in children. Powdered roots are considered analgesic and used in treating stomach-ache and snakebites. A leaf decoction is used as an analgesic and to treat epilepsy and urethral discharge.

In Nigeria the leaves are used to treat asthma, while in India the sap is applied to swellings; it is also used as a vermifuge (expels intestinal worms) and to treat rheumatism. In the Moluccas (Indonesia) the juice, together with lime and onion juice, is recommended for dry coughs with an irritated throat and discomfort in the chest. In the Philippines the leaves and flowers are used as an intestinal astringent. In Tanzania plants are pounded with water to make a wash against fleas for young animals.

Oh yes, and they also add: '*Asystasia gangetica* is occasionally planted as an ornamental.'

I'm delighted to find so many uses for what I'd come to regard as a problem plant. So excuse me, I'm off to cook some more for dinner."

### Foraging for Mushrooms

While out walking in the forests, have you ever wondered which mushrooms are edible and which are not? Local forager, Justin Williams, was reported in the Bulletin a few months ago, saying "never consume a wild mushroom unless you are absolutely certain about what it is. One mistake can be fatal. More often than not, the ones with white gills under the cap are poisonous, some even deadly. You get old mushroom foragers and you get bold mushroom foragers, but you never find old, bold mushroom foragers. Always consult with an expert." He also says "fungi are a near-abundant food source and it is extremely difficult to deplete the supply unless host trees are removed or the environment is changed. The mushrooms you see above the ground are merely the fruit of a much larger, subterranean organism known as mycelium, ... If the mycelium is removed or damaged, the mushrooms will not appear." Cape Town apparently has a handful of edible varieties such as porcini, chicken of the woods, blewits and pine rings. Visit [www.mushlove.co.za](http://www.mushlove.co.za). If you would like to learn more about this, why not attend the foraging workshop being organized by Good Hope Nursery?

### Good Hope Nursery's Veld and Sea Winter Events: *Mushroom Foraging* on Thursday 11th of Aug - 8am- 12pm Cost: R350

Join us on a winter forest forage led by avid mushroom hunter Justin Williams as we delve into the forest to learn all about the magical world of mushrooms! We will be meeting early and begin the foray with an educational talk about wild mushrooms, then head off into the forest to find what is on offer. Participants will need to bring a basket, pocket/pen knife, rain coat (weather permitting) and outdoor-friendly shoes. Included: Notes, recipes, post-forage refreshments of nourishing mushroom soup, bread, mushroom pate and a warming buchu brandy and rooibos hot toddie prepared by wild food forager, Roushanna Gray.

Other workshops taking place are Fynbos Foraging and Malchemy Fermentables. For more information or to book please e-mail [roushanna@hotmail.com](mailto:roushanna@hotmail.com).

**Arderne Gardens Walk:** On the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of every month at 10:00, a FOTAG committee member will take you on a guided walk through the gardens for a fee of R40. For more information, contact Harold Mills on 021-794-6242. For more information e-mail [secretary@ardernegardens.co.za](mailto:secretary@ardernegardens.co.za)

**Hermanus Flower Festival – Fynbos and Fire:** 22-25 September at the Fernkloof Nature Reserve from 09:00 – 17:00. Entrance fee: R20; R10 for pensioners on 22 Sept.

### July Gardening in the Western Cape

<http://gosouth.co.za/july-in-the-garden/> had this to say about what we should be doing this month:

Plant out lots of Pansy and Viola seedlings in well composted beds – the rewards are a welcome splash of colour to warm up those winter blues.

Feed Clematis and Fuchsias every two weeks with liquid fertiliser and pinch out the growing tips to encourage bushier growth and thus more flowers in spring.

Cut back Bougainvilleas which have finished flowering, feed with a balanced fertiliser and water afterwards. Summer and autumn flowering climbers and shrubs like Golden Shower [*Pyrostegia venusta*], *Barleria*, Ribbon Bush [*Hypoestes*], Wild Dagga [*Leonotis*] and Westringia also need pruning now.

Winter veggies for planting include cabbages, leeks, peas, turnips, carrots, radishes, beans, eggplant, pumpkin, broccoli, Swiss chard and Asian greens.

**Hot tip:** Cover your compost heap in very wet weather to stop rotting and nutrients from leaching out.



### NOTICEBOARD

#### Flower and Garden Show – 3 & 4 Sept:

The Show Schedule is being sent out with this newsletter. This gives you a good 6 weeks to go through it thoroughly and decide which plants will fit which class for exhibiting. Don't forget to get your list of entries in as soon as possible. All details are on the cover of the schedule.

Do you have a product to sell? Members pay reduced rates. For more information, contact Wilma on 083-645-2468 or at [katetindall@telkomsa.net](mailto:katetindall@telkomsa.net)

It's time to return the trophies you won last year. Please bring them – beautifully clean and shiny bright – to the next meeting (the last before the Show) and hand them to Errol Scarr or a Committee member. If you are unable to attend, please make a plan to return them before 2 September. Erroll can be contacted on 021-531-0711 or [ejscarr@iafrica.com](mailto:ejscarr@iafrica.com).

#### Garden Tools No Longer Required:

Are you wanting to get rid of old spades, forks, rakes, shade cloth, hand trowel, old wheelbarrows, or anything that would be of use to new gardeners in Gugulethu Section 2? Call Sylvia Shearer of U3A on 021-671-6964, who will be happy to collect from you.

Melanie has also requested tools for the Seawinds community. Call her on 082-550-2618 / 021-788-2840.

#### Arbour Day:

Last year's drive to collect trees for charity yielded a good response. It has been decided to repeat this. On Arbour Day, for a packet of newspapers, Stodels will give you a tree for free.

If you know of an organization starting up a garden or an area that needs greening, please let us know. The trees brought to the September meeting will be distributed among the members to donate to their favourite charities.