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NEXT MEETING

Mon, 3 October 2016 at 20:00 at The Athenaeum, Newlands.

R10 for members; R20 for visitors.

CONSTRUCTION AND CHOREOGRAPHY OF THE 2016 CAPE TOWN FLOWER SHOW

CHS member, Paul Odendaal, is the curator of the show gardens that will be featured in the forecourt of the Castle of Good Hope at the Cape Town Flower Show at the end of October.

Paul is a landscaper and during his 15 years in the industry has worked with many of our well-known South African gardening personalities on a number of shows, including our exhibit at Chelsea.

NEXT OUTING

Sat, 8 October at 10:00: Visit the Constantia garden of Susie Harris-Leblond, who studied with the RHS in London at Capel Manor School of Garden Design. She worked with an amazing Garden Designer called Nic Howard while in the UK, and then worked as a Head Gardener in Kent. Susie came home after 9 years, had a family and has in the past three years rekindled her passion for plants, while also being a family and botanical photographer.

Susie says: "Simonsvlei belonged to Leslie Hill and was later bought by the Harris family in the 80s. It was Mr Hill who laid out the gardens and, with the help of Clifford Harris Construction (his neighbour), terraced Simonsvlei and dug clay ponds at the bottom of the property. Mr Hill was an amazing man and I feel a great responsibility to his home and garden. Some of his trophies from plant hunting expeditions can still be seen in the garden today."

Limited to 20 members. Please let Glenda have your name by 6 October. Directions will be sent to those who make the list.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CHS Plant Sale – Sat, 15 October from 10am to 2pm: Contact Melanie (021-788-2840) for more details.

Sat, 5 November at 2pm: See the Bromeliad collection of Japie Esterhuyzen in Platteklouf Glen.

WELCOME TO ...

... Jurgens Bosch, Melanie Hotz, Lillian Masebenza, David Walsh, Eric Harley and Helen Mitchell who all signed up as a result of visiting our recent Spring Flower and Garden Show. We hope they will remain with us for many years.

REPORT BACK

September plant table: Spring has sprung!



Coleonema pulchellum (Confetti Bush) – deep pink; baby of an old plant bought 15 years ago. Growing in Kirstenhof. Eight species found in W and E Cape. *C album* is the local white specie.

Tetradenia riparia (formerly Iboza) – shades of blue, lavender and pink; does not get a lot of water

Veltheimia bracteata – comes in dusty pink, dark pink (above) and pale yellow

Gladiolus citrinus and *Lachenalia* "pavement special??"



Above, from left to right: *Bromeliad*, *Vireya*, *Dendrobium*, *Gasteria glomerata*
Also brought in by members were *Haworthia*, *Echeveria*, *Lotus berthelotii*

Flower and Garden Show

A big thank you to all those who helped at, and who visited, the show – it was the most marvellous spectacle of extraordinarily beautiful and unusual plants and flowers, with quite a few rare ones, and many interesting things amongst the stalls too! Many of our exhibitors won awards, cups and prizes, while the excellent speakers attracted many visitors as well ... a marvellous introduction into Spring!

Melanie Stewart

The winners of the three raffle prizes were:

The new book by Marion Whitehead (see more about it in the "Haphazard Gardener" article) went to Jackie Diesveld;



Heather, Elaine and Hazel manning the gate, with Jane's lovely arrangements in the background



An "Ali Baba" pot was won by Susan Armstrong

A beautiful flower arrangement done by Jane Robertson was presented to Jenny Barnett (left).

Our Show trophy winners were:

Jane Robertson & Jenny Scarr – The Chapmann Trophy for The Most Spectacular Exhibit on Show (bowl of mixed indigenous flowers and *Coelogyne Mossiae* respectively)

Michael Tuffin – The Sybella Schelpe Trophy for The Plant Most Difficult to Grow (*Pachypodium namaquanum*)

Cherise Viljoen – The Constantia Woods Trophy for The Most Unusual Exhibit on Show (*Akebia quinata* "Chocolate Vine")

Alison James – Jocelynn McDowell Memorial Trophy for The Most Points on Show

Alison James: Caroline Ward Trophy (Best Exhibit of Pelargoniums); The Brandt Plate (Best Exhibit in Exotic Succulents); McDowell Centenary Trophy (Best Exhibit in Indigenous Succulents); Stuber Cup (Most Points for Succulents); Dr JC Coetzee Floating Trophy (Most Points for Herbs)

Bernice Mallet: Eric Marsden Trophy (Most Points in Exotic Section); Count Natalia Labia Memorial Floating Trophy (Most Points in Pot Plant Section)

Cherise Viljoen: CHS Chairman's Floating (Best Exhibit in Pot Plant Section); AM van der Merwe Trophy (Best Exhibit in The Fragrant Garden Section)

