

# FORUM BOTANICUM

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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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EDITORIAL:- Production of Forum Botanicum has been carried out in Stellenbosch since 1970. From January 1976 the newsletter will be produced in Pretoria as Mr. Oliver is moving to the Botanical Research Institute to take charge of the Herbarium Services Section. All news and correspondence should be sent to The Editors, Forum Botanicum, Private Bag X101, Pretoria, 0001.

At this time it is appropriate to make a request to all readers of Forum:-

PLEASE remember to inform the Editors of any change of address as soon as possible.

PLEASE supply information and news about activities, research, degrees, student enrolment, visitors etc. without having to be prodded.

## CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES OF FAUNA AND FLORA:

The World Conference held in Washington DC, USA in February/March 1973 drew up a Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora. This Convention is, at present, subject to ratification, and instruments of ratification are to be deposited by governments of states with the Government of the Swiss Confederation. Through ratification of this Convention, a contracting state recognises that wild fauna and flora are irreplaceable, and must be protected for the present generation and generations to come; declares itself conscious of the ever-growing value of wild fauna and flora from aesthetic, scientific, cultural, recreational and economic points of view; recognises, in addition, that international co-operation is essential for the protection of certain species of wild fauna and flora against over-exploitation through international trade; and is convinced of the urgency of taking appropriate measures to this end.

Those species likely to be adversely affected have been divided into three groups for the purpose of activating the control on trade in these species. A list of species of each group has been included in the Convention.

The first group includes all species threatened with extinction which are or may be affected by trade.

The second group includes all species which, although not necessarily threatened with extinction at present, may become so unless trade in specimens of such species is subject to strict regulations.

Group three includes all species which any contracting party identifies as being subject to regulation for the purpose of preventing or restricting exploitation, and as needing the co-operation of other parties in the control of trade.

The parties shall not allow trade in specimens included in these groups except in accordance with the provisions of the present Convention.

Import, export, re-export and introduction from the sea of the species mentioned in these groups, will be subject to strict regulation. Export, import and re-export permits will be required, while it will be expected from the officials concerned to ensure that any living specimen will be so prepared and shipped as to minimise the risk of injury, damage to health or cruel treatment.

It will be expected from contracting governments to take the necessary steps to put into practice regulations in compliance with the requirements of the Convention. These measures will have to provide for the penalising of illegal trade in the species concerned, for the confiscating of such fauna and flora and for the return thereof to the country of origin.

On 15 July 1975 South Africa became party to this Convention when an instrument of ratification of the Convention was deposited <sup>with</sup> the Swiss Government by the South African Ambassador in Berne, Switzerland. For South Africa the Convention took effect as from 13 October 1975. By this action, South Africa again revealed itself as a leading country in the field of nature conservation.

MNR. WIM . TIJMENS, Senior Kurator van die Universiteitshortus, Stellenbosch is verkies tot die Sentrale Raad van die Instituut van Landskapargitekthe in Suid-Afrika en voorsitter van die onlangs gestigte Kaapse tak. Hy is o.m. een van die lede wat saam met wyle mej. Joane Pim die voortou geneem het vir die daarstelling van 'n universiteitskursus in Landskapargitektheur aan die Universiteit van Pretoria.

Een van die Instituut se doelstellings is om aan diegene wat die besoedeling van die omgewing koppel aan hedendaagse beplanning, te wys op die estetiese aspekte van die omgewing deur inskakeling of nie-inskakeling van die "Natuur" as deel van die totale beplanningskonsep.

Mnr. Tijmens is ook weer verkies tot voorsitter van die Stellenbosch Tuinbouvereniging wat tydens 1976 sy 50-jarige bestaan vier.

SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE :- In terms of the resolution of the 1975 Annual General Meeting, the Head Office of the Association has been transferred to Stellenbosch. Office bearers are giving special attention to the policy and methods of congress planning. Congresses are considered to be the most important activity of the Association.

The next congress will be held from Friday 20th to Tuesday 24th August 1976, inclusive, at Nelspruit. Dr. F.D.P. Wicker is the Chairman of the Organising Committee at Nelspruit. The Congress Planning Committee is centred in Pretoria under the Chairmanship of Prof. G.C. van Drimmelen.

A symposium entitled "Advancement of the Science of Eco-system Development" will occupy two days of the Congress (20th and 21st). The full programme includes excursions on 22nd and 24th and the traditional parallel sessions on various themes of progress in science on 23rd. There will be the usual students' session.

NATIONAL TREE OF SOUTH AFRICA:- The giant yellow-wood has joined the Protea and Springbok as one of the Republics national emblems.

The Minister of Forestry, Mr. S.P. Botha, announced that the yellow-wood chosen as the "Tree of the Year 1975" by the Green Heritage Committee has now been selected as the Republic's national tree. The yellow-wood has played an integral part in the history and development of the country. Recently thousands of trees have been planted by schools, local authorities, farmers and women's organisations.

The source of this information gave no mention of species concerned.

MR. MITTON R. STEVENSON, a schoolmaster and conservationist from Renfrew, Ontario, Canada, arrived in South Africa in July. He is on a year's sabbatical leave and plans to meet scientists active in environmental research and monitoring and hopes to spend some time in the field with various workers in order to experience their particular techniques of sampling.

