

Title: Drivers of floral diversification in the *Dimorphotheca pluvialis-sinuata* species complex

Description: The two currently recognised species in the *D. pluvialis-sinuata* complex are central to the spring mass flowering displays in the western and northern Cape, around which the flower tourism industry is built, and are important horticulturally. Our recent work in the complex suggests that it contains several distinct species with clear differentiation of several floral characteristics, such as ray floret colour patterns and the unusual disk floret appendages typical of *Dimorphotheca*. This project aims to characterise the pollinator communities associated with these floral phenotypes via field-based observation and collection, and to assess the functional significance of divergent floral traits for behavioural responses of key pollinating species through pollinator behaviour experiments and by using insect visual models to understand perception of divergent floral signalling. The project will provide both critical conservation information about pollination requirements of these mass flowering species, and insights into the drivers of the remarkable floral diversity in this complex.

Field: Taxonomy

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Level: BSc Hons.