

CHS NEWS

NEXT PRESENTATION

Monday, 7 February 2022 at 20:00

BRINGING NATURE HOME:

THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIVE PLANTS

Our first presentation for 2022 will be the talk by Doug Tallamy on the Tending Nature series hosted by Ohio State University.

The link to this talk was sent out, but whether you've already seen it or haven't yet got around to it, this is well worth watching.

University of Delaware Professor Doug Tallamy launched Homegrown National Park, a non-profit organisation, which encourages people to transform their yards into habitats for native plants.

He says: "... the health of an ecosystem can be measured by the number of caterpillar species, because caterpillars are an important food for birds. Approximately 96 percent of birds raise their young on insects.

"Most of those insects are caterpillars. So you get rid of your caterpillars, you've gotten rid of your birds.

"... there are four things every ecosystem needs to accomplish: sequester carbon dioxide, manage the watershed, support the local food web and support pollinators. A lawn does none of those. It's the worst plant for carbon sequestration. It destroys watersheds rather than manages them. It doesn't support any pollinators, and it doesn't support any food webs."

If what he says resonates with you, then join us for a wonderful talk on the role indigenous plants play.

Source: [UD professor Douglas Tallamy hopes to save native species, one lawn at a time | News | newarkpostonline.com](#)

Plant Show and Tell: Please send in your photos of flowers blooming in your garden at the moment (either a close-up or the whole plant), with the name of the plant and some interesting information about it. Please Google it if you're not sure.

Photos are needed by **Friday morning, 4 February**, please. If you have difficulty with the technical side of this, please call Glenda.

WELCOME TO ...

... Julie Smith, who received her CHS membership as a Christmas gift. We wish her a long and beneficial stay with the CHS.

TO MEET OR NOT TO MEET ...

... is no longer the question! Thank you to the 44% of our membership who took the time to respond to last year's questionnaire and give their comments. No surprises there, but it was very helpful to gauge everyone's mood and it seems that, of the 67 responders, nearly two-thirds are prepared to return to live meetings, albeit with some reservations. Your Committee has met and have agreed that the way forward will be to have meetings, whenever possible, at the

JANUARY 2022

LOCKDOWN EDITION 22-01

President

Marianne Alexander

Chairman

Hon Treasurer

Henry Diesveld

Secretary

Glenda Thorpe

Committee Members

Melanie Stewart Jenny Scarr
Susan Armstrong Isabella Hayden
Gerald Robertson

Honorary Members

Laurie Powis Marianne Alexander
Mary Smith Anne Bean Adam Harrower
Michael Tuffin Bill Elder Ernst van Jaarsveld

*"Every flower is a soul
blossoming in nature."
Gerard de Nerval*



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Instagram – capehortsoc

Athenaeum, with the prevailing COVID-19 protocols in place. We will make the effort to record these talks so that members who cannot, or are hesitant about attending meetings at the Athenaeum, can watch them on YouTube afterwards.

The 7 March meeting will, hopefully, see us returning to the Athenaeum but the Newbery Hall can only hold 50 people, including speaker and workers. As many people have regularly been doing for Church and other meetings for a while now, we will institute a booking system – nothing too difficult, but it will mean reserving your place beforehand. More details about this next month.

MATTERS FINANCIAL

Our Treasurer has done some head scratching recently, and with less than 2 months to go to the end of the 2021/22 financial year, he is forecasting that the Society will incur a loss in the order of R12 250.

He says: “Meetings held at the Athenaeum have in the past generated income in the vicinity of R10 000 annually from admission fees and plant sales. COVID restrictions have wiped out this source of income for two years now, and the outlook for 2022/23 is still very uncertain. If one assumes that we manage to have 6 meetings at the Athenaeum and that we increase our 2020 subscription rates by 10%, we can still expect a loss in the order of R9 000 for 2022/23. Obviously, this is not a sustainable option.

“In order to have both a live meeting and a video recording of the talk, to accommodate all of our membership, our funding model will have to change so that everybody contributes a fair share towards the costs of running the Society.

“To achieve this, we propose increasing our subscription rates **from R140 (single) and R210 (family) to R200 and R350 respectively**, and to **do away with the R10 admission fee for members entirely**. The increases are the equivalent of the admission fee for 6 meetings.”

In the absence of holding a live Special General Meeting, where this proposal would have been put to the vote, please reply to Glenda with a YES or NO, with comments if you have any, **by no later than Friday, 11 February**.

REPORTBACK

Members' Plants:

Andrew in Pinelands:

After many years of absence, *Verbascum* plants started showing themselves again in our garden last year.

This one found itself in a pot – an old earthenware sewerage pipe – and has steadily flowered, grown like Topsy to garage roof height (centre), seeded and produced new shoots from the bottom (right).

The flower stalk, now full of seeds, has reached a height of 2.3m (far right), way above the garage roof.



Elwyn in Mowbray:

This hybrid *Streptocarpus* is from the late Pat Ellis's collection. A beautiful colour, and very rewarding. It has been on the stoep for about 3 weeks since the first blooms came out.

It gets no special treatment and sits outside in the garden all winter; gets watered twice a week in summer with the rest of the plants. When it flowers, it is brought onto the stoep where there is no sun and is watered about every 3rd day.