Georgina Charlesworth: CHS Chairmans Centennial Cup (Best Exhibit in Collector's Corner Section); Edna Minnitt Trophy (Best Exhibit in Fruit and Veg Section)

Jan Meynell: CHS Floating Cup (Best Exhibit in Proteaceae and Ericaceae); Stuber Cup (Most Points in Indigenous Section)

Jane Robertson: Stakol Cup (Best Exhibit for Indigenous Shrubs, Trees and Climbers); Arthur Middlemost Trophy (Best Exhibit in Indigenous Bulb Section)

Jenny Samuel: McDowell Camellia Trophy (Best Exhibit in Camellia Section)

Jenny Scarr: CHS Chairman's Floating Trophy (Best Orchid); CHS Floating trophy (Best Exhibit in Cut Flower Section)

Jenny Zeederberg: Jardine Cup (Best Cymbidium)

Melanie Stewart: Goodall Cup (Best Exhibit in Exotic Bulb Section)

Jenny Scarr & Jenny Zeederberg: Mrs HF Werner Cup (Most Points for Orchids)

Henriette Louw: The Stuber Cup (Best Decorative Entry)

Verity Rufro: Mrs P Coleman 1960 Cup (Best Exhibit in Children's Decorative Class)

Amy Viljoen: Mrs P Coleman 1962 Cup (Best Exotic Flower – Children); Kidz Cup (Best Indigenous Flower – Children)

Jessica Viljoen: St Arnaud Children's Cup (Best Pot of Succulents – Children)

Amy and Jessica Viljoen: Cormack Cup (Best Vegetable – Children)



Below left: Jenny Scarr looking very surprised at the size of her trophy

Right: Amy and Jessica Viljoen with their vegetable exhibits; and

Right below: ... with their pots of succulents

Below: the stalls outside the exhibition hall



JOURNAL OF A HAPHAZARD GARDENER –SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

The CHS Flower and Garden Show requires eighty one 1.8m and fifteen 2.4m trestle tables. When I arrived early on Friday morning the day before the show, they were all stacked waiting expectantly. On Saturday morning there they were all laid out and covered in a variety of exhibits: a wonderful transformation. Were your plants there? No, neither were mine. I took one glance at the categories in the Show schedule and took fright. But when I had a look at the exhibits on the show I realized that many of the plants that were on display are growing in our garden. One I noticed is the beautiful and unusual evergreen shrub *Eriocephalus africanus* (Wild Rosemary). It was there in three different guises. To quote the schedule under the heading Indigenous Section – Shrubs, Trees and Climbers, there were Classes for: '**One species/hybrid of shrub in flower**'; or '**... in berry or fruit**'; or '**... to be judged for foliage**'. It is easy to grow and the leaves have a pleasant smell when crushed. In winter it produces many attractive white flowers. It's one of those wonderful local plants that love the wind and need very little care. The name *Eriocephalus* is from the Greek erion, wool, and cephalus, head, referring to the fluffy seed heads. Two other plants in the garden, *Carissa macrocarpa* (Num num) and *Podalyria calyptrata* could easily have been entered in the same sections as the wild rosemary.

I could have done the same in the Class '**One species/hybrid or climber**' with *Rhoicissus tomentosa* (Wild grape). This evergreen has attractive foliage and grows vigorously over our back garden wall. Another Class also caught my eye: '**Miscellaneous Indigenous Plants: A bowl/vase of Restionaceae 1-4 species, male and/or female allowed**'. There are two attractive species in our garden that I could have easily cut and put in a vase. Maybe next year.

At the September monthly meeting we were very lucky to win a signed copy of the new book **Visitor's guide: Flower route** by Marion Whitehead (see back page). The book concentrates on the West Coast from Darling to the Richtersveld in the Northern Cape. The article about each region has a detailed map and spotlights places of interest, where to stay and eat with contact details and useful information like where you will need to take extra petrol. The photographs help to identify the plants you are likely to see. One of the parks highlighted is the Tankwa Karoo National Park and Marion Whitehead's description brought back happy memories of a birding holiday we spent there. To quote: 'This is one of the few places you may...see aardvark, one of the impossible Five, in daylight'. And we did – a vivid memory. There is also a guide to 'favourite farm stalls along the N7'. I like these lists because one can then agree – **De Tol Plaasstal** in

Piekenierskloof does indeed have scrumptious homemade goodies, while we find the **Kardoesie Farm Stall** nearby a disappointment because of the rather bland food. There is also a section in the book on how to take good flower photographs and about the secret life of plants. Marion Whitehead quotes John Manning: 'Don't stick your nose into a protea... they have little scent [and] are refuges for tiny mites. They use proteas as bus stops... They wait for a passing bird or insect so that they can get a lift to the next flower to meet other boy or girl mites.' I recommend this book as it is a wonderful resource for those wishing to explore our local wonderland of spring flowers. [Whitehead, Marion. 2016. **Visitor's guide: Flower route**. Maitland: MapStudio. ISBN 9781770268579]

During spring, one of our favourite places to visit is the Tienie Versveld Nature Reserve outside Darling on the road to Yzerfontein. Marion Whitehead writes: 'It is full of little gems and carpets of spring flowers'.



