

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, Bill Elder

NEXT MEETING

Monday, 5 August at 20:00 at The Cape Town Athenaeum, Newlands

Entrance fee: Members – R10; Visitors – R30

2019 SALI AWARD-WINNING GARDENS

Morné Faulhamer of Tokai Super Plants recently completed judging the gardens for the South African Landscapers Institute. He will share with us what makes these gardens winners in their respective categories.

NEXT OUTING

Thurs, 22 Aug at 10:00: Visit the Meadowridge garden of Angela Rissik.

This almost 7-year old garden on 750sq m relies on grey water and rain water harvesting only. It has a pond, edible garden, propagation areas, potting table, insect hotels, bee hive, vertical planters, succulent arrangements, quirky elements and garden art. The principles of permaculture are adhered to as much as possible, which adds to the sustainability of the garden.

This will be followed by a visit to member, Jane Yeats' Plumstead garden.

Limited to 15 members. Please let Glenda know, before 19 August, if you would like to attend.

REPORTBACK

July Plant Table:

EXOTIC

Petunia – grown from seed and sown far too late (right at the end of summer); been flowering throughout autumn and winter; a great joy to have (below)

Nasturtium – always lovely to have, especially when they are an unusual colour (bottom, left)



Salvia ?? – hasn't been identified (bottom, second from left)

Calceolaria – a pot plant; winter annual; it grows, flowers and seedlings appear the following year

Pentas – are back in fashion; colour varies (bottom, second from right)

Aechmea gamasepala – flowers are exquisite; there is a huge number of genera in Bromeliaceae – all have very unusual flowers (bottom, right)



INDIGENOUS

Thunbergia "Crème Caramel" (top row below, left) – new hybrids being bred with very different colours, much more vigorous and flowers are bigger; will flower all the way through winter; will cope with the drought if given a bit of water now and again

Lachenalia reflexa (top row below, centre) – first collected and named by Thunberg in 1794: now a 'weed' in Australia and about to be included on their Invasive Alien List. Occurs from Darling to the Peninsula and to Franschoek; likes the lowland sandveld fynbos – was very common but development has rendered it 'vulnerable'. They grow on the verges (especially in Pinelands) which should be left uncut so they can flower.

Portulacaria afra "Spekboom" (top row below, right) – large-leaved variety

Aloe – grows to 3m high with lots of babies; planted in 2012 on the Kirstenhof Green Belt

Aloe arborescens (bottom row below, left) – needs sun; hardy; attracts birds and bees

Salvia africana lutea – grows to 2m high; flowers from June – December; hardy plant; growing all the way up the West Coast towards Veldrif

Nylandtia spinosa – spiny; purple flowers mainly in June/July; edible orange fruits, but astringent; frequently found on sandy flats and grows up the West Coast

Agathosma ovata "Kluitjieskraal" – low-growing Buchu; perfect for the front of the border; bright cerise flowers in winter; bees cover the plant when in flower

Leucadendron "Safari Sunset" – grown in Betty's Bay

"Bot River" *Protea* – grown in Betty's Bay

Metalasia muricata "Blombos" (bottom row below, second from left) – found on sandy flats and lower slopes of Table Mountain; planted on Kirstenhof Greenbelt in 2015 and is now 2.5 to 3m high; was only watered for 2 years.

Kalanchoe thyrsiflora (bottom row below, second from right) – growing in a pot on a patio; spike was produced months ago

Acacia "Monkey Thorn" (bottom row below, right) – grown from seed; one month old; as they are well tap-rooted, they need to be handled gently when re-potting.



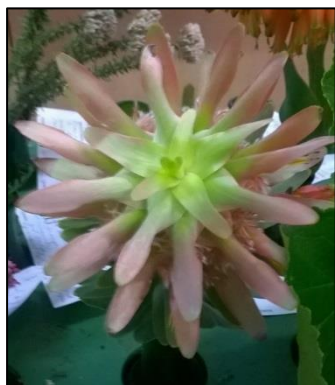
JENNY'S CHOICES FOR THE MONTH**INDIGENOUS:**

Mimetes argenteus "Silver Pagoda" (below, left) – because of its silvery leaves, could be mistaken for the "Silver Tree"; endemic to the Cape Floristic region; found on the most southern slopes of Hottentots Holland, Franschoek and Riversonderend mountains; only seen by hikers in the wild; endangered due to loss of habitat and the Argentinian Ant.

Greyia flanaganii "Kei Bottlebrush" (below, centre) – a rare endemic of the Eastern Cape, found on grassy hillsides and slopes of the Kei River; large shrub or small tree to 3m; can be found planted in university and botanical gardens.

EXOTIC:

Cattleya (below, right) – Blc (= Brasso, Laelia, Cattleya cross) Fry 'Dundas' x Blc Gildenzelle 'Tokyo' – Arpad says this year it has been the best and there are 3 more buds to open.



ANNUAL PLANT SALE – SATURDAY, 31 AUGUST 2019

Here is a message from our Plant Sale Convenor, Melanie Stewart:

"Hi Everybody

It's Plant Sale time again! Hope you all have as many plants as possible for us, and, if they're not as good as you'd like them to be, please bring them anyway – we'll have a special bargain corner again.

Plants may be brought to the house any time before the sale, as long as delivery arrangements have been made, and all plants must be labelled, please. We're delighted to receive all bulbs, potted or loose, and I've already had requests for Snowflakes – do please bring some for the sale. I have masses of pots and also home-grown potting compost, so do let me know if you need anything.

There are two mornings of preparation for the sale:

- 🌱 Thursday morning, August 29, from 9.30 am, for sorting and setting out of plants. Helpers to bring marking pens if possible, please.
- 🌱 Friday morning, August 30, from 9.30 am, for pricing, signage, etc. Helpers to bring marking pens if possible, please.
- 🌱 Saturday morning, August 31, sale hours from 9.30 to 2pm. Most helpers are able to leave by 1pm as we're here to help latecomers.

We really do need as much help as possible for setting up – the more of us there are, the less time it takes. Please volunteer to help – it's a really pleasant time (lots of tea and coffee too) and it's what I believe our Society is all about... growing and sharing of plants!

Rosters will do the rounds at the July and August meetings, so do please make yourself available – this fundraiser is a vital element of our association, and we need the help of our members.

Best wishes

Melanie

082-550-2618 / 021-788-2840 / rsp@telkomsa.net / 11 Sonnet Quay, Marina da Gama"

JULY IN THE GARDEN

Life is a Garden

Baby, it's cold outside, but that doesn't mean you have to stay indoors. There are several plants that thrive in the cooler months and can transform your garden into a winter wonderland. Others are a little more delicate but shouldn't be left to the last minute to plant if you're wanting to enjoy a beautiful spring garden filled with flowers showing their colourful faces to the sun. So get into your (flower) beds and garden this winter and enjoy the fruits (and veggies) of your labour.

Flowering this month

While many plants shy away from harsh winter conditions, the **African Daisy** (*Arctotis*) is a hardy plant that boasts beautiful large and colourful daisy-like flowers that range from pink to red, yellow and burnt orange. These evergreen flowers, which have been said to look like an African sunset, are real sun worshippers, opening only when they are in bright sunlight.

If you're looking for low maintenance flowers that add beautiful bursts of colour, then you will love the **Treasure Flower** (*Gazanias*). These water-wise plants require minimal watering and grow best in full sun. With their bright flowers, which range from bronze, orange, yellow, red, deep pink and mahogany, they can be added to flower beds or rockery to add colour to the garden for most of the year. Because they require minimal water, they grow well in drought-stricken areas too.

The **Cancer Bush** (*Sutherlandia frutescens*) is a small evergreen shrub that bears orange-red pea-like flowers on the tips of branches filled with greyish-green leaflets. This plant enjoys full sun and tolerates all soil types. It is tough and hardy and benefits from being watered moderately.

