



President: David Davidson, **Chairman:** Michael Tuffin, **Hon Treasurer:** Henry Diesveld, **Secretary:** Glenda Thorpe
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NEXT MEETING

Monday, 1 May 2017 at 20:00 at The Athenaeum, Newlands. We *will* meet on the public holiday.

R10 for members; R20 for visitors.

The evening will begin with our **Annual General Meeting**, notice of which was given last month. The proposed Budget for 2017/2018 is on page 10. Please remember to bring your copies of the Minutes and Financials to the meeting.

Our speaker will follow the formal proceedings.

There is no introduction needed for the travelling plant collector, Ernst van Jaarsveld. We will accompany him on an armchair excursion ...

FROM AGULHAS TO ANGOLA

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

The ladies of the CHS Nursery (the sale of plants) have agreed that plants can be brought to meetings again. Their only request is that you are to please take your plants home if they have not been sold, and nurture them until the next meeting. ☺ We will have sweetpea seeds from a Chelsea grower to sell! It's time for sowing.

Sadly, the Kirstenbosch Plant Fair has been cancelled for this year BUT if you have brought in any seeds or bulbs, these will now be available from the CHS Nursery.

FORTHCOMING OUTINGS

Sat, 13 May at 12:00: Visit two gardens designed by Clare Burgess, one in Fernwood and one in Silwood. Limited to 20 members. The list is full, but put your name on the waiting list as there's always a chance of a cancellation.

WELCOME ...

... to a few more new members. They are Kathleen Garrity, Margy Hamann and Jean Sleigh. We hope they will enjoy what we have to offer and stay with us for many years to come.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

This is a last reminder to pay your annual subscription. If you have not renewed by the AGM, you will no longer receive newsletters or notifications. A renewal form (sent with your February and March newsletters) and payment will guarantee your reinstatement to the membership database.

REPORT BACK

March Plant Table:

Thank you to those members who took the time and trouble to fill in the new plant slip for the specimens brought to the plant table. A few reminders about filling these in:

1. The plant name and details regarding its growth or position in the garden would be very useful to those who live in your suburb.
2. The idea behind ticking the water that is used on your plants is to compile a database of plants that have done well with wellpoint water (good or bad) or just grey water and survived the restrictions imposed on us.
3. Please ensure your slip is stuck onto the green bottle with your specimen, or onto your plant pot.
4. For every plant brought on the evening, the grower will be awarded ONE point. No slip or no name = no point. These points will be tallied over the year and prizes awarded at our year-end party.
5. An *extra* point will be awarded to both an indigenous and an exotic specimen chosen by Jenny on the night.

Your plants will be divided into Indigenous and Exotic on the Plant Table, which will give members an idea where unusual things are coming from eg. in the Americas and what local plants are flowering. Jenny will help you with this if you're not sure.

Jenny reported on the plants/veg brought in by members. The notes have been taken, for the most part, from the slips attached to each specimen. Selected photographs can be seen on page 9. More on Face Book.

Grown in **Constantia** with 'shared' complex borehole water on allocated days and grey water:

- Cinderella pumpkin – 3 heritage seeds planted July/Aug, of which 1 came up; started out bright yellow colour then became bright orange; climbed into lemon tree, for which it was too heavy and had to be lowered to the ground; weighs 11 ½ kgs!!

Grown in **Kirstenhof** with good wellpoint water:

- *Omicum ?kilimandscharicum*, perennial "Bush Basil" (EX) – strong comfrey smell, doesn't seed.
- *Justicia ?fulvicoma* (Acanthaceae) (EX) – sprawling.
- *Justicia petiolaris* (EX) – blue flower; requires sun or semi-shade; long-flowering.
- *Streptocarpus* hybrid (IND)
- *Pentas lanceolata* (Rubiaceae) (EX) – long-flowering; has lots of water; loved by butterflies.
- *Tricyrtis formosana* (Liliaceae) "Toad lily" (EX) – from East Asia. Shade lover. Comes in a number of colours. Dies down for the winter.
- *Tecomaria capensis* (IND) – coral colour; loved by sunbirds for their nectar.
- *Plectranthus ecklonii* (Lamiaceae)
- *Plectranthus ambiguus* – easy to grow.

Grown in **Pinelands** with bad wellpoint water and grey water:

- *Zauschneria californica* "Californian Fuchsia" (EX) – from Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico. Very hardy. Not watered very often.
- Fuchsia hybrid (one parent *F microphylla*) (EX) – from central/south America. Growing in shade house with orchids. Very little municipal water on allocated days.
- *Plectranthus oertendahlii* (IND) – only true variegated Plectranthus (you find this out by looking under the leaf). In shade house; very little municipal water.

Grown in **Pinelands** with grey water:

- *Fuchsia triphylla* (EX) – semi-shade/morning sun; minimum wind; tallish bush.