One of the little gems that we have recently discovered is closer to home. It is the Harmony Flats Nature Reserve in the middle of suburbia between the Strand and Gordon's Bay. The display of spring flowers was breathtaking. We saw, for the first time, the Spider orchid *Bartholina burmanniana* (above, left) growing in the wild. Getting down on our hands and knees we saw the rare sweet smelling *Disa tenella* (above, centre). The reserve is VERY small – about 4 soccer fields (9 hectare) in size. It is one of the last spots where you find the Lourensford Alluvium Fynbos. The site was first proclaimed as a reserve in 1985 to try to preserve the Geometric tortoise but this was unsuccessful. It was then realized that with the encroachment of houses on all sides the area needed to be saved for its critically endangered plant species. It is now administered by the Strand Municipality and there is a permanent biodiversity management staff caring for the area. On the day we were there we met 4 highly motivated students from CPUT (above, right). They are interns in their final practical experience year. Do pay the reserve a visit. The easiest approach is from the robot intersection at the start of Sir Lowry's Pass. Turn right and drive until you reach Dennehof Rd on your right. Carry on down this road until you see the reserve on your left. It is not sign posted but there is a low fence and a wooden office to act as beacons. Here are some other pictures taken at the reserve (from left to right): *Babiana angustifolia*, *Arctopus monacanthus* (Bear food) and *Gladiolus alatus* (Kalkoentjie).



ON THE SNAIL TRAIL

"For decades gardeners have tried many ways to rid their gardens of snails and slugs – but every year they appear again! Try these organic methods for deterring these creatures from your garden..."

Despite the size of slugs and snails, their trail of devastation can be great. By familiarising yourself with the habits and needs of these creatures, you can easily control them without having to resort to toxic measures.

The body of snails and slugs has a high water content. To prevent water evaporation, their bodies are wrapped in a coat of mucous. Just behind their mouth they have a special slime gland which secretes the mucous on which they glide over the ground. They must protect themselves from the sun and hide in damp, poorly ventilated areas to retain their body moisture.

Follow these measures for snail and slug control:

- Keep your soil's pH level balanced by applying good compost.
- Avoid planting too closely as this results in poor ventilation and damp conditions.
- When preparing your soil for planting or mulching, always rake the ground fine and even, as this will deprive them of hiding places – the soil clumps also provide ideal places for the snails to lay their eggs. Hoe the top layer of the ground on a regular basis to make life for snail and slugs uncomfortable. In this manner you also may come across a clutch of white pearl-like snail eggs.
- Mulching is part of good soil management. However, in a garden where there is an invasion of snails and slugs due to reasons beyond the gardener's control, remove the mulch until the situation is under control. To reduce the loss of moisture of the soil, regularly hoe the soil in the upper 2cm region and rake even. Hoeing breaks down the fine channels through which the moisture is drawn up by capillary action. When mulching, only use a very thin layer of shredded, dried organic matter.

The best materials for mulching are:

- Whole comfrey leaves – the rough texture is uncomfortable to glide over.
- Sawdust – place a thick ring around vulnerable plants as this slows down the movement of snails.
- Clean river sand (on clay soils only), crushed eggshells or lime. The latter two naturally balance acid soil conditions.
- Coarse peanut shells.
- Untreated pine bark for flowerbeds.
- Run a pathway of coarse gravel around your vegetable patch. The rough uneven material will deter many snails.
- Interplant with parsley, sage, basil, lavender, mint, because snails dislike the scent.
- Grow the odd lettuce plant as bait to distract snails from your main crops. You can also bait them with a mixture of bran, cat pellets and water, from which you can collect them easily.
- If you harvest your cabbages or carrots, do not leave the 'holes' open and the residues lying around.

Change your soil management and the snail and slug population will balance itself to a tolerable level. After all, snails and slugs are an importance food source for many garden creatures such as toads, mice, hedgehogs and lizards. They are also relished by birds such as the Cape robin, olive thrush, hadedah and coucal.

Beer trap:

Sink a bowl into the soil, where the soil is at the same level as the brim, and fill the bowl with beer. According to most sources, snails will be attracted to the beer and find a boozy end.

Although they love your butter lettuce, snails also eat decaying matter, leaf mould and fungi, thus forming an important part of the environment. Slugs are effective scavengers, feeding on insects, worms and even snail eggs. The slimy mucous of both snails and slugs contains enzymes which are beneficial to the soil.

