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NEWS-LETTER OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF BOTANISTS
NUUSBRIEF VAN DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE GENOOTSKAP VAN PLANTKUNDIGES

ASSOCIATE PROF. E.A. SCHELPE has been promoted to a full Professorship in Botany at the University of Cape Town. He continues to be Curator of the Bolus Herbarium. Prof. Schelpe recently left for overseas on his sabbatical leave which will be spent mainly at the Herbarium Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. He will also go on a tour lecturing to the Danish Botanical Society and at the Universities of Stockholm, Lund, Copenhagen, Hamburg and Munich. While overseas he will be working on intercontinental relationships of the Southern African and Tropical African Pteridophytes. He is accompanied by Mrs. Schelpe who will work on the taxonomy of the genus *Rafnia* (Leguminosae). They return towards the end of November this year.

S.A.A.B. - S.W. CAPE REGION: The following is a report of the activities of the S.W. Cape Region for the past year.

At the AGM held on 27th April 1972 in the Botany Dept., University of Stellenbosch, Mrs. A.S.L. Schelpe was elected as Hon. Sec./Treas. to fill the post vacated by Mrs. E.P. du Plessis. The remaining committee members: Mr. E.G.H. Oliver (Chairman), Prof. M.P. de Vos (vice-Chairman) and Prof. W.J. Lütjeharms remained on for their second year. Prof. M.P. de Vos was elected as the Regional Representative on Council.

Meetings:

1. 27 April, 1972 at Stellenbosch: Prof. R. Bigalke, Prof. of Nature Conservation in the Forestry Faculty, University of Stellenbosch, spoke on the recently introduced degree-course in Nature Conservation at Stellenbosch.

2. 10 August, 1972 at Cape Town: Mr. R.H. Simons, Government Algologist at the University of Cape Town, discussed some peculiarities of marine red algae.
3. 23 August, 1972 at Stellenbosch: A joint meeting with the Tak Biologie of the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns. Various speakers discussed the biological control of weeds.
4. 17 November, 1972 at the Athenaeum, Newlands: A joint meeting with the Royal Society of South Africa at which Emeritus Prof. Irene Manton FRS of Leeds University gave a lecture on her work on nanoplankton especially the ultrastructure of the flagella.
5. 14 December, 1972 at Cape Town: Prof. R.K.S. Wood, Professor of Plant Pathology in the Imperial College, London and President of the International Society of Plant Pathologists, addressed members on his current research interests.
6. No meetings were held during the first quarter of 1973.

The Region greatly appreciates the liaison with the Akademie and Royal Society for joint meetings.

Excursions: One very successful trip was held on 4 November, 1972 to the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve under the guidance of Mr. H.C. Taylor of the Botanical Research Unit, Stellenbosch who a few years ago completed an M.Sc. degree on a survey of the vegetation. Eighteen members and 3 guests attended.

Associated activities: The Region continues to play an active role in the young but now very active Co-ordinating Council for Nature Conservation in the Cape. Dr. A.V. Hall is Chairman and Mr. E.G.H. Oliver is on the Executive representing SAAB (S.W. Cape).

Social: A most enjoyable end-of-year braaivleis was held in the very pleasant surroundings of the Andries Venter Research Station in the Assegaaibos Nature Reserve, Jonkershoek near Stellenbosch by kind permission of the Cape Department of Nature Conservation. There were 51 people present - 17 members with their families and two guests, Mrs. C. MacLeod, Secretary of the British Heather Society and Mr. Kyoichi Ogawa the Japanese student who recently arrived in the Botany Department at Stellenbosch.

Membership: The Region's membership has increased slightly to 34 with the arrival of Prof. O.A.M. Lewis from Durban and Mr. H. Glen from Johannesburg. The past year saw the election of Prof. R.H. Compton as an Hon. Member of SAAB. His nomination was put forward by 20 local members. The Regional members congratulate him on this well deserved honour and are privileged to have him join their ranks with the other Hon. Member in the Region, Dr. Margaret Levyns.

Sincere congratulations go to those members receiving degrees during the past year - Ion Williams, Ph.D. (Cape Town), Charlie Boucher, M.Sc. (Cape Town), Mary Thompson, M.Sc. (Stellenbosch) and Joan van Reenen, B.Sc. Hons. (Stell.)

'N MEGANIESE WORTELAFSONDERINGSAPPARAAT: By ekologiese studies is dit dikwels van belang om die wortelverspreiding en hoeveelheid in die grond te bepaal.

Gedurende 1970-71 is 'n meganiese wortelafsonderingsapparaat ontwerp om wortels op 'n meganiese wyse uit grondmonsters te skei. Die apparaat is reeds oor twee seisoene in die VSA getoets. Die resultate wat verkry is, vergelyk baie gunstig met dié van die bestaande metodes. Daar is bv. bevind dat hierdie tegniek 30% meer effektief is, as die standaard hand-was metode en dat die tegniek ook talle kere vinniger is.

(Berig van prof. J.J.P. van Wyk, Plantkunde Departement, Universiteit van Potchefstroom).

SOIL CONSERVATION ACT: The following is an extract from a newsletter from the Wild Life Conservation Society which draws attention to some very important but little known and little publicised legislation.