Grown in **Kenilworth** with municipal water (collection of clean cold water before hot water emerges):

- *Jatropha* (Euphorbiaceae) (EX) – from central America. Name taken from the Greek, 'iatros' = a physician and 'trophe' = food. Plants have medicinal properties.
- *Nerine bowdenii* (IND) – from the Eastern Cape; has grass-like foliage.
- *Nerine filifolia*

Grown in **Sea Point** and only watered by rain:

- *Bougainvillea* (EX) – do very well in the drought. No flowers in winter months. Flowers increase when stressed.
- *Bauhinia galpinii* "Pride of de Kaap" (IND) – pods explode to disperse seeds.
- *Barleria obtusa* (IND) – hardy; survives the heat; very low maintenance.

Grown in **Rondebosch** and only watered by rain:

- *Sanseveria* "Mother-in-Law's tongue" (IND) – survives arid conditions; has a pale green flower; lovely perfume.

The plain Sanseveria is indigenous; yellow-edged one is the pot plant and to propagate you have to cut away the central green part and make sure buds grow on the edges where it is variegated.

Grown in **Rosebank** with grey water:

- Japanese anemone (EX) – shade lover.

Grown in **Diep River** with grey water:

- *Gasteria glomerata* (IND) – from the Kouga River in the Eastern Cape.
- *Plectranthus saccatus* "stoep jacaranda" (IND) – does well in a pot in semi-shade.
- *Plectranthus ecklonii* and *P fruticosus* (IND) – watered 2 – 3 x per week; survived full sun all summer (smaller leaves); flowering well now in shade.
- *Thorncroftia longiflora* (IND) – needs space; branches out over the ground.

Grown in **Community Garden on City-owned Kirstenhof Greenbelt on Westlake River**:

- *Leonotis leonurus* (IND) – sunbirds and Cape whiteeyes love the nectar; self seeds. Planted in 2010 and watered for 2 years. Now only watered by rain.
- *Psoralea aphylla* (IND) – originally planted 2010; now only seedling; now only watered by rain.
- *Freylinia lanceolata* (IND) – planted in 2016 and received 3 litres per week from municipal standpoint until January 2017. Now only rain.
- *Pelargonium capitatum* (IND) – planted in 2016 and only watered by rain since January 2017.
- *Salvia chamelaegnea* (IND) – planted in 2010 and only watered by rain since January 2017.
- *Polygala myrtifolia* (IND) – planted in 2012 and only watered by rain since January 2017.



Cherrie walked off with the raffle prize (*P. Oertendahlii*) for the first time in her more than 30 years as a member.

Cape Flats Strandveld plants:

- *Athanasia trifurcata* and *Metalasia muricata* (IND) – no compost or fertilizers allowed. Planted in 2015. Surviving with rain only since January 2017.
- *Muraltia mitior* (endangered) – planted in 2016 and only watered by rain since January 2017.

Grown in **Constantia** with grey water and rain water:

- *Gomphocarpus fruticosus* (Asclepiadaceae) (IND) – host plant of monarch butterflies; milky sap; good for flower arrangements.

Grown in **University Estate** (water type not available at time of going to print)

- *Plectranthus ?argentea* – grey foliage which gives good interest in shady corners; straggly; fairly waterwise.

NB: Although there are about 355 spp of *Plectranthus*, generally in summer rainfall areas, there are no indigenous *Plectranthus*es in the Western Cape. The closest they come is Knysna.

The most waterwise are *P neochilus* and *P ornatus*, which can take full sun and are drought tolerant.

Others are *P tetragonus* (Malawi), *P esculentis* (yellow), *P madagascariensis* (Mauritius and Reunion), *P ciliatus* and hybrid Mona Lavender (*P saccatus* x *P hillardiae*). Namibia has 7 spp. If you want these in your garden, be prepared to give them water, preferably shade and good soil.

JENNY'S CHOICE FOR APRIL

Exotic

Andrea's pumpkin

The pests are only too ready to attack it at any stage and as it was planted about 9 months ago, that is a mammoth time to care for it.

Indigenous

Beth's Nerines

Any bulb is notoriously fickle about flowering and to get the watering correct, not too much or too little, at the correct time and to protect the flower stem from being eaten, is an effort.

These are worthy winners as they are both most difficult to get to that stage of development.

Beasts and Beauties talk – part 2:

Here is the second half of Cherise's list, showing the names of the 'beasts' with a 'beautiful' alternative.