The **Aloe ice-cream's** delightful two-toned pink to creamy white flowers make it a beautiful addition to the garden. This small aloe is well suited for smaller gardens and containers for added colour on patios.



What to spray

For those living in warmer climates **Persian Buttercups** (*Ranunculus*) may start to flower as early as July. Those living in cooler climates may need to wait until September to enjoy these beautiful, rose-like blossoms that are available in an array of bright colours. Whether you are lucky enough to be enjoying these beautiful flowers in July or waiting patiently for Spring, be sure to spray with a suitable fungicide to prevent mildew from growing on the leaves.

What to plant

For beautiful show-stopping gardens in the spring, the time to start gardening is now. For bursts of colour in the early spring, you can't go wrong with the **Daisy Bush** (*Argyranthemum*). These easy-to-grow plants grow best in full sun and moderately fertile garden soil with good drainage. They will flower from spring until the first signs of frost and will bloom all year in areas with no frost.

Another low maintenance plant to plant now is the **Cape Thatching Reed** (*Elegia tectorum*). These hardy plants can withstand frost and drought well and adapt to most climates. Their bold architectural shape makes them an attractive addition to any garden. Plant in full sun and remove brown decaying culms and enjoy the golden-brown flower spikes in autumn, they will be well worth the wait.



Agapanthus 'Buccaneer' (*Lily of the Nile*) is like the gift that just keeps giving. These fast-growing plants with prolific dark blue flowers are fantastic re-bloomers that flower from early summer to late summer. Plant in a sunny spot with well-drained soil and enjoy these flowers every year.

What to Prune

This is a good time to transplant roses if necessary. It's also the best time to prune your rose bushes. After pruning be sure to feed your roses, dig compost into the rose beds, spray bare stems to kill insect and fungal spores and water your roses once a week.

Plant some **Strawberry** (*Strawberry 'Selecta'*) plants now and enjoy eating strawberries in the spring. This fruit is easy to grow in full sun, fertile, well-drained soil. Mulch can also be helpful to protect the plant from mould and keep weeds at bay. Cover your plant with a light netting at the first sight of strawberries. Make sure that light can get in though so that the strawberries continue to grow.

What to sow

With Spring around the corner, this is a good time to start planting to enjoy fresh salads. Sow early crops of herbs and vegetables such as lettuce, spinach, beetroot and radishes as well as parsley and garlic chives.

Be water-wise

As most of the country experiences a dry winter, it is especially important to be water-wise while enjoying your garden. Some plants are better at withstanding the drier months and gardens across the country stand to benefit from planting some of these beautiful plants that mostly require full sun and minimal water.

- **Aloe Orange Delight** (*Aloe arborescens*) this easy to grow Aloe boasts beautiful orange flowers on long inflorescences. Plant it in a sunny or semi-shaded spot, water moderately and enjoy the delightful orange flowers between June and August.
- **Aloe Firechief Charles** With its fiery red flowers, these aloes add beautiful colour to a winter garden. They are easy to grow in rich, well-drained soil and full sun.
- **Bird-of-Paradise** (*Strelitzia parvifolia*, *Strelitzia juncea* and *Strelitzia reginae*) boasting beautiful orange and blue crane like flowers, these plants are a great focal point for any garden. While they can be drought resistant, they thrive in subtropical regions with summer rainfalls.

Excerpt from <https://gosouth.co.za/july-in-the-garden/>



WEEKEND AWAY – 11/12/13 OCTOBER 2019

This is the weekend that *Barrydale* (bursts) *in (to) Bloom*. We are busy planning another weekend for members. We will be visiting their open gardens, some of which will be Barrydale Clinic Gardens, the Barrydale Heritage Garden and NG Kerk garden. A wine tasting and visit to a seed distributor is on the programme, as well as a chance to see a fynbos nature reserve which is not open to the public. We hope to include a visit to a propagator of wild orchids.