Quotes taken from Annexure to the Soil Conservation Act published in the Government Gazette of 26 March, 1970.

- "1. Virgin soil and land normally not under cultivation, shall not be ploughed without the consent of the Minister and otherwise than on the conditions prescribed by him.
5. Vleis, marshes, water courses and sponges shall not be ploughed, cultivated or drained.

6. No land shall be ploughed, cultivated or drained within ten (10) metres of the edges or banks of rivers, brooks, springs, vleis, marshes, dongas, water courses or earth channels.
7. No vegetation, excepting proclaimed weeds and other noxious plants, shall be destroyed within ten (10) metres of the edges or banks of or in rivers, brooks, springs, vleis, marshes, dongas, water courses or earth channels.
8. Within ninety (90) metres of the edges of marshy water sponges, under average rainfall conditions, and twenty (20) metres horizontally and vertically from the edges of water sponges, brooks and rivers, no plantations shall be planted or re-established for commercial purposes or re-growth allowed after existing plantations have been thinned out or completely felled."

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA: At the recent AGM the following botanists were among the 18 members elected to Council - Prof. P.G. Jordaan, Mr. E.G.H. Oliver, Mrs. E. Powrie and Prof. E.A. Schelpe and Mr. H.C. Taylor. Dr. L.E. Codd, Prof. R.H. Compton and Prof. H.B. Rycroft were re-elected as Vice-Presidents of the Society which has a membership of 6 500. The Society has Branches in Johannesburg, Harrismith, Nelspruit, Pietermaritzburg and Bloemfontein.

THE RHODESIA SCIENCE NEWS is the monthly journal of the Association of Scientific Societies in Rhodesia which represents 28 societies. It contains authoritative articles on a wide range of subjects of particular interest to Rhodesia and for that matter Southern Africa. Each month the articles are based on a different theme. The last issue, April 1973, for example deals with conservation and environmental studies for school children particularly in the wild at the Recce School in Mushandike National Park. Each month T. Gordon writes about two indigenous trees of Rhodesia illustrated with a habit and close-up photograph. This is followed by notes from the various societies. Those interested in this publication should contact the Association at P.O. Box 8351, Causeway, Salisbury, Rhodesia.

CONSERVATION ON THE CAPE PENINSULA: At a recent meeting the Cape Divisional

Council resolved in principle that the conserved land in the Cape Peninsula should be extended by setting aside all remaining land above the 500 foot contour. This decision is admirable and has met with general approval from the local public and conservation bodies. It will, however, be very expensive to implement as about 9 million rand is required to buy up the private land within the area envisaged for conservation. If and when finalised this plan will provide a situation unique in the world - a very large mountainous nature reserve virtually within a city's limits.

TREES OF THE KRUGER NATIONAL PARK: Volume I of this prestige publication has recently appeared and deserves comment.

The book is the work of Mr. P. van Wyk who is Chief Research Officer of the Park after joining the staff in 1961. The first volume deals with 100 species and the excellent photographs of each species showing habit, bark, flowers, leaves and fruit are a particular feature of the work. The large habit photographs are outstanding and show also the associated vegetation and often characteristic habitat features. The close-ups of details are most useful. The book is well produced with clear print and uncluttered layout. The text reads well with only a few casualties due to translation ("fountains" for springs, "examples" for specimens). There is a wealth of general information, besides the botanical descriptive detail. There are two unfortunate drawbacks. The distribution maps for each species are very poor and the absence of author names to the species in the text and index is regrettable. As the species in this book are numbered according to the National Tree List one can refer to this for the information. No native common names are given and sometimes the English and/or Afrikaans common names differ from those in the National Tree List. (H.C. Taylor).

REQUEST FOR SEED: Mr. Gerrit Davidse, Assistant Curator in the Missouri Botanic Garden, USA, is conducting a biosystematic study of the genus *Trachypogon* (Poaceae). He is especially interested in comparing differences and similarities between African and American taxa through a hybridization programme. For this reason, he would very much like to obtain seed from as many populations as possible. Plants grown from seed will also be used in anatomical, cytological

POST REQUIRED: On the advice of Dr. G.P. Chapman (Wye College, Department of Botany) I am writing to enquire about a position in South Africa which would involve both research and teaching.

My interests lie particularly in Plant Biochemistry and Physiology but I am most interested in the presently developing problem of genetic conservation particularly in regard to Gramineae but not exclusively so. I am at present in my third year of a B.Sc. Honours Plant Sciences degree at Wye College, University of London.

I have travelled within the Middle East and the Indian Sub-continent in the process of which I saw at first hand the problems of research in developing countries. This assignment included a collection of wild and cultivated wheats for Rothwell's Plant Breeding Division from which company I received a travel grant.

Since South Africa is the home of such interesting genera as *Digitaria* and *Chloris* etc. I am anxious to have first hand experience of field work in this kind of plant group. (From R.B. Eastwood, Wye College, University of London, Ashford, Kent.)

EDITORS/REDAKSIE

E.P. du Plessis, CSIR, Pretoria.

E.G.H. Oliver, Botanical Research Unit, Stellenbosch.

CORRESPONDENCE/KORRESPONDENSIE

Mrs. E.P. du Plessis
Science Co-operation Division
CSIR, P.O. Box 395
PRETORIA