Some of his study areas will be as follows:

- a) Research into agricultural problems and techniques.
- b) Tours of working farms and experimental stations.
- c) Research and operative systems in the Botanic Gardens at Kirstenbosch.
- d) Marine biology.
- e) Anthropological field diggings and dating processes.
- f) A session at the Department of Forestry field study centre at Knysna.
- g) Viewing the primary and secondary school system of the Cape Province.

Mr. Stevenson also hopes to visit several of the Bantu Homelands.

A.E.T.F.A.T.:- Following the resolution passed at the Geneva Congress, the Secretariat is now run by the Botanical Laboratory on Las Palmas in the Canary Islands where the next congress will be held. The address is Secretariat A.E.T.F.A.T., Laboratorio de Botanica, Excmo. Cabildo Insular, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, Spain.

BOOKS RECENTLY PUBLISHED:

The Genera of Southern African Flowering Plants by R.A. Dyer: Volume I of this work, which has been in preparation for many years now since Phillips' Genera went out of print, is now available. It covers in 756 pages the Dicotyledons and contains keys to and descriptions of the families and genera much on the same lines as Phillips' Genera. Volume II covering the Monocotyledons is nearing completion and should appear by the end of this year.

The work is published by the Botanical Research Institute, Pretoria, and is obtainable at R11.00, post free in R.S.A., from the Division of Agricultural Technical Services, Private Bag X144, Pretoria, 0001.

Southern Cape Forests and Trees by F. von Breitenbach. The aim of this book is to publicise the indigenous forests of the southern Cape. They are the largest of their kind in the country. Dr. Von Breitenbach deals with the composition and structure of the forests, their value and history and the plants and animals of the forests. The book of 328 pages consists of three sections: The Forests, The Plants and Animals and The Trees. It contains 470 illustrations and is available in English or Afrikaans at R10.00 from the Government Printer, Pretoria.

Wild Flowers of Natal (Coastal Region) by Janet Gibson, published by the Natal Publishing Trust Fund (1975). This profusely illustrated book contains 116 colour plates covering 810 species in 886 paintings. It follows the form of alternating plate and brief text opposite each plate. The notes are very brief and designed to fit into a single page. The paintings are rather stiff and stylised, but give a very clear representation of each species. Unfortunately the paintings are all of different sizes with no indication as to the scale. The printing is good and clean which shows what can be done when one has control of the printing. The plates are all authoritatively named and the genera listed according to the Flora of Natal by J.H. Ross.

Natal Wildflowers by Barbara Jeppe is published by Purnells (1975). With a wider coverage of Natal, this book is very much like Cythna Letty's superb

Transvaal Book, with colour plates alternating with short notes on the plants. The paintings are drawn natural size in a style one has come to expect from Barbara Jeppe in this her third major book with 56 colour plates covering 284 species. However, the artist must undoubtedly be distressed by the reproduction of her work. The printing is extremely poor in places. One has but to compare the dust cover with Plate 52 and the prospectus with Plate 40 to wonder how wrong the other plates could be. At the price of R20 one wonders if the colour printing is worth it despite the phenomenal increase in costs.

Flora of Malaŵi: Two books have recently been published on the flora of Malaŵi. One, by Jessie Williamson, is a revised and extended edition of Useful Plants of Malaŵi (1975: Montfort Press, Limbe), first published in 1955 and reprinted twice before this revised edition. This book contains descriptions of the vast majority of useful plants of the country and now includes cultivated plants. The various vernacular names are given, a brief description of the plant, the uses to which it is put and an illustration. As the foreword says, 'the book has the particular merit of linking the traditional knowledge with that newly acquired by educational and health workers, and is fully in line with the emphasis today in developing Africa on intermediate technology'.

This book is an important source for the investigation of medicinal plants and food plants, now neglected for sophisticated cultivated crops. The author, a fully qualified dietician, has spent many years working in Malaŵi on her subject and is eminently qualified to write about plants along these lines. This time, useful fungi, a valuable source of proteins, are also included. The scientific names have been checked by experts and there are various lists of uses, glossaries and indexes as well as a map of the country with place names mentioned, and two bibliographies, one for the general section and one for the fungal section.

The second book, Wildflowers of Malaŵi, by Audrey Moriarty (1975: Purnell, Cape Town), belongs more to the 'coffee table' type of publication, with a lavish number of coloured plates and scanty information about the plants described and illustrated. However, for those who plan to holiday in Malaŵi it will prove a useful book for quick reference and a snap identification of the plants most likely to be seen and wondered about. Again, the names of the plants have been carefully checked by experts.

Flowering Plants, Evolution above the species level, by G.L. Stebbins. This book is the work of a man renowned in the field of genetics and evolution. He has collated a vast amount of information on this complex field of biological study, and in the book examines flowering plant morphology and systematics and population

genetics. Prof. Stebbins develops a series of hypotheses concerning Angiosperm evolution, hinging his discussion on the influence of natural selection in the development of flowering plant morphology. This is the first book to interpret the phylogeny of Angiosperms in the light of modern knowledge of developmental genetics, ecology and biology. It is based upon a unified theory that identifies the same fundamental processes at work in the origin of both species and the broader taxonomic categories. Price £13.50 published by Edward Arnold, London, obtainable from Book Promotions, Box 40, Wynberg, 7284.

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