Tips:

Some recommended control methods include:

- Encourage natural predators, or keep a few chickens and a duck or two.
- Monitor damp shady areas in your garden. Lift and check bushy plants regularly, especially clumps like agapanthus and ivy.
- Place barriers across pathways used by snails, such as wood ash, crushed eggshells or sawdust.
- Sprinkle tobacco dust around plants.
- Nothing beats good old hand picking – the best time to do this is at night. Alternatively, rub fat or lard on cabbage leaves to trap them in daylight.

Try to avoid poisons as they can cause ill effects in other creatures as well."



[This article is found on <http://gosouth.co.za/gardening-snail-trail/> and the following article on <http://gosouth.co.za/indigenous-colour-garden/> provided by Life is a Garden]

INDIGENOUS COLOUR IN THE GARDEN

"The miracle of spring can be seen in the countryside and in our gardens.

The South African countryside in spring wears a coat of many colours, of pink proteas, yellow gladioli and mauve sutera on hillsides, carmine dierama and yellow daisies in grasslands, gold gazania and purple vygies on rocky ground, fiery kniphofia and white arums in vleis, and orange clivia and indigo streptocarpus carpeting forest floors.

Life is a spring garden which is bright and colourful, with a profusion of annuals and perennials, and an abundance of bulbs. If you didn't have time to plant for spring, or need to fill gaps, you can still enjoy a beautiful spring garden by visiting your local garden centre now. There you will find flowering spring bulbs, annuals and perennials ready for planting in borders, on banks, in rockery pockets and containers.

Pretty trees to colour your spring garden include the tree wisteria (*Bolusanthus speciosus*) which grows to a height and spread of 4-7m and has a slender form and slightly weeping branches, with mauve pea-shaped flower trusses. The purple broom (*Polygala myrtifolia*) has beautiful clusters of mauve flowers and can be grown as a small tree or shrub as it reaches a height of only 2m. It is not only the colours of spring that delight, but also the scents found in the butterfly bush (*Buddleja auriculata*) and the creamy-white, bell-shaped flowers of September bells (*Rothmannia globosa*).

Rockeries are bright with orange-red kalanchoe, gerbera and ursinia in sparkling orange, and the glistening flowers of magenta mesembryanthemum. A sunny slope is ideal for aloe, lion's ear (*Leonotis leonurus*), plumbago (*Plumbago auriculata*), protea and leucospermum. Even a slight slope is perfect for arctotis, felicia, gazania and mesembryanthemum that need good drainage.

Emphasise a flight of steps with pots of showy zonale pelargoniums. Drop a pot or two in empty spaces in the border, or combine them with their scented-leafed relations. Ivy-leafed geraniums (*Pelargonium peltatum*) with shiny foliage and flowers in pink, red, amethyst, purple, salmon and yellow, are usually seen spilling from window boxes, hanging baskets and window boxes. They are equally attractive down banks, over low fences and trellis. Compact plants are the answer where wind is a problem. Cape daisies, vygies and nemesia look spectacular when planted in clumps of colour.

Every spring garden should have some daisies. The colours of gazanias range from cream through lemon, gold and bronze, russet and maroon-red. Many are bicoloured; whilst others display a contrasting colour around the central disc. The ursinia's daisy-like flowers come in shades of yellow and orange with red and black centres.

The dusty-pink forest lily (*Veltheimia bracteata*), bush lily (*Clivia miniata*) with trumpet-shaped blooms in shades of orange and yellow, and *Clivia nobilis* with pendulous dark orange flowers and green tips, will colour shady areas in your spring garden. The forest bell bush (*Mackaya bella*) is a dense shrub with glossy green leaves and bell-shaped white flowers with mauve veins that thrives in the semi-shade.

Spring is a time when we should forget about colour schemes and simply enjoy our bright and beautiful gardens, gardens where floral pictures are painted in glorious splashes of colour."



NOTICEBOARD FOR ITEMS OF INTEREST

Looking for a gardener? Jane Robertson's gardener of 15 years' standing has, through no fault of his own, just lost the job he had had for ten years, and is looking for work on a Wednesday. He lives in Westlake Village and cycles to work. He is absolutely trustworthy and an excellent all-round gardener. (The only task Jane can think of that she has never asked him to do is prune roses.) If anyone is able to offer him employment, Jane can be contacted on 021-794-0208 and shall be glad to answer any questions and give Sibus details.

SARDA's Open Garden at Water Oak Farm: Sat/Sun, 8/9 October 2015 from 09:30 to 17:00. Entrance fee is R30 at the gate. There will be a tea garden. For more information, call Debbie on 082-406-3434.

Lost Property: A Tamron lens cap was found in the hall after the show. If it belongs to you, please call Melanie on 021-788-2840.