If you are interested in joining the group, book your accommodation now – before it's too late. Then please advise Glenda so you can be added to the list for further communications. If you have any questions, ask Glenda.



THE BRIGHT SIDE OF HORTICULTURE

PLANT IDENTITY CRISIS

The spikey one, over there? It's the same, but it's different.

This, folks, is a phrase that frequents my conversations, and it must come to an end!

When it comes to plant identification, I think one is never finished learning! And to make it more difficult, different families have different names for the same plants, countries have different names for them too, and then even between friends a plant can have an identity crisis (wrap your head around that sentence!). Luckily for us, the nature of the Latin naming system and the binomial nomenclature, one can get to the bottom of it quite easily!

Coming from a family of plant-people, we have always referred to certain plants a certain way; and mind you not just with an incorrect name – “those purple jobs” and “those spikey jobs” are plant names which frequent our household. However, when it comes to labelling dried flowers or creating plant lists for a garden proposal, I need to be slightly more accurate.

My interest in plants with mistaken identities increased when I was labelling a dried *Watsonia pillansii* and I went to check the spelling... turns out it was *Chasmanthe floribunda*! This marks the first plants on my list of mistaken identities!



Chasmanthe floribunda



Watsonia pillansii

Pictures: <http://pza.sanbi.org>

Now these are fairly easy to identify to the trained eye, once you know what you're looking for! Tip: amongst other features, the *Watsonia* has a larger and more characteristically bugle shaped flower!

For those who have highly sharpened identification skills, it may be time to skip the article! But for those who sometimes get *this* muddled with *that*, here are a few more examples of some rather specific species and their similar looking counterparts:

Hydrangea arborescens & *Viburnum opulus*



Hydrangea arborescens



Viburnum opulus

Pictures: Crocus.co.uk

These two look frighteningly similar from a step back, but the leaves are a big giveaway! The *Hydrangea arborescens* has the classic ovate shape leaf (many *Viburnum* have this shape too!), while the *Viburnum opulus* has more of a palmate shape to it!

Mimetes splendidus* & *Leucadendron argenteum**Mimetes splendidus****Leucadendron argenteum**

Pictures: pza.sanbi.org and
sciencephotogallery.com

These two species are well-recognised around the Cape and have the same gorgeous silver glimmer to their leaves. However, if you catch them between autumn and spring, *Mimetes splendidus* has orange pink flowers on display, which extend from the top of the plant and make them highly distinguishable from the *Leucadendron argenteum*. Out of flowering season, they can be told apart by their height; *Leucadendron argenteum* reaches 7 to 10m in height, while *Mimetes splendidus* only around 2.5m. The leaves of the *M. splendidus* also are wider, and have a rounder edge to them, while the leaves of *L. argenteum* are thinner and have a sharper edge.

Upon closer inspection, most plants of similar appearance can be quite simply distinguished from one another, especially with the help of a Field Guide – or look around on the internet!

Which plants catch you out?

Stacey Bright

BRINGING LAWNS TO LIFE

Extract from **The Garden – May 2004**

Rather than battling to produce perfectly manicured turf, why not accept and even encourage weeds into your sward? Martin Fish, a garden writer and broadcaster, champions a more environmentally-friendly approach.

"Lawns come in many shapes and sizes, playing an important role in many gardens. For some, a lawn is the main showpiece of the garden, while for others, it serves as a fine foil for planting, an area for relaxation or where children can play. The type of lawn depends greatly on the style of garden. A formal setting suits closely mown turf with stripes, whereas in an informal garden the lawn can be left to grow longer and be less manicured.

Traditionally, lawns are composed of a mixture of grass species. Plants including thyme and camomile can be used, although these are less hardwearing and functional, so are only suitable for an ornamental lawn.

One common problem that links all types of grass lawns is weeds. Many gardeners spend a great deal of time removing them by hand or chemically to produce a perfect sward. Following the withdrawal, however, of selective herbicides, for use on lawns, weed control is increasingly difficult.