Beast or Beauty	Latin, Family and Common Names	Cherise's observations:	Official description	Summer/Winter Rainfall	Threatened Status
Beast	Hibiscus tiliaceus MALVACEAE (Hibiscus/cotton family) Wild Cotton Tree, Tree Hibiscus, Kusvuurbloem Wildekatoenboom,	Full sun any composted soil. Likes plenty of water. Prune back hard when untidy. Attracts pollinators.	Large spreading open-branched shrub or small tree 3-6m. Young branches, buds and flowers densely covered with short soft hairs. Distinctive greenish-purple heart-shaped or round leaves. Large showy yellow flowers with a deep purplish centre occur in summer, turning shades of coppery orange to deep red as they mature, shed after lasting only a day	Summer	LC
Beauty	Hibiscus pedunculatus MALVACEAE (Hibiscus/cotton family) Forest Pink Hibiscus, Pink Mallow, Wildestokroos, Pienk Hibiscus.	Full sun, semi-shade any composted soil. Likes moderate water. Prune back lightly when untidy. Use in middle of a mixed bed concealing sparse woody base and showing off long slender branches with pretty flowers. Attracts pollinators.	Long-flowering, small, dainty erect shrub 1-2 m. Base is woody and sparsely branched. Single dangling long stalked pink flowers year round, even though each flower only lasts a day.	Summer	LC
Beast	Hyparrhenia hirta POACEAE (Grass family) Common Thatching Grass, Dektamboekiegras	Full sun, any soil. Tough, low maintenance. Waterwise. Prune back hard in winter when untidy. Use as hedging & screening. Spreads rapidly and should be contained. Pioneer.	<i>Fast growing</i> , wiry, tufted perennial grass 1-3m. Rhizomatous and with slender culms. Thin leaf blade is attractive blue grey. Thin, sparse inflorescences Sep-Jun.	Summer	LC
Beauty	Melinis nerviglumis POACEAE (Grass family) Bristle-Leaved Red Top.	Full sun, any soil. Tough, low maintenance. Waterwise. Use in mixed borders. Ornamental. Year-long interest. Provides shelter, food and nesting material for many birds and insects.	Soft looking tufted perennial grass 25cm with rolled blue-green leaves. Flowers fade from purple to rose pink to white while maturing. Inflorescences densely covered with glistening, silky hairs give a 'shining' appearance Sep-Apr. Light, fluffy black seeds are scattered by wind.	Winter to Summer	LC

Beast	Lobelia xongorolana (from Angola) LOBELIACEAE	Full sun, semi-shade, any composted soil. Likes moderate water. Prune back hard when untidy.	Very large multi-stemmed perennial 3-5m with long upright softwood branches. Leaves contain a watery or milky sap. Large two-lipped pink flowers are typical of lobelia. Upper lip consists of two smaller erect lobes and lower lip of three spreading lobes.	Summer	
Beauty	Lobelia valida LOBELIACEAE Galjoenblom	Full sun, any well drained composted soil. Easy to grow Hardy. Coastal gardens. Pinch tips for bushier growth stems get untidy and woody at base after a year's vigorous growth.	<i>Fast growing</i> short-lived perennial 40-60cm with upright stems light green coarsely toothed leaves. Deep blue flowers crowd at tips of branches with yellow centres and a white splotch on the lower petals Nov-Apr. Lots of tiny black seeds produced.	Winter to Summer	VU
Beast	Metalasia muricata ASTERACEAE White Bristle Bush, Witsteekbossie, Blombos	Full sun, well drained sandy soil. Tough, low maintenance. Hardy coastal plant. Waterwise. Prune back lightly when untidy. Attracts pollinators.	Bushy sturdy shrub 2-4 m. Silver-grey or green rough foliage. Bristly creamy-white clusters of flowers at tips of branches throughout winter	Winter to Summer	LC
Beauty	Metalasia aurea ASTERACEAE Geelsteekbossie	Full sun, well drained sandy soil. Tough, low maintenance. Hardy and Waterwise Easy to grow. Attracts pollinators.	Compact rounded shrub of 0.51-1m with rough green bristly foliage. Terminal clusters of bright yellow flowers throughout the winter.	Winter	LC
Beast	Pelargonium tomentosum GERANIACEAE Peppermint scented pelargonium	Semi-shade, full shade any well drained composted soil. Low maintenance. Used as a ground cover, on embankments in semi-shaded areas or in pots.	Aromatic, low-growing perennial 20-40cm. Velvety soft peppermint-scented leaves and stems. Tiny, white flowers with purple markings on the petals Oct-Jan. Seeds have a feathered, spiral, tail-like attachment	Winter	LC
Beauty	Pelargonium hispidum GERANIACEAE Hispid Pelargonium, Grofharig	Full sun to semi-shade any well drained composted soil. Tough shrub for coastal, fynbos, low maintenance and Waterwise gardens.	Erect, branched herbaceous shrub 1-2m high, with woody base. Aromatic roughly hairy leaves. Light pink flowers Sep-Apr. Seeds have a feathered, spiral, tail-like attachment.	Winter	LC
Beast	Polygala myrtifolia POLYGALACEAE (Milkwort family) September Bush, Augustusbossie, Blouertjie.	Full sun, semi shade well-drained composted soil. Easy to grow. Tough shrub for coastal, fynbos, low maintenance and Waterwise gardens. Prune lightly to promote bushier growth. Attracts pollinators.	Multi-stemmed shrub 2m or small tree 4m. Slender branches have grey-green myrtle-like leaves. Pink blooms Aug-Oct cover the bush. Fruit is a small, winged capsule.	Winter to Summer	LC
Beauty	Polygala virgata POLYGALACEAE (Milkwort Family, Purple broom Family) Purple Broom, Bloukappie, Persboom	Full sun, semi shade well-drained composted soil. Easy to grow. Suitable for coastal, fynbos, low maintenance and water-wise gardens. Attracts pollinators.	Fast growing upright shrub 2-2.5m. Single stem at the base of the plant and slender hairless branches at the top Drooping racemes of deep purple magenta flowers at the ends of branches Sep-Feb. Winged capsule fruit.	Winter to Summer	LC
Beast	Rhoicissus tomentosa VITACEAE (Grape family) Glossy Forest Grape	Semi-shade, full shade any well drained composted soil. Low maintenance easy to grow. Used as a ground cover, on embankments in hanging baskets or climbing on a fence to form a screen, or over a pergola or a trellis. Accustomed to low light it can be grown indoors. Attracts birds.	Vigorous, evergreen tendril climber which can reach tops of 20m high trees with rope-like stems. Kidney-shaped, 3-veined leaves with soft, dense, rust-coloured hairs. Small, creamy green flowers clustered in dense heads on long stalks Oct-Jan. Bunches of purple grape-like fruits, green turn red to deep purplish black when fully ripe.	Winter to Summer	LC
Beauty	Rhoicissus digitata VITACEAE (Grape family) Baboon Grape, Bobbejaandruif.	Full sun, semi shade well-drained composted soil. Hardy, low maintenance. Easy to grow. Used as a ground cover, on embankments in hanging baskets or climbing on a fence to form a screen, or over a pergola or a trellis. Can form a small loosely stemmed shrub.	Fast growing vigorous woody climber 10m or large loose, untidy shrub 1.5 m. Small greenish-yellow inconspicuous flowers Jan-April. Red-brown fleshy berries ripen to purple Mar-Aug.	Winter to Summer	LC

Beast	Salvia africana-lutea LAMIACEAE (Sage or mint family) Beach Salvia, Dune Salvia, Bruin-, Sandsalie	Full sun any well drained composted soil. Tough shrub for coastal, fynbos, low maintenance and Waterwise gardens. Prune lightly after flowering. Attracts pollinators.	Rounded large dense shrub 2m aromatic greyish-green foliage. Bright yellow flowers fade to rusty-orange and reddish brown. After petals fall, saucer-like papery dark calyx remains on plant.	Winter	LC
Beauty	Salvia dolomitica LAMIACEAE Dolomite Sage, Pilgrim's Rest Pink Sage	Full sun, will tolerate partial shade, any well-drained, composted soil. Prune back hard to encourage bushy, non-woody growth in late winter. Attracts pollinators.	Fast growing shrub 1–2m Aromatic dusty grey-green leaves. Lilac and white flowers with yellow throat markings Sep-Feb. Deep pinkish-purple calyx remains after flowering holding the nutlet seeds.	Summer	LC
Beautiful Beast					
	Gardenia thunbergii RUBIACEAE (Gardenia family) White Gardenia, Forest Gardenia, Witkajtjiepiering, Buffelsbal	Full sun, semi-shade, any well drained composted soil. Regular deep watering. Easy to grow. Tough shrub for low maintenance gardens. Good pot plant in a large container, interesting form plant with pale grey bark and angular shape.	Slow-growing large shrub or small tree, 2-5m. Smooth grey branches bearing whorls of glossy dark green leaves. Strongly fragrant large starry white flowers Oct-Mar. Unusual, rock-hard and distinctive egg-shaped greyish speckled fruits stay on the bush all year round	Summer	LC
	Laportea grossa URTICACEAE (Nettle family) Spotted Nettle, Gevlekte Brandnetel	Semi-shade, full shade any well drained compost enriched soil. Beautiful foliage plant. Feed and water this plant in summer for it to perform at its best.	Scrambling spreading perennial 1m. Upright much branched stems have downward-pointing stinging hairs. decorative, glossy dark green foliage with conspicuous white spots on triangular, spiky leaves. Small white flowers Dec-Mar.	Winter to Summer	LC
	Oldenburgia grandis ASTERACEAE (daisy family) Lamb's Ears, Cushion Bush, Kreupelbos	Full sun, any well drained composted soil. Makes a lovely feature plant.	Robust tree 4-6m, gnarled trunk and strong branch structure. Large, stiff leathery glossy leaves in rosettes at the end of branches. Giant cream and purple thistle-shaped flowers yearlong. Fruits are small brown nutlets.	Summer	LC
Beastly Beauty					
	Clematis x Clematopsis RANUNCULACEAE (Buttercup Family) Wild Clematis, Klimop	Full sun, well-drained composted soil. Low maintenance. Easy to grow. It requires a trellis, a pergola or a fence to climb on. Be a loosely stemmed shrub. Prune back hard in late winter.	Deciduous climber to 5m. Slender, twining woody stems. Sweetly scented, creamy white pink-tinged flowers Feb-May. With 5 pointy petals and a puff of yellow stamens in the centre. Large, fluffy, silvery seedheads Jul-Aug.	Winter to Summer	
	Barleria greenii ACANTHACEAE (Acanthus Family) Green's Barleria, Wild Bush Petunia	Full sun, semi-shade, any well drained composted soil. Regular deep watering.	Small shrub 1.5m with robust stems which are woody at the base. Large sweetly fragrant white to pink flowers Jan-Mar, occur in groups in the axils of the leaves. The flower bracts are stiff and spiny. Seed in capsules.	Summer	CR
	Berkheya purpurea ASTERACEAE Purple Burkheya, Bloudisseldoring	Full sun, well-drained composted soil. Hardy, low maintenance. Waterwise but for lush growth needs regular deep watering.	Fast-growing, long-lived perennial, 70cm. Dense clumps foliage with large green rosettes of prickly leaves. Flower stem 1m bears two toned purple flowers Dec-Apr.	Summer	LC

