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

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## RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANT SPECIES IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE:

Of the many vegetation types present in the Cape Province, the Macchia of the South and South-Western coasts is of outstanding international importance. It is recognised, in spite of its small area, as one of the six Floristic Kingdoms of the World (Good, R. (1964): *The Geography of Flowering Plants*; Takhtajan, A. (1969): *Flowering Plants: Origin and Dispersal*). It has been considered as among the most floristically rich, in species per area, of the world's vegetation types (Good (1964), as above).

The present area for the Macchia, shown by comparing satellite photographs with vegetation maps, is about 980 000 hectares. This is about one-third of its former area. The satellite photographs show that this reduction is due mostly to agriculture, and to a much smaller extent, by forestry, housing and other land-uses. The satellite photographs do not show the frequently serious levels of replacement of the Macchia by invasive trees and shrubs, introduced from elsewhere, and belonging to the genera *Acacia*, *Hakea*, *Leptospermum*, *Albizia* and *Pinus*.

At a meeting of Cape Botanists held at the Bolus Herbarium on 12th October, 1972, it was agreed to launch a survey of the apparently major endangered plant species problem in the Western part of the Cape Province.

Applications for funds to the National Programme for Environmental Sciences were successful, and in February, 1974, a team of three persons started examining herbarium records for species distributions that were either very limited, or confined to clearly threatened or highly changed habitats. The team is directed by Dr. A.V. Hall of the Bolus Herbarium, University of Cape Town.

The herbarium survey showed that 1 700 flowering plant species in the Western Cape Province, south of the Orange River and west of Port Elizabeth, should be considered as candidates for endangered status. Sixty species appeared to be fully extinct. Most of the species were from the Macchia.

Field work started in February, 1975, in examining the status of the candidate

taxa in the field. The field-work is planned using a computer-based data-bank, controlled by an extension of the BOLIR system developed at the Bolus Herbarium. Collectors' records are retrieved for the route and time of year of a given field trip, so visits can be planned on an orderly basis. The bank is not complete but at present holds about 1 600 records.

The field-work to date has shown a threatened status for 65% of the 52 species studied, extinction for 4%, and a rare but not endangered status for 31%.

The actions to be taken for the species found to be in hazard are at present under close scrutiny. Action in a few cases is already well in hand. The likely size of the problems suggests a major effort will be needed to avoid quite large numbers of extinctions within the next two or three decades.

HANS-JOACHIM SCHLIEBEN (1902-1975): It is with deep regret that we have to report the death of H.J. Schlieben, one of the great plant collectors. He died on the 14th July in Essen/Germany. Since his retirement from service with the Botanical Research Institute, Pretoria, on 31st January, 1973 (see *Forum Botanicum* 11(3): 20-21) he devoted much of his time to gardening and philately. He undertook his last collecting tour in June, 1974 to Mocambique Island, but owing to failing health he collected only a few specimens. The last specimen he collected was an *Argyreia nervosa* (Burm. f.) Bojer, Schlieben no. 12926.

A biographical sketch of H.-J. Schlieben will appear in the next number of *Bothalia*. This sketch was compiled in the early months of this year and on the last visit to our deceased friend he told the compiler "You had better hurry up, I would like to have the opportunity to read my own obituary".

He leaves a wife and three married daughters. "Bwana Maúa" (Mr. Flower) as he was known to his East African assistants, ends one of his books on his expeditions to Tanzania with the words: "Yet the best place to be is "home", even if it is only a lonely tent waiting for me in the eternal peace of Mt. Kilimanjaro, protected by the great spirit Ndjaro".

Kwaheri, Bwana Maúa.

