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

SAAB CONGRESS : The tenth annual SAAB Congress hosted by the University of Cape Town in January must be considered a success by most counts. Not only was a record number of papers and posters presented, 141 and 47, respectively, (largely due to the tourist attraction of Cape Town and its beaches?) but the sessions progressed mostly without disturbance from the current construction at the University (although a few were locked out of an afternoon talk and more than one (from non-field botanists?) commented on the numerous steps ascended and descended). The organizing Committee for this Congress should be congratulated on their good preparation and organization as well as the general success of the experimental mid-Congress excursions (which may have extended the length of the congress to exclude full attendance for some, as brought out at the Annual General Meeting.

The programme ran very smoothly despite the occasional long-winded speaker. The Welcome by Professor J V O Reid of UCT contained a few pointed but somewhat nebulous remarks of internal politics which would have best been left out and the Opening Address by the Honourable J W E Wiley was pleasantly innocuous (although the conservation-minded might like to comment differently). The Plenary session on nitrogen and plants provided a well-balanced survey of current research on this subject within South Africa. The Keynote address by Sir Leslie Fowden of Rothamsted Experimental Station, United Kingdom, was well-received even by non-physiologists and the paper by Dr D Read, University of Sheffield, UK, could be considered the high-point of this session. It can be said that the Congress was well-rewarded by the contributions from all the overseas guests.

In general, the quality of the papers was of high standard even if many of these have importance only to the specialist in the respective fields. It should be noted with enthusiasm that most of the student papers were excellent and carefully presented. In not just a few cases, the student presentations rivalled

equally those of their supervisor's. A word of congratulations must be given to J C Manning in receiving the prize for the best student paper for his talk on "Patterns of Endothelial Thickening in the Monocots". Many of us should take note that the students from the University of Natal set a superb example by the high quality of their talks. The poster sessions were well attended, a reflection on the care and planning by the majority of presenters. The only valid negative comment heard was in regard to the numerous parallel sessions which were required for this largest gathering of SAAB members. Having three or four parallel sessions prevented many people from exploring topics outside their own fields.

The midweek excursions to Cape Point and Table Mountain offered opportunities for the Congress participants to interact with members outside their own discipline. The less energetic individuals who chose the bus tour through Cape Point Nature Reserve were provided expert commentary by Associate Professor A V Hall. The more energetic and youthful who dared the strenuous drive to the top of Table Mountain were given an entertaining and knowledgeable survey of the vegetation by Dr John Rourke, Professor E A Schelpe and Mrs E Ashton. On top of the mountain, views of the red Disa, Disa uniflora, and a self-guided tour of the Water Works Museum preceded the fateful decision of hiking down the mountain to Kirstenbosch via Nursery Ravine or whether to return by way of the dull drive by car. All the hearty mountaineers safely completed the descent and reported to the next morning's sessions with only slightly aching knees. The plenary lecture by Professor A Bradshaw, University of Liverpool, UK, was a superb presentation on the problems of disturbed habitats, a topic of importance to us in South Africa. It was unfortunate that this was the final scheduled lecture because attendance would have been greater if it had been given earlier in the week.

Just as the weary members began to regain their strength after the week long overdose of botany, the Annual General Meeting brought out some lively discussion on several topics. The question of when (or even whether) to have congress excursions resulted in a divided opinion although it was generally agreed that such decisions should be left to the judgment of the local organizing committee. A scheme to generate revenue for the Association created some startled looks as many members were unprepared to consider such an important subject without prior warning. With the inclusion of the various regional reports etc, the AGM ran

two hours beyond the original estimated length. It might be suggested to consider shortening the AGM, i.e. the reports might be distributed prior to the meeting and not read during the AGM.

The assortment of evening activities provided many with entertainment and companionship which ranged from the first evening's cheese and wine reception and barn dance to the finger supper at Kirstenbosch and other cultural alternatives to dining. A fitting end to the week long botanical indulgence was the Banquet in the Smuts Hall residence. Professor Brian Warner gave an inspiring, often anecdotal speech integrating the fields of botany and astronomy. The food must have been good as well.

In conclusion, the SAAB membership can be proud to have convened a Congress of high quality. By working together under our Association's able leadership, we can continue our endeavors deserving high respect based on international criteria. (DK)

DEPARTEMENT PLANTKUNDE, UNIVERSITEIT VAN STELLENBOSCH : Die roterende voorsitterskap van die departement rus vanjaar op die skouers van prof J J A van der Walt, nadat prof J H Visser gedurende 1982 en 1983 die voorsitterskap behartig het. Die studentegetalle is vanjaar as volg : eerstejaar : Plantkunde 1 : 250, Biologie vir Landbou- en Bosboustudente : 174, Biologie (Geneeskunde) : 236; tweedejaar : 82; derdejaar : 68; honneurs : 15; MSc : 9; PhD : 8.

Prof Van der Walt behartig kursusse in plantanatomie, sitologie, en genetika vir die eerstejaars; beginsels en metodes van taksonomie vir die derdejaars; en 'n gