



President: Michael Tuffin **Chairman:** Errol Scarr **Hon Treasurer:** Henry Diesveld **Secretary:** Glenda Thorpe
Honorary Members: Laurie Powis, Marianne Alexander, Barbara Hey, Mary Smith,
Anne Bean, Adam Harrower, Michael Tuffin

Entrance fee: Members – R10; Visitors – R30

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Notice is given of the 114th AGM of the CHS to be held on Monday, 6 May 2019 at 20:00
at The Athenaeum, Campground Road, Newlands**

Agenda

1. Confirmation of Minutes of the AGM held on Monday, 7 May 2018
2. Chairman's Annual Report
3. Treasurer's Financial Statements and Auditor's Report
4. Election of President
5. Election of Committee
6. Appointment of Auditor for the ensuing year
7. General

The Minutes of the 2018 AGM, are enclosed/attached. We would appreciate you bringing your copy of these documents to the meeting.

The AGM will be followed by an illustrated talk by Cherise Viljoen, Kirstenbosch Senior Horticulturist, and CHS Committee member. She will share some of her plant knowledge, as well as tips and advice, in an informative talk, entitled

GUILT-FREE GARDENING

on how to use water wisely in order to be guilt-free and proud as a Cape gardener in the drought.

Despite the fact that winter is upon us and all thought of dry gardening will be shelved, Cherise will give suggestions on how to garden in the drought and how to recognize a plant that is designed by nature to survive our long hot summer climate (wind, lack of water, harsh sun) – and in preparation for when summer returns in a few short months.

NB: A 'blind/silent auction' will be held for 2 pots of succulents, donated by Michael Tuffin: *Haworthia reinwardtii* (left) and *Haworthia fasciata* (right).

If you are interested in owning one of these plants, on arrival at the meeting, write your name, phone number and the amount you are prepared to bid for these plants (separate slip for each plant) on the paper provided and place it in the container. All bids to be placed before the start of the meeting. The highest bidder will be announced during tea time, at which time the new owners will pay their bid price to our Treasurer.



NEXT OUTING

Sat, 11 May at 10:30: Visit the long-awaited Constantia garden of Matt Bresler, which is an acre and has: a veggie garden; strip along vineyard fence all fynbos with a few Aus/NZ guests; forest area with existing large trees and many new; and a new forest area (where original house used to be) with new trees.

The house was bought and demolished in 2011 and occupation taken in 2013. Mary Maurel designed the garden and Ross McGill installed. Our hosts were involved in plant choice, and the landscape design, hard landscaping choices etc and, having a specific interest in trees, selected and planted 200 trees – 5 by crane, the rest mostly in 50-200 lit. bags – while the garden was taking shape. Another 30 – 40 rare trees, especially those that flower prolifically, have been added to this number.

Limited to 25 members. Please let Glenda know, before 8 May, if you would like to attend.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS ...

... Gerrida Howard and Josephine Noyce. We hope their association with the CHS will be a long and happy one.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

This is the last call for subscriptions for the 2019/20 year. Anyone not having renewed by mid-May will no longer receive news from the CHS office.

REPORTBACK

April Plant Table:

EXOTIC

Ocimum tenuiflorum "Sacred Basil": all flowering at the moment; good for bees.

Gelsemium sempervirens "Carolina Jasmine": flowers in April and odd times during the year.

Tradescantia

Capsicum "Black Pearl" (right): needs regular pruning; full/afternoon sun

Cosmos (far right): growing in a lot of new soil and new compost after renovations; unusually woody and tall; from a six-pack bought this year.



INDIGENOUS

Protea "Pink Ice": the hybrids are so much more vigorous than the species; if you have difficult soil that Proteaceae doesn't really like, like Pinelands, then the hybrids are much more vigorous and flower and grow very well.; fast growing, free flowering.

Hypoestes aristata "Ribbon Bush": normally pinky-lavender; also white; seeds readily; needs light shade.

Varieties of *Plectranthus* brought in:

P ecklonii x 3

P ambiguus: forms a very large mid-height plant

P petiolaris

P saccatus x 3

P ciliates x 2

P fruticosus? "Ellaphie"

P fruticosis "James"

P malvinus

P strigosus

P zuluensis x 2

P fruticosis "Velvet Elvis"

P oertendahlia: a truly variegated plant (not a mutation or a virus). It doesn't grow shrubby; it stays small; the flowers are not its main feature; the foliage – white with the green edging is spectacular; a lovely shade-loving patio plant, never getting too big.

P madagascariensis: the variegated form which is good because it needs less water than the other shrubby *Plectranthus*; a natural mutation

Mona Lavender: released in 2002; *P saccatus* x *P hillardiae*



Jenny's research on *Plectranthus* tells us: "There are ±355 spp in Africa, Madagascar, India, Australia and into the Pacific islands. They are known as the Spur Flower as the first species found had a spur, but not all have.

In the 1700s, collectors like Thunberg and Masson travelled from the Cape to the Sundays River. They collected *P madagascariensis*, *P verticillatus*, *P fruticosus*.

Generally all come from high summer rainfall growing conditions, in the forest, dappled shade, forest margins. Growing them in Cape Town means they need lots of water – about 1000mm annually.

The first *Plectranthus* was painted by Redouté who we associate with rose paintings.

For the next 230 years more species were collected and Ernst van Jaarsveld has been hunting them in Namibia and eventually, after a number of journeys into northern Namibia, he found a species, *P unguentarius*, way up in Kaokoland in 2005.

P oertendahlia, although grown in Sweden from 1924, its origins were unknown until 1936. Ernst van Jaarsveld collected it in Oribi Gorge and was then introduced in South Africa in 1977."

JENNY'S CHOICES FOR THE MONTH

INDIGENOUS:

Nerine filifolia: evergreen; from east coast so need water all the time seeds need to be sown straight away as they are fleshy and they don't dry out; cover them lightly with sand.

EXOTIC:

Asarina or *Lophospermum erubescens* "Mexican Twist" or "Creeping Gloxinia"

UNUSUAL:

Stapeliad: Klein Karoo plant; arid areas; a number of different genera, seen as far as north of Springbok; often tucked under shrubs protected from the summer heat; when they flower, they stink; pollinated by blue bottle or carrion flies; has a spiky fruit of seed heads; flowers don't last long.



Although Jenny tries hard to comment on all the specimens on the plant table, she feels that time does not always allow for singling out every plant for a mention; or there are duplications, or she misses them among all the foliage. She also feels that even when holding up a specimen for viewing, it isn't easy for people at the back of the hall to see the plant clearly.

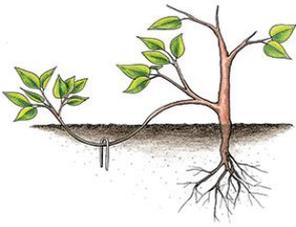
In order not to miss out on learning about the plants on display, we would ask all members who bring specimens to the meetings, to write the full name (if known) of the plant on the slip and as much useful information as possible, including your name. If you don't know the correct plant name, ask Jenny, Errol, Isabella, Nicky, Cherise or any other knowledgeable member to help you. The idea is to give as much information as possible (either Googled or from experience), so that others can come up to the table after the meeting and learn more about your particular plant from the slips attached. Whether Jenny has singled out your specimen for comment or not, there is always someone in the audience who would be interested.

Different or unusual plants would be of special interest and are welcomed. As much information as possible must accompany the plant for Jenny, Nicky or Isabella to make comment.

PROPAGATION TIPS FOR POTTING UP PLANTS TO SELL AT OUR ANNUAL PLANT SALE

This month, Isabella explained how to propagate by layering.

SIMPLE LAYERING



Simple layering is for plants that have long and flexible branches like climbers eg. Podranea which has very long branches.

Bend the branch down to the ground. Scrape off a bit of bark on the underside of the stem, take off leaves and tuck this part of the branch under the soil, with the growing end still sticking out. Weight it down with a stone or pin down in the soil with a piece of bent wire. Leave it there for a few months, checking every now and then to see if the roots have formed. When it is rooted, cut it off between the roots and the parent plant and pot it up.

<https://www.groworganic.com/organic-gardening/articles/how-to-propagate-plants-by-layering>

Air layering is a technique using branches that can't reach the ground. If you can't get your branch down to the soil, you bring your soil up to the branch. An example is Bauhinia bowkeri.

Select a stem about pencil thickness; find an area where you will wound the stem; cut off the leaves on either side.

Scrape the bark away or cut a notch into the bark (not too much that the branch breaks), leaving a flap of bark. Under that flap, place a stick or piece of wood, together with rooting hormone into the wound.

Take a couple of handfuls of moss and wrap it around this area, packing it tightly; place a sleeve of black plastic over the branch and wrap tightly around the moss; tie tightly above and below the moss, making it airtight.

