

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

NEXT VIRTUAL MEETING

Monday, 5 October 2020 at 20:00 – seated in front of your computer.

SPRING IN NORTH ISLAND, NEW ZEALAND

John van der Linde will give an illustrated talk on his visit to New Zealand with his wife, Beth. This plant-filled talk will include a visit to the world-renowned Taranaki Rhododendron and Garden Festival.

Attending a Zoom meeting:

The link to this Zoom presentation will be sent to you prior to the presentation, with a repeat of the instructions. All you have to do is click on the link in the body of the e-mail message and you will gain access to the meeting on the night. Please link in between 19:55 and 20:00 in order to be admitted (this is for security reasons).

As everyone receives e-mails in different programs (either on their PCs or on their cellphones), the onus is on each of you to find out how to save the Zoom Meeting invitation link in order to find it on the night. If you are still very unsure as to where to find icons on your screen and what to do with them, let Glenda know and a test run could be held before the time. Wed, 30 September, in the morning would be a suitable time for anyone who is interested.

If you missed the previous presentations and would like to listen to them, click on the You Tube links below.

- Barrydale Open Gardens: <https://youtu.be/AOs9uh2710c>
- Clivia Conundrum: To be advised.
- Weird and Wonderful Plants: <https://youtu.be/5VkyoGpg2rM>

OUTINGS

Sat, 26 Sep at 10:00: Yes, this will be our first "live" garden visit in 6 months!



A visit to Arderne to see their Wetland Project which was officially opened in February this year. Alex Lansdowne will explain what went into the making of this wetland which should be looking very good after all the rain over the last few months. Should it rain on the day, the outing will go ahead.

Under the current lockdown level protocols, all attendees are to wear

masks and keep a 1.5m distance between themselves. Should the numbers wishing to attend exceed 10, a second group will follow at 11:30. RSVP by Wed, 23 Sept.

Sat, 24 Oct at 09:45: Visit the Imhoff's Gift garden of member, Belinda du Rand. Full details in the October issue.

SALE OF PLANTS – DONE DIFFERENTLY!

The fund-raising initiative for the year, as in previous years, has been the Annual Plant Sale, but 2020 has been very different! Melanie has worked tirelessly to make all the arrangements for the sale and to ensure everything adhered to the Covid-19 protocols.

The Society thanks Melanie most sincerely – and not forgetting Rod and others who assisted her – for literally getting the sale off the ground. Because of the "different" year it has been, it has taken a lot more of her time and effort to be available over a longer period of time in order to sell by appointment.

The sale raised a total of R5 375 from the plants members had been propagating and nurturing since before lockdown. Thank you to these growers for their diligence in keeping the plants alive until now.

Plants which were left over have been shared by the Sozo Foundation in Capricorn (visit <https://thesozofoundation.org.za> to find out more about their work), the Capricorn Primary School (take a look at their Facebook page) and the Rainbow Project there.

PINELANDS PLANTS(WO)MEN vs THE WEST COAST

There is really no need to travel up the West Coast or to Namaqualand to see the flowers. These Pinelands gardens are a sight to behold.



- The Scarr garden (above):

Top row, L to R: Errol and Jenny in their back "field of flowers"; *Arctotis*; *Argyranthemum* "white daisy", orange *Hibiscus* and yellow *Arctotheca*

Middle row, L to R: Unnamed cream *Veltheimia*; *Gazania*; *Freesia laxa*; collection of *Lachenalia*

Bottom row, L to R: *Cistus purpurea* "Brilliance"; veggie patch; *Cyrtanthus elatus* "George Lily" and *Freesia alba*

- The Hahn garden (next page):

Top row, L to R: Rodney's front garden and lawn has been turned into a meadow planted with *Moraea flaccida*, *Oxalis purpurea* including light and dark pink, cerise, white, orange, yellow and mauve, and *Mesembryanthemum* (Bokbaai vygie) is the groundcover; *Leucojum vernum* "Snowflakes" on the verge.

Second row, left: *Hippeastrum papillio*, is flowering for the first time in years, after being subdivided about six months ago.



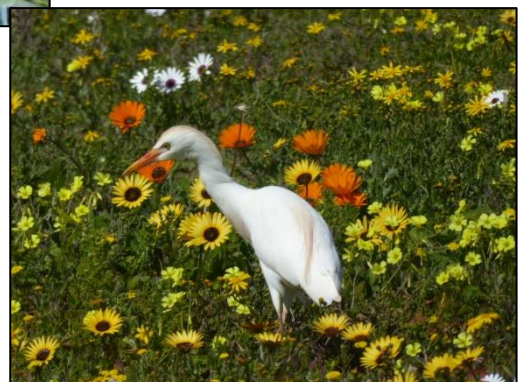
But some members did manage to get to Postberg, Rocherpan, and Waylands. Angela and John sent in these pictures:



Below: *Babiana ambigua*









Above: *Albuca flaccida*



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Unfortunately, the response was no different to last month. One unnamed member managed 5 out of 6.

AUGUST BOTANICAL NAMES		
<p>A. <i>Babiana rubrocyanea</i></p> 	<p>B. <i>Brunia stokoei</i> now <i>Berzelia stokoei</i></p> 	<p>C. <i>Lachenalia aloides</i></p> 
<p>D. <i>Erica coccinea</i> (Yellow)</p> 	<p>E. Leaves of <i>Oxalis</i></p> 	<p>F. <i>Haemanthus sanguineus</i></p> 

HAND POLLINATING CLIVIA

John van der Linde has been keeping himself busy during lockdown, not knowing how long it would last. This is what he has been up to:

"The variegation in the leaves of the large *Clivia miniata* (following page, right) is called "Light of Buddha". This plant flowers orange flowers.

I have two aims that I want to achieve together: (1) I want to produce more compact plants with the same type of variegation, and (2) I want yellow flowers instead of orange.

To begin the process, I hand-pollinated 4 of the flowers with pollen from a dwarf yellow-flowering *Clivia miniata* (following page, left), resulting in the 4 large fruits you see in the photo.

The new F1 seedlings from this cross will all flower orange, because orange is dominant over yellow.

When they flower in 4 or 5 years I will sibling-cross the smallest of them and grow a lot of the seeds that I harvest in the following year.

25% of those F2 seedlings will have green stems when young, indicating that they will produce yellow flowers. Mendel's Laws work!

I will select the strongest growing of them with the best "Light of Buddha" variegation and size characteristics and will grow them on. I will have to live at least another 10 – 15 years to see the F2 generation flowering!

Happily I did a similar cross 6 years ago. I have one F1 seedling which hopefully will flower this year. I will hand-pollinate using pollen from the same yellow that I used initially. The resulting F2 babies will have 50% with green stems and yellow flowers. The other 50% will have pigmented stems, signalling that they will have orange flowers. All will have leaves with the "Light of Buddha" variegation.



This is a long-term project in case Lockdown lasts longer than anticipated.

Incidentally, those fruits were huge, averaging 3,4cms diameter at the middle and 4,0cms lengthwise. Each contained 17 seeds."

If you'd like to see a display of Clivia, visit Babylonstoren. Details on page 6.

LONG-LASTING COLOUR

by CHS member, Jenny Simpson of Auldearn, published in the May 2002 issue of SA Gardening

Success with salvias

- To get the most out of your salvias, bear in mind the following:
- Most salvias need to be planted in full sun
- Good drainage is vital – salvias will die in waterlogged soil.
- Cuttings of most salvias can be taken at any time during the growing season. Cut a 10cm stem tip. Remove the bottom leaves and cut the remaining larger ones in half. Insert the cuttings into sandy soil and keep moist until they strike.

Every gardener deserves the beauty of salvia in their garden – they are easy to grow, easy to propagate by means of cuttings, and reliable, undemanding garden plants. The water wise movement of the last decade has highlighted the salvia family as water wise plants, requiring only a modest amount of water, and, as a result, an exciting assortment of new species and hybrids from Mexico and South America is now available.

Salvias have many growth habits and include perennials, biennials, annuals and shrubs. Some species are found at sea level while others are happiest in the mountains, but most originate in the temperate and subtropical regions of the world.

Types of salvias

The following are some salvia species that are widely available, and which make charming additions to the garden border:

- *Salvia canariensis*

This shrub has a height and spread of 2m in warm conditions. The leaves are spear-shaped in a very desirable shade of grey-green. It bears marvellous rose-red flowers at the ends of long arching branches in summer. If clipped back by two-thirds after flowering, *Salvia canariensis* will flower again during the cooler days of autumn. Seeds are scattered far and wide, providing numerous baby plants in spring for friends and charity plant sales. Use this reliable beauty in the mixed border.

- Blue sage (*Salvia chamelaeagnea*)

Also known as "bloublommetjesalie" and "Afrikaanse salie", this indigenous salvia is a much branched rough-textured shrub about 2m tall. It has pairs of leathery, oval leaves with smooth or slightly toothed edges. Two-lipped, bluish flowers, with or without white markings, are borne at the ends of leafless branchlets. Flowers appear from November to May.

Blue sage is widespread on slopes and flats from Namaqualand down to the south-western Cape and is equally at home in the clay soils of the Overberg and the sandy soil of the West Coast. However, it is more floriferous in water-retentive clay.