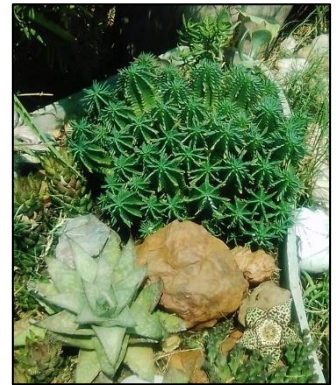
*Wilma in Rondeberg:*

A small succulent trough (R) with, from left clockwise, *Gasteraloe*, *Euphorbia* and *Orbea*.

Below:

Orbea variegata (below left) about 80mm X 80mm with interesting annulus (central "ring") – from Lambert's Bay to Mossel Bay and common on Cape mountains; one of the first succulents to reach Europe about 1639.

Euphorbia ferox (below centre) from around Graaff Reinet. The stems are about 120mm tall and grow into a 'cushion' or rock-like mound. It has sharp 20-30mm spines along the edges of some of the stems and interesting typically Euphorbia-like flowers on top during November (below right – taken last November).



AUTUMN PLANT SALE

You have read on page 2 that our financial situation is not too healthy. As mentioned in the November issue, to generate a bit more income, it was decided that a smaller Autumn Plant Sale should be held in the hope of raising some much-needed funds. So, **SATURDAY, 21 MAY 2022** is the day!! More details next month.

Spring and summer *are* the best times to take cuttings – plants are all busy growing and flowering and producing vigorous shoots, which will root more easily. Yes, they do need extra water, more feeding and probably some shade, but it will be very rewarding if you have been taking cuttings over the past few months.

Jenny found that her *Plectranthus argenteus* had rooted itself where it touched the ground and she now has instant plants for potting! Have a look around your garden for similar 'instant' plants.

If you are re-designing your garden, or doing renovations, and find you have plants in the wrong place, or an excess of them, please pot them up. Your throw-aways could be someone else's longed-for plant.

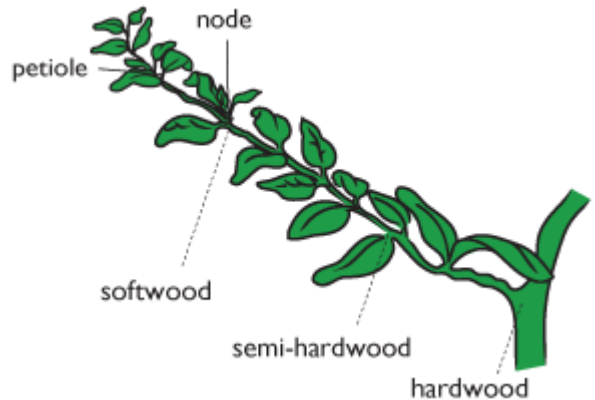
If you do not have plants to pot up, 6-packs are available from nurseries. These can all be potted up singly and will produce saleable-sized plants by May. Don't forget the 6-packs of Herbs, which saves you sowing seeds. These are always in demand at our sales. Don't forget to label your plants as you pot them up.

Any plants that are too small come Autumn, can be kept for growing on and sold at the Spring sale.

Now, more than ever, people are gardening as a form of relaxation, so let's keep their interest alive and encourage them by having a Super Sale!


A FEW TIPS

1. The extra water you need can be the lag water from your taps ie. the cold water you run to get your hot water.
2. The types of plant material used for cuttings can be classed as
 - softwood (herbaceous plants like *Plectranthus*, *Impatiens*)
 - semi-hardwood (e.g. *Leonotus*, *Hibiscus*, *Buddleja*)
 - succulents.
3. Use a dibber (a clean stick or pencil) to poke holes into the medium before inserting the cuttings – if you just push the cutting into the medium, you run the risk of blocking up the capillaries with grains of sand. Press the medium lightly against the stem of each cutting.
4. Test whether the cuttings have rooted by tugging gently on them. Once they're rooted place the tray in a slightly less shaded spot, increasing the amount of light over two weeks to harden them off, and by now you can feed them with a weak dose of Seagro or Nitrosol.
5. Some cuttings will root if stood in a container (preferably opaque) of water, but those roots are not as strong as roots that form in a growing medium.




To be continued ...

NOTICES

 **Van Rhynsdorp Vetplantfees** – 19 and 20 March at Letsatsi Lodge:

https://m.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=4703064293134540&id=100002930488435&set=gm.4837250903059294&source=57&refid=18&ref=share&_tn_=EH-R

 **Puya raimondii:** [The World's Largest Bromeliad - Bromeliad Plant Care \(bromeliads.info\)](http://bromeliads.info)

 **Cherish Plants:** Organic horse manure/stable shavings/straw compost at R20 per 30dm (19 Kg) bag – good for sandy and 'oily' soils (below); new organic coffee ground fertilizer at R45 for a 1-litre container; free delivery to Muizenberg and surrounds; order on WhatsApp. Contact Cherise on 065-100-4564.



Photos: E Whitford, W Tindall, G Thorpe, FB, Google, C Viljoen

VANRHYNSDORP
Succulent Festival/Vetplantfees



Date/Datum: 19 & 20 March/Maart 2022
 Time/Tyd: 09:00 - 16:00
 Venue/Plek: Letsatsi Lodge
 Vanrhynsdorp