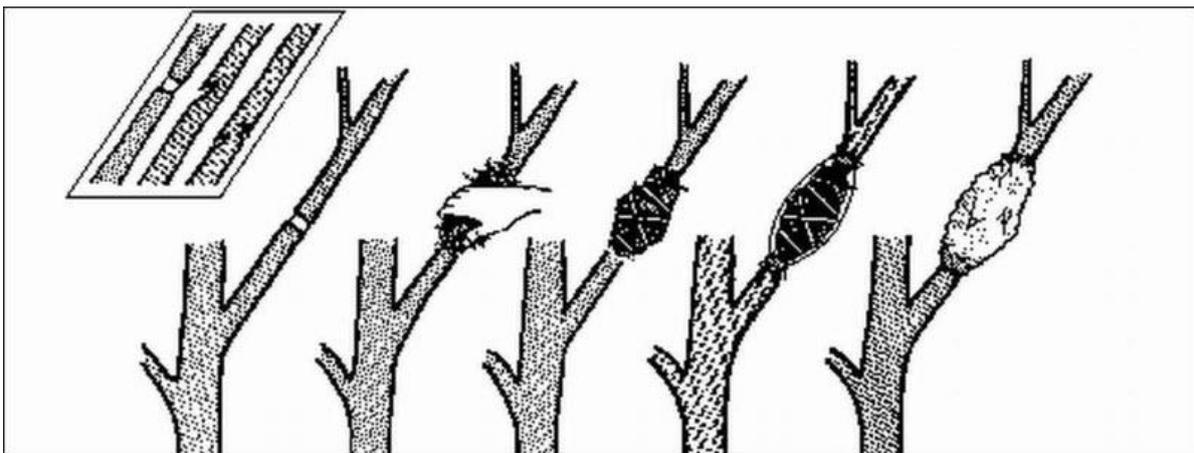
An alternative is to cut a ring right around the stem and pack the moss around that.

Opaque plastic is better than clear, as the roots don't like direct light.

The moss will stay damp throughout.

The cut/wound can be between nodes on the branch. The cambium needs to be exposed below the bark which will form the root cells.

Again, open the plastic after two months and once the roots have developed enough to hold up the top half of the branch, cut below the root ball and pot up.



<https://www.daleysfruit.com.au/forum/air-layering-white-sapote/>

Try your propagating by using the notes sent out by e-mail in February.

TEST YOUR BOTANICAL/HORTICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

- | | |
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| 1. What is the process in which plants use energy from sunlight to turn CO ₂ into food? | 2. Which Karoo plants are known as flowering stones? |
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(Answers on page 5)

THE ROAD TO MALVERN 2019

One of our newer members – and the youngest – is currently in the UK working very hard at producing a show garden at the RHS Malvern Spring Festival which runs from 9 – 12 May. Stacey Bright studied Horticulture through Intec College and hopes to continue her studies in Garden Design later this year.

Here's what she has to say about how she comes to be exhibiting at Malvern:

"In November 2018 I attended the Futurescape Conference in Cape Town for the landscape and garden design industry, as a budding horticulturalist seeing what the industry had to offer. At this event, I was inspired by an interview with Jamie Butterworth, Royal Horticultural Society Ambassador and horticulturalist in the United Kingdom, where he discussed the industry abroad and the show garden process. As a young horticulturalist, I was excited to see someone of my age pursuing something I was also interested in but knew so little about. After the conference I made contact with Jamie Butterworth, and a friendship of like-mindedness over plants developed.

For a few months after the conference, I followed Jamie's progress in the horticulture and garden design industry, ever inspired to follow suit. It was in February 2019 that Jamie told me about RHS Malvern Spring Festival, and suggested I submit a design to the judging panel.

The week following was a blur of design programmes, mood boards, and gardening magazines, resulting finally in a submission to send off to the Royal Horticultural Society in the UK! After a tense few days, I received an email saying that my design had been chosen for the Green Living Spaces category – and I was going to the UK to build it! Here is where the dream for my garden – *Ikhaya* – was born.

The RHS Malvern Spring Festival attracts, on average, 100,000 people over the course of the weekend! The Green Living Spaces category was developed to inspire a generation of people renting apartments to get gardening and growing. With a large percentage of the population turning to rent over purchase, these gardens aim to showcase the importance of green living spaces both indoors and out. An area of 33m² is assigned, 18m² of which are indoor and 15m² of which are outdoor.

Ikhaya, meaning "home" in Zulu, is inspired by South African farm living and incorporates dust, rust, and greenery into a contemporary living environment. The garden is predominantly planted with vegetables and edible plants, so the outdoor space not only provides an area in which to relax and unwind, but functions as a fresh, open air pantry! The garden allows you to go back to picking what you eat and connecting with nature, whilst having your feet firmly on the ground in a relaxing yet inspirational atmosphere which appeals to taste, touch, and smell.

After submitting final designs and ideas to the RHS, it was time to find sponsors! A budget is allocated for these gardens, but sponsorship is heavily encouraged – which I now understand why! I was lucky to be sponsored by a few industry-leaders, such as Hortus Loci Nursey, London Stone, and Harrod Horticultural – all of whom have their products featured time and again at the Chelsea Flower Show!

With just two weeks to go until opening, the construction of *Ikhaya* is coming together, with months of work being assembled! I have industry professionals working tirelessly with me on site, and it is so inspirational to see how valued gardening and the horticultural industry is!

Gardens are finalised and undergo an initial assessment in the week starting the 6th of May, after which the festivities and gardens are opened to the public for the weekend!"

We wish Stacey well in her endeavours – and may the best designer win!



LUMBERED WITH LATIN

Latin plant names are detested and shunned by many gardeners who find them difficult to remember; impossible to pronounce or just plain stupid. Tom Barber pleads in their defence by outlining the value of proper botanical names, even though the language was certified dead centuries ago!

You want a what, madam? demands the scornful and impatient garden centre assistant, as you struggle valiantly to pronounce some hideous Latin tongue twister while wishing the earth would swallow you up. Faced with names like *Leucothoe fontanesiana* or *Bothriochloa ischaemum*, perhaps the easiest way out is to buy something else!

Then no sooner have you mastered a Latin name than some botany boffin comes along to change it to something even more outlandish. Even names as familiar as chrysanthemum are not immune – most have now been re-christened dendrathema or nipponanthemum.

What is wrong with common plant names anyway? They are full of rich and evocative language (like 'pee in the bed' for taxacarium species). Everybody knows an ash but how much more difficult it is to remember *Fraxinus excelsior* and why bother anyway?

Communication is a characteristic human obsession that encourages endless classification and labelling. Names then, but why on earth in Latin? Here Carl Linnaeus, Swedish biologist extraordinaire, must take the rap, for in 1753 he produced a book, *Species Plantarum* that gave a unique two-part name to every known species of plant. This was made up of the genus to which the plant belonged followed by a descriptive species name, like *Ranunculus repens* for creeping buttercup. This was all done in Latin as it was the language used by scientists of the time, and such was the success of this pioneering work in imposing order to former chaos (we have Linnaeus to thank for re-naming *Viburnum foliis intergerrimis ovatis ramificationibus subtus villosa-glandulosa* as plain *Viburnum tinus*) that his system of classification has endured to the present day.

There are several reasons why common names alone are unsuitable for plant classification. You may feel pretty confident about identifying a bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, that carpets many woodlands in May), but in Scotland bluebell is used for *Campanula rotundifolia*, in Australia for *Wahlenbergia* and in America for penstemon, campanula polemonium or mertensia.

As well as a single name being used for several different plants, a single plant can have any number of common names – *Caltha palustris* is commonly known as marsh marigold and kingcup, but has a further 90 local names in Britain, 140 in Germany and 60 in France. Furthermore, as common names are not formed according to any defined rules, they are forever liable to alter according to local whims and changing circumstances. The possible misunderstandings that could arise when using common names is therefore obvious. This is not to say that there is no place for their use as local alternatives to true botanical names, but for clear and unambiguous communication Latin names are essential.

The re-naming of familiar plants is understandably a source of great irritation to gardeners but it is not done to spite. The naming of plants follows strict rules governed by an International Code of Nomenclature which, if ignored, would create more and more anomalies and render the system increasingly useless. Most changes arise either because of previous errors that may have come to light as a result of expanding scientific expertise, or when botanists attempt to simplify classification by, for example, dividing up an excessively large genus into two new clearly distinguishable genera. Classification is not an exact science, and botanists are often in disagreement, so some renaming will inevitably always be necessary.

So where does this leave you, the gardener?

Do persist with Latin names as they become more rewarding and informative the more you learn. For example, a name like *Acanthus mollis* tells us that the plant is thorny (akanthos in Greek) with soft hairs (mollis), which is far more than the common name 'bear's breeches' tells us.

And pronunciation? There are few hard and fast rules, and there will always be differences of opinion, so keep listening and practising and your confidence will grow. If you are really stuck with a beast of a name, write it down and let the garden centre worry about how to say it!

Practical Gardening, June 1994

DATES TO DIARISE

🌿 Botanical Society's Kirstenbosch Indigenous Plant Fair: 4/5 May 2019

🌿 Annual Plant Sale: 31 August 2019

🌿 Weekend Away: 12/13 October 2019 to *Barrydale in Bloom*. Please indicate your interest to Glenda by 15 May.

Photos: I Hayden, A Thorpe, S Bright, Google