JOURNAL OF A HAPHAZARD GARDENER – APRIL/MAY 2017

The talk given by Kay Montgomery about the history of gardening at the general meeting in March was fascinating because it put into perspective one's own efforts in the garden. I thought that I was ploughing my own path. I am a creature of habit like everyone else: Flower colour co-ordination, abandoned dahlias and planted local like everyone else.

The question at the conclusion of the talk about how to stop a neighbour's cat coming into one's garden fully caught my attention. There is a large white Tom that visits us on a regular basis. His paw marks on the windscreen of the car and pooh deposits are evidence of his nightly visits. So I went to the internet to see what solutions are offered. They included talking to the neighbour but we are not sure where they live. They also suggest the use of ultrasonic sound and motion activated sprinklers. So I gave up, as these ideas aren't going to work for me.

As a result I got sidetracked by the feral cat and the story of Tibbles the killer (right). Tibbles was the pet of a lighthouse keeper, David Lyall, who was posted to Stephens Island off the coast of New Zealand in 1894. He was a keen amateur naturalist and Tibbles was bringing home as part of his prey a strange flightless songbird, hitherto unknown to science. Lyall sent skins to prominent ornithologists and the bird came to be recognized as a new species, which was named the Stephens Island Wren, with the congratulatory scientific name *Xenicus lyalli* (Lyall's stranger). The Wren was endemic to the island. Tibbles, who was pregnant, left home and she and her feral offspring had exterminated every wren in just over a year.



A BirdLife South Africa site reported that in Cape Town domestic cats kill between 25-33 million animals annually. Birds count for 2.4 million of this number. Can this statistic possibly be true? How did they calculate this number? (In a book I read called **Mathematics in the newspaper**, the author cautioned against a belief in any statistic one read in the newspaper.)

I recall that on our visit to the Company's Garden we were told that the feral cat population was a big problem but that they help to keep the rat population under control. In 2016 there were reports that a very rare Lykoi or Werewolf kitten had been found in the Garden. It is a natural mutation and there are only 35 in the world. It has been sterilized by TEARS and returned to the garden.

Islands also suffer particularly from feral cats: Robben Island being a case in point. Their removal was targeted by BirdLife South Africa and UCT ornithologists who proceeded to shoot them. DARG persuaded them to stop by promising to capture them, have them spayed and then returned to the Island to kill the rats. They only managed to catch five cats and so the shooting continued. Another organization that got involved was the UWC feral cat project (TutCat). In 2015 it was reported that there were still some feral cats on the Island; that the rabbit and rat population had increased and that the penguins and other birds were being killed in greater numbers. Man creates the problem, tries to solve it and only makes the situation worse. Roger Tabor of TutCat stated that: 'We don't want to acknowledge that it is our fault. It's not a case of the cat being the worst offender. It isn't even remotely the worst offender. It's us'.

Delivered with our morning newspaper recently was a promotional copy of a local décor magazine: Condé Nast House & Garden. There are three articles about gardening: use of grasses and perennials in a Dutch garden, how to make the most of the entrance way to your house and about a garden in a remote corner of New Zealand. On first glance nothing much here for the haphazard gardener. The décor section with its articles about autumn palettes and style must-haves were not my area of interest.