WELWITSCHIA: In accordance with the decision of the Standing Committee on the Stabilization of Specific Names, published in *Taxon* 24(1) Feb. 1975, the specific name *Welwitschia mirabilis* Hooker fil., takes priority over *W. bainesii* (Hooker fil.) Carriere on the grounds that the latter was based on the provisional name (*nomen provisorium*) *Tumboa bainesii* Hook. fil. This brings to a close a long drawn out argument on the pros and cons of each name, during which period of

uncertainty both names were used in important literature. The case was submitted to the above Committee by Dyer and Verdoorn in *Taxon* 21(4): 485 (1972), since an official ruling was essential to reach finality as soon as possible. Because *Welwitschia* is such a remarkable plant and because it has always held such an important position in botanical literature throughout the world, it is felt that the official decision should be given immediate widespread publicity.

There will be only a few readers in South Africa who do not know that Hans Herre achieved world fame with *Welwitschia*. He has the distinction of being the first person to grow *Welwitschia* from seed through its life cycle to the seeding stage. An account of this remarkable achievement was recorded by him in the *Journal of South African Botany* 20: 23 (1954). He had started the experiment more than 25 years earlier, soon after his arrival from Germany to become curator of the Stellenbosch University Botanical Gardens. (R.A.D.)

VISITORS: Prof. R.L. Specht from the University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, visited South Africa in September on his way to Europe. He has studied Mediterranean-type vegetation in Australia, California and Europe. After a visit to the Kruger National Park and discussions with staff members of the Botanical Research Institute in Pretoria, he visited the south-western Cape. Prof. Specht was shown aspects of fynbos by Mr. F. Kruger and Mr. C. Boucher in the Cedarberg. He gave a lecture to local S.A.A.B. members in Stellenbosch. He then left for Natal via George, Port Elizabeth and Alice.

Mr. M. Kroenlein, Director of the Exotic Garden of Monaco, visited Southern Africa in June and July. He attended the Aloe Congress in Salisbury and was then accompanied by Mr. Dave Hardy of the Botanical Research Institute to Namaqualand and Northern Transvaal. The object of his visit was to collect succulents for the Garden in Monaco.

NASIONALE AFRIKAANSE LETTERKUNDIGE MUSEUM EN NAVORSINGSENTRUM (NALN):

S.A.G.P. het 'n brief gekry van prof. P.J. Nienaber, Direkteur van NALN in Bloemfontein in verband met sy Bibliografie van Afrikaanse Boeke en die versameling van die NALN. Die waarde van so 'n Bibliografie lê in sy volledigheid. Elke Afrikaanse boek moet ingesluit word. Daarom wil die NALN graag lede se hulp inroep. In die verlede het sommige lede baie van hul boeke en publikasies aan hom gestuur vir insluiting in die Bibliografie. Nou wil hy almal vriendelik vra of hulle nie asseblief in die toekoms hulle publikasies aan die NALN sal stuur sodat hulle ingesluit kan word in die Bibliografie. Daarna sal die publikasies by die NALN wees waar hulle tot beskikking van navorsers sal wees. Die adres is: Die Direkteur, NALN, Posbus 517, Bloemfontein 9300.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES OF INTEREST TO BOTANISTS:-

- March 1976 - Symposium on Azaleas c/o Prof. J. van Onsen  
Institute Ornamental Plant Growing  
Caritasstraat 21  
B 9230  
MELLE, Belgium.
- 2-8 May 1976 - 4th Symposium on Virus diseases of ornamental plants.  
c/o Dr. R.H. Lawson  
Plant Genetics & Germplasm Inst.  
Ornamental Plant Lab  
Beltsville, MD 20705, USA.
- 19-23 June 1976 - 6th International Colloquium of ISSS: Soil Organisms as  
Components of the Ecosystem.  
c/o Dr. U. Lohm  
Department of Entomology  
P.O. Box 561  
S-751-22 Uppsala, Sweden.
- 25-31 July 1976 - 10th International Congress of Biochemistry.  
c/o Dr. W. Fritsche  
Varrentrappe Str. 40/42  
P.O. 900440  
a.M. 90  
Federal Republic of Germany.
- 28 July - 5 Aug. 1976 - 11th European Marine Biological Symposium.  
c/o Prof. O'Ceidigh  
University College  
Galway, Ireland
- 29 Aug. - 3 Sept. 1976 - 7th International Congress on Photo-biology  
c/o Dr. A. Castellani  
CNEN - CSN - Casaccia  
Caselle Postale 2400  
00100 ROME AD  
Italy.
- 30 Aug. - 4 Sept. 1976 - 9th International Congress on Plant growth substances.  
c/o Prof. P.E. Pilet  
Inst. of Plant Biology & Physics  
Place de la Riponne  
CH - 1005 Lausanne  
Switzerland
- 6-11 Sept. 1976. - International Congress for Cell Biology.  
c/o Dr. K.R. Porter  
University of Colorado  
P.O. Box 1CCB  
Bouler CO 80302, USA.
- 29 January 1977 - 4th International Palyonological Conference.  
c/o Birbal Shni Institute of Palaeobotany  
53 University Road,  
Lucknow 226 007, India.