- *Salvia coccinea* "Lady in Red"

Salvia coccinea is a species that is grown as an annual, from seed, and the cultivar "Lady in Red" is superior to the original species. Long racemes of well-spaced flowers in a strong shade of red bloom almost all summer long. It will self-seed for the following year. For a gorgeous effect, plant in a sunny, well-drained position together with giant zinnias – the smaller-growing "Lady in Red" softens the hard edges of the stocky zinnias.

- *Salvia darcyi*

This is a most attractive 90cm-tall plant with pale green triangular leaves held out at right angles to the square stems, and long corralled flowers borne on 30cm-long flowering stems. It has a long flowering season and is a great asset to the mixed border, especially for those interested in working with colour.

As an inhabitant of the Mexican Sierra Madre Oriental Mountains, *Salvia darcyi* can withstand temperatures dropping to below freezing. It dies back to its rootstock in winter. However, the rootstock is stoloniferous – that is, it consists of creeping over-ground stems that are capable of rooting at the nodes – and will produce new plants from the shoots.

- *Salvia discolor*

If you like plants with unusually coloured flowers, this salvia is a must as it bears purple-black blooms that protrude beyond the silvery green calyxes. It reaches a height of 60cm and can be grown in either full sun or where it receives half a day's sun. As this sage tends to flop, it requires staking whether grown in a container or in the ground. *Salvia discolor* makes a contribution to the garden beyond mere shock value, because, positioned judiciously, the black blooms provide contrast and visual depth to any planting scheme.

- *Salvia guaranitica*

The South American perennial reaches a height of 2m and bears rich, blue-violet blooms. Although it starts blooming in early summer, the most floriferous period is during the hot mid-summer months. It is dormant in regions with very cold winters. Plant in full sun in enriched soils that drains well.

- *Salvia greggii*

Occurring in America and Mexico, this evergreen water wise shrub has a height and spread of 50cm. In the wild, the blooms are tints and shades of red, but selective breeding has produced cultivars in shades of white, purple and pink. *Salvia greggii* "Raspberry Royal" has lots of blossoms and is hardier than others. The flowers appear right through summer and autumn. As the plants tend to get woody as they age, be sure to take new cuttings every 3-4 years. A gentle trim at the end of the flowering season will take the plant through winter and into the next spring.

- Mexican bush sage (*Salvia leucantha*)

An old favourite, this water wise plant bears marvellously woolly spikes of blooms all summer long. The calyx is rich mauve, and the corolla is white. The

cultivar "Midnight" bears entirely mauve flowers. The leaves are narrow and finely wrinkled, deep green above and a woolly grey beneath. This is an evergreen, erect, well-branched shrub that grows to a height of 1m or more and responds well to being clipped back by two-thirds after flowering. Mexican sage makes a lovely low hedge and is happy in most soils.

- *Salvia patens*

This 50cm-tall perennial salvia must have a mention, if only for the incredible electric-blue of its flowers. As there are seldom more than two flowers open at any one time on each flowering spike, the display is a bit thin although the season is long. Towards winter, the leaves die back in colder parts of the country but, if left undisturbed, the plant will renew its growth in spring.

- Clary sage (*Salvia sclarea* "Turkenstanica")

Also known as opal sage, this fast-growing biennial is usually grown as an annual. The mass of tubular white and lavender-purple flowers with prominent lavender-purple bracts is a sight to behold when this plant is in flower in summer. It reaches a height of 50cm and is superb in a mixed border. Cut it back at the end of the flowering season. It is easily grown from seed.

- Bog sage (*Salvia uliginosa*)

This graceful, branching 1m-tall perennial has oblong to lance-shaped, saw-edged, mid-green leaves with long racemes of bright blue flowers for many weeks in summer. Reaching a metre in height, it makes a colony by suckering. It is a good plant for the back of the border, and it is easily propagated by cuttings or pieces of rooted suckers. So, don't let its unpronounceable name deter you from tracking it down!

We *have* come a long way. Water wise is no longer a new concept – it has become the norm. Google Images will show you the beauty of all the varieties mentioned above.

DATES TO DIARISE

🌱 **Elgin Open Gardens:** 31 Oct-1 Nov, and 7-8 Nov, at the slightly earlier opening time from 9.30-5. Full details are now on the website www.elginopengardens.co.za.

🌱 **Babylonstoren:** The Clivia are stunning at the moment. You have a few more weeks to see the spectacle. There are tours and workshops on offer. Details can be found on www.babylonstoren.com.

🌱 **Barrydale in Bloom:** 10 and 11 October from 10:00 to 16:00. Visit www.BarrydaleinBloom.online.

🌱 **Cape Orchid Society Spring Show:** 25-27 Sep 2020 – Hundreds of orchids and daily demonstrations at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens.

🌱 Visit www.horti.co.za, a South African website dedicated to promoting horticulturally related businesses and events. They also have shop.horti.co.za, selling plants and horticultural products online.