But I had another look. The grass article had a wonderful picture of autumnal grasses and seed heads in 'shades of gold, blond and russet' that looked stunning. Grasses in South Africa are summer rainfall plants and so not much use in summer-dry Cape Town. But the comment about perennials spoke good advice for us: 'So much more dynamic, they change with seasons, die back, come again'. Hurrah for the common *Gazania* which has survived the drought in our garden.

The article about entranceways pointed out that in your driveway the junction of walls and floor was a 'perfect opportunity for some greenery' like succulents and miniature agapanthus. This will definitely work in our garden. In our driveway there is no room for a garden bed but I plan to extend the number of rectangular pots along the wall.

The horticulturist who created the New Zealand garden is quoted as saying: 'a garden should be of its place'. Exactly! – this brings me to a book which caught my eye on a trip to the public library.

The book, **Succulent Paradise**, is about twelve great gardens of the world that are situated in dry areas. The South African gardens are the Karoo Desert National Botanic Garden, Worcester and Obesa Gardens in Graaff-Reinet. I learnt a new word Xeriscape from the Greek xeros for dry, and landscape. It means gardening in harmony with prevailing climatic conditions. What to do in our garden? The lawn looks pathetic, is struggling to survive and needs to be replaced. The book is an excellent resource for the various types of succulents that can be grown successfully. The author describes them as 'earthy and humble, work anywhere, easy to establish and mature quickly'. They can

also easily be grown in small and medium sized pots which one can mix and match and move around to give variety to the garden.

Watch this space for next month's journal for news about how the succulents have transformed our garden!?

I used the following resources when writing this journal:

- **Condé Nast House & Garden April 2017**
- Smith, Gideon F. & Figueiredo, Estrela **Succulent paradise: Twelve great gardens of the world**
- www.birdlife.org.za
- www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/private/tibbles-the-killer/
- www.tutcat.co.za

MEDITERRANEAN GARDENING INTERNATIONAL

It's time to update you on what has been happening on the MG*i* front.

The MG*i* website has a **Book Review** section where you can find books about Mediterranean gardens and plants, and which now includes a review by our very own Marianne Alexander of Marijke Honig's *Indigenous Plant Palettes*.

There is also a **Seed Exchange**. All the information on how to obtain seeds is explained on the website. If you find a name in the list that does not have a photograph perhaps you can supply one. The seeds that were given to Christine when she was here in November are now included in the 2017 seed list. She says, "If any members have photos to fill the gaps where photos are missing, I'd be very pleased to receive them."

Visit <http://mediterraneangardeninginternational.org> and you will find the above pages on the left hand side of the home page. All you need do is click!

A fairly new addition to the MG*i* website is a **Forum**, the explanation of which is: "A computer forum is a bit like Facebook or other social websites. It is a place where a community of people can share information and views on topics of mutual interest. Members can post articles, comment on articles posted by other people, ask other members for information, and answer questions posted by others. This forum is closed to the general public and can only be viewed by people who have subscribed." You, as a CHS member, are a subscriber.

To access this you have to go through the CHS website (www.capehorticulturalsociety.co.za) and click on the MG*i* Forum link on the home page. Type in your first name and surname, as requested (the name we know you by has been used). Your password will be your first and surname, with no space eg. JohnDoe. Family members each have their own password. Use your password for now, although you can change it to something else at a later stage.

Once signed in, you have access to all the 'conversations' under a variety of categories. Feel free to post your own comments or requests. Clicking on Next takes you to the next post in that category. The Forum is very user friendly and easy to navigate. Your comments on how you found this 'experience' would be welcome.

In November 2016, some members of the French group of MG*i* joined a tour to visit the Western Cape. If you would like an armchair tour of our beautiful part of the world and also see a number of gardens of our CHS members, as well as gardens we've visited over the past few years, click on *Activities / Past activities / International / Gardens of the South African Cape*, once you've accessed the website <http://www.mediterraneangardeningfrance.org>. There are plenty of beautiful photographs to drool over.

GARDENING TIPS

Excerpt from <https://gosouth.co.za/april-in-the-garden/> by Life is a garden

Colour matters and to enjoy lots of autumn colour now, means you should PLANT SMART. 'Smart planting' means taking home top sellers, buying plants which are in season (a time when they will be looking their best!), and using those which will give you better bang for your buck!

Ribbon Bush (*Hypoestes aristata*) is a handy gap filler for sun or light, dry shade. This indigenous plant has a reputation of being one of the toughest choices for harsh growing conditions.

Lilyturf (*Liriope* 'Evergreen Giant') is also called an ornamental grass, but actually belongs to the lily family. It grows everywhere (sun or deep shade) in

thick clumps, with dark green leaves about 90 cm long.

Cordylina (*Cordylina banksii* 'Electric Pink') has leaves with shocking pink edges giving it a very tropical appearance. With a mature size of about 1 x 1m, it is ideal for small gardens or containers.

Everlasting (*Syncarpha argentea* 'Emma Everlasting') seems to be indestructible, handling any abuse it might receive. If, however, well cared for, it will produce masses of papery, rose-pink buds fading to white with bright yellow centres, carried on wiry silver-white stems. Perfect for retaining walls.

Plant spring-flowering bulbs now

Plant alliums, anemones, babianas, chinchinchees, freesias, daffodils, hyacinths, ixias, Dutch Irises, lachenalias, snowdrops, muscari, blue bells, narcissus, ranunculi, sparaxis and tritonias. After you have finished your bulb-planting, set out the following seedlings to grow around them: ornamental kale, pansies, violas, Fairy Primula (*Primula malacoides*) and Iceland poppies.

Remember to: Water newly planted bulbs deeply every four days – they should never dry out completely. Those in pots will need more regular watering. [Ed: This could fit in with our watering days.]

Hedge up!

Cool April is the perfect time to plant a new hedge. The advantage is that cooler soil gives young hedge plants a chance to settle in well, and cooler weather will allow you to spend the time needed to dig the trench required to plant them in. High fashion is hedge plants with a dual purpose – defining space and supplying you with edibles like quinces and pomegranates. The following plants are ideal:

- Plant Plumbago (*Plumbago auriculata*), a bushy shrub which flowers profusely from summer to autumn with sky-blue phlox-like flowers. Perfect choice for different sun patterns during the day as it likes full sun and light shade.
- Escallonia 'Iveyi' is a very versatile evergreen and glossy shrub up to 2,5m in height. It is hardy, fast-growing, and produces white flowers from summer to autumn.
- Amatungulu or big num-num (*Carissa macrocarpa*) is also indigenous and will be equally successful in coastal or subtropical gardens. The foliage, starry white flowers and edible fruit are very attractive and it will be only a fool that would attempt to breach your fully grown, thorny, boundary.
- Abeliast, bottle brush (*Callistemon*), Blue potato bush (*Solanum rantonnetii*), Australian Tea Bush and *Camellia sasanqua* will all grow into lovely flowering hedges which do not need constant pruning – all are frost-hardy. Blue Potato Bush (*Solanum rantonnetii*) is another fabulous option, but note that it is a frost sensitive plant.
- If a high and dense, evergreen hedge is what you envisage, plant the cold and frost hardy Sweet Viburnum (*Viburnum odoratissimum*) or Pittosporum.

More Hedging ideas

If screening is not what you're looking for, and you want just a hedge, try these options: Lavender (*Lavandula*), Box Hedge (*Buxus Macrophylla* 'Faulkner'), Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*), Duranta varieties, Freylinia varieties, or Portulaca varieties (for dry conditions).

Bedding plant of the month: Alyssum

Sow cushions of 'snow' all over with honey-scented sweet alyssum (*Lobularia maritima*) which attracts ladybirds, lacewings, predatory wasps and hoverflies

which all feed on aphids. Alyssum loves the cooler months and flowers profusely, so buy bumper packs of seed and sow it everywhere or get some trays of seedlings at your GCA nursery.

Rose care – fill in the gaps

As roses are deciduous, their bottom leaves will soon turn brown and start dropping off. Planting cool-season annuals in front of them will screen the bare stems at the base of the bush. Choose sun lovers like alyssum, calendulas, dwarf snapdragons, lobelias, Namaqualand daisies, phlox and pansies.

Good for you – Asian greens

For a productive winter food garden even if it is only in a box, sow or plant seedlings of Asian greens like mizuna, red giant mustard, pak choi, green-in-snow or tatsoi. They produce an abundance of tangy and flavourful leaves to pick as needed, and are a good source of minerals and vitamins. These plants are extremely pretty with frilly, lobed, or serrated leaves in all shades of green as well as bronze. They combine beautifully with edible flowers such as calendula, viola, and nasturtiums.

Banting broccoli

To grow broccoli on a small scale in pots, choose a size of at least 30 – 40cm in diameter and plant only one plant per pot. Water daily and feed with a nitrogen-rich liquid feed every second week.

New in-store: Go for the latest brassica seed varieties (or cruciferous vegetables) in rainbow colours and with petite sizes, like purple broccoli, purple cauliflower, green cauliflower, baby cabbage, baby cauliflower and mixed kale.

Cool season herbs to plant

Chives and garlic chives – grow in sun or partial shade. They also grow well in window boxes indoors if there is enough light.

Coriander – grow in light shade or indoors on a window sill.

Calendula – healing herb with pretty, edible flowers. Grow in full sun.

Rocket – the peppery leaves are rich in iron, chlorophyll and various vitamins. Grow outside in a sunny spot and even try it indoors on a sunny window sill.

Coastal gardening

(Western, Northern and Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal)

Plants

These plants look top notch in April, providing you with a mass of colour:

Canary Island hibiscus is a large shrub reaching 2.5m in height and 2.5m in width; evergreen, garden hybrid with classic pink flowers; the blooms are large (125mm in diameter) and displayed during late summer to autumn. This plant makes an effective barrier specimen and grows best in sub-tropical and tropical climates especially at the coast.

Mexican bush sage (*Salvia leucantha*) is a downy and spreading shrub which produces white or purple flowers clasped by soft purple calyces from

late summer to early winter when it should be cut back drastically. It is very tough and drought resistant and basically looks after itself in well-draining sandy soil. Butterflies love them.

White correa (*Correa alba*) is a small shrub up to 1,5 m high and wide. It has leathery oval leaves with hairy undersides with lots of delicate white flowers in autumn. Tolerant to salt spray, wind, drought and moderate frost.

Woolly grevillea (*Grevillea lanigera* 'Mount Tamboritha') is an utterly charming, low-growing shrub that copes perfectly in a wide range of climatic conditions, from stormy coastal winds, to hot and dry summers to extreme winter cold. It is a neat evergreen that only grows to a height of 30 to 50 cm, but can spread to a width of about 1,5 to 2 m. It is lovely in a rock and gravel garden. The unusual-looking, pinkish-red and cream flowers appear from early winter to summer.

Garden tasks

- Sow in situ: Wild snapdragons (Nemesias), Namaqualand daisies, bokbaai vygies, and Virginian stocks.

Excerpt from Atlantic Fertilizers' April 2017 newsletter: *Cool April is the perfect time to plant a new hedge. The advantage is that cooler soil gives young hedge plants a chance to settle in well, and cooler weather will allow you to spend the time needed to dig the trench required to plant them in. High fashion is hedge plants with a dual purpose – defining space and supplying you with edibles like quinces and pomegranates.*



Above: *Muraltia mitior* (L),
Metalasia muricata (R)
Right, from top: *Nerine bowdenii*
(front), *N. filifolia* (behind); *Justicia*
?fulvicoma; the 11 ½ Kg
Cinderella Pumpkin!

- Pinch out the growing tips of sweet peas when the seedlings are about 10 to 15cm tall to encourage bushy plants. Feed with 3:1:5 SR.
- Feed young flower seedlings regularly with a water soluble fertiliser and to keep them well-watered.
- Keep on weeding, but leave some seed heads for the birds.
- When belladonna lilies have stopped flowering, they can be lifted (only if overcrowded), and replanted with the neck of each bulb showing above soil level.
- Hold on to fallen leaves. They can be used as a mulch for woodland plants such as azaleas and rhododendrons.
- To ensure a great harvest of lemons, you have to fertilise at least four times per year – in July, September, January and April. Use a balanced granular fertiliser such as 3:1:5 or 8:1:5.



From top:
Zauschneria californica,
Freylinia lanceolata;
Right:
Sanseveria in flower!

(Photos: Andrew and Glenda Thorpe)



THE CAPE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

PROPOSED BUDGET 2017-18

		BUDGET 2016-17	As per audited statement	BUDGET 2017-18
2 016	<u>INCOME STATEMENT</u>		2017	
	INCOME			
18 120	Subscriptions	19 000	21 220	21 000
10 190	Admissions - monthly meetings	10 000	10 130	10 000
2 306	Plant sales at monthly meetings	2 000	1 804	1 000 ¹
9 304	Fund raising - annual plant sales	9 000	10 442	10 000
6	Badges	-	46	-
2 408	Donations	1 500	1 385	1 500
5 525	Interest & dividends re-invested	5 600	5 967	5 500
47 859	TOTAL INCOME	47 100	50 994	49 000
	EXPENSES			
1 559	Printing, stationery & postage	1 600	2 763	2 500
4 899	Speaker fees & Outing gifts	5 000	5 597	5 500
1 824	Refreshments at monthly meetings	1 900	1 863	1 900
323	Raffle plants at monthly meetings	400	329	400
5 170	Rental - storage garage	5 200	5 290	5 300
3 974	- Athenaeum	4 400	4 567	4 900
7 007	Spring Show	5 000	4 426	- ²
20 550	Secretary - honorarium	21 000	21 000	21 000
1 567	Bank charges	1 800	2 016	2 500
967	Xmas party	1 000	772	800
895	Asset purchases - Kettles, computer accessories	300	299	300
2 500	Donations - CPUT Student prizes	2 500	2 500	2 500
404	Donations	600	442	4 200 ³
755	Website, Publicity & computer consumables	800	1 745	1 000
571	Sundry	600	750	600
52 964	TOTAL EXPENSES	52 100	54 359	53 400
R5 105	NET DEFICIT	R5 000	R3 365	R4 400

Notes

1 Sales curtailed due to water restrictions

2 Spring show cancelled

3 R3600 sponsored school trips to Kirstenbosch, R600 Athenaeum gardens

Membership for year ends 2010 – 2017:

293 / 304 / 256 / 226 / 238 / 203 / 195 / 197