22-26 Aug. 1977 - International Symposium on Microbiological Ecology.

c/o Prof. J.A.R. Miles  
Department Microbiology  
P.O. Box 913, Otago  
Dunedin, New Zealand.

September 1977 - 4th International Congress on Photosynthesis

c/o Prof. D.O. Hall  
Kings College  
68 Half Moon Lane  
London SE 24 9JF  
United Kingdom.

(From Mrs. E.P. du Plessis, C.S.I.R.)

THE GENERA OF THE MESEMBRYANTHEMACEAE BY H. HERRE:- Those readers who have copies of this excellent work and who do not already know of the erratum would no doubt like to have the following information. On page 22 the numbers 103-110 of the key to the genera were omitted. Erratum pages were obtainable from the publishers who have [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Refer to the Erratum published in the journal *Aloe*: 13:26 (1975).

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM THE BOTANICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE:-

1. Acocks's Veld Types of South Africa. This Botanical Survey Memoir (No. 40) has been reprinted with the plant names updated and 104 photographs illustrating the veld types included. The new format is A4 and the cover is of a serviceable 'telephone directory' type. The Memoir sells at R8.60 and the map which is unchanged, may be purchased separately at R2 for the two sheets.
2. Bothalia 11, 4 (1975). This contains a wide variety of papers including a revision of *Plectranthus* by Dr. L.E. Codd. Price is R3.

These publications are obtainable from the Division of Agricultural Information, Department of Agricultural Technical Services, Private Bag X144, Pretoria, 0001.

NEW MEMBERS:- The following have recently been admitted to the Association:

- Mr. B.J. Durand, Departement Bosbou, Jonkershoek Bosnavorsingstasie, Privaatsak 5011, Stellenbosch, 7600.
- Mr. W.P.D. Gertenbach, Privaatsak X404, Skukuza, 1350.
- Mr. J. Gouws, Departement Plantkunde, Universiteit van die Noorde, P.K. Sovenga, 0727.
- Mrs. M.N. Mzamane, Agricultural Research Station, P.O. Box 24, Maseru, Lesotho.
- Mr. J.E. Watts, Departement Plantkunde, Universiteit Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch, 7600

Dr. G.H. Wiltshire, Institute for Environmental Sciences, University of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein. 9300.

Dr. P.T. van der Walt, Privaatsak X404, Skukuza. 1350.

Miss J.G. Abbott, 15 Welcam Court, Commercial Road, Pietermaritzburg. 3201.

Prof. R.N. Pienaar, Department of Botany and Microbiology, University of the Witwatersrand, Jan Smuts Avenue, Johannesburg. 2001.

Dr. P.W. Roux, P.O. Box 233, Queenstown. 5320.

Mr. S. Russell, Botany Department, University of Fort Hare, Private Bag 314, Alice. 5700.

Dr. C.J. Taylor, Department of Botany and Microbiology, University of the Witwatersrand, Jan Smuts Avenue, Johannesburg. 2001.

Mr. T.B. Vorster, Navorsingsinstituut vir Plantkunde, Privaatsak X101, Pretoria. 0001.

Prof. B. Walker, Department of Botany and Microbiology, University of the Witwatersrand, Jan Smuts Avenue, Johannesburg. 2001.

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