For those gardeners who are not offended by the sight of a few weeds in their lawn, or who wish to adopt a more natural approach to lawn care, there are various ways that lawn weeds can be used to your advantage.

Creating patterns

Making circles or indeed any other shape with lawn weeds – or native wild flowers, which is what most really are – can create an interesting, innovative, even a beneficial feature. Depending on the native fauna, the flowers could attract butterflies including meadow browns, gatekeepers and common blues, and moths such as the six-spot burnet and the silver-Y will visit the unknown areas.

Beneficial insects, including ladybirds and hoverflies, which prey on garden pests, will also be encouraged into the garden.

Wild flowers can be grown in this way on any plot, regardless of size. The aim is to create a semi-natural feature that does not look out of place or detract from the rest of the garden.

One such place where wildflower circles are being grown in turf is Kailzie Gardens, near Peebles in the Scottish Borders, where a large population of *Bellis perennis* (lawn daisy) is allowed to flourish in the sweeping lawns. In spring, the daisies are left to grow in large circles, and regular mowing creates a neat finish to the remainder of the lawn. The white daisy flowers tinged with pink give a fine natural display on a sunny day. When they finish flowering in late spring, the circles are mowed down and maintained along with the rest of the turf.

Mini-meadows

By introducing a selection of grassland flowers a mini-meadow can be created. These can be grown from seed or bought as plugs or small plants from a wildflower nursery, and simply planted into the lawn. The principle is the same as the daisy circle, although with summer-flowering plants they would not normally be cut down until midsummer, once the plants have seeded.

Growing plants in a lawn does mean some small changes in the way maintenance is carried out. For a start, lawn weedkillers are no longer required, unless it is intended to keep areas outside the circle weed-free. If this is the case, take care not to allow spray to drift into the wildflower areas. It is not normally necessary to feed the plants, as they grow best when there is less competition from grass. If lawn fertiliser is used, feed only the regularly mown areas of grass around the circles.

Only when flowering is complete should the circle be mown down. A string trimmer or rotary mower set high is the best way to mow off the long grass; therefore the circle can be cut along with the remainder of the turf. Avoid, however, close mowing, especially when growing taller species such as field scabious. I find a cutting height no lower than 2.5cm (1in) is fine for most plants through late summer and autumn.

With more people becoming interesting in meadow planting and growing wild flowers, I love the idea of creating a small piece of countryside – a patch of ‘set-aside’ – on one’s own turf. It is a fun, novel way of preserving beautiful wild flowers in a garden situation, and makes the best use of what may otherwise be seen simply as a weedy lawn.”

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What is the botanical name for the Cancer Bush?

(Answer on page 4)

2. Which South African bulb has become invasive in Australia?

(Answer on page 2)

Gulp.
I loved my vegetable garden.
So here is my sad ballad:
I nurtured it for months
and ate it in one salad.

Arnold Zarett

from “A Gardener’s Journal”, a Helen Exley Giftbook

DATES TO DIARISE

- 🌿 Botanical Art Exhibition: 6 – 27 July at Irma Stern Museum – “*Tipping Point: Threatened Plants of Southern Africa*”. For more information visit: www.irmasternmuseum.org.za
- 🌿 CHS Annual Plant Sale: Sat, 31 August from 09:30 in Marina da Gama.
- 🌿 Weekend Away in Barrydale: Fri, 11 – Sun, 13 October. Book your accommodation now and advise Glenda in order to receive the proposed programme.
- 🌿 McGregor Magic Garden Festival: Sat, 21 – Tues, 24 September (Heritage Weekend) – a wide variety of talks and displays, including open gardens.
- 🌿 2020 International Conference: Fri, 28 – Mon, 31 August 2020. This will give us an opportunity to meet members of Mediterranean Gardening International. More details about the plans for this event next month.

Photos: A Thorpe, J Scarr, D Fitz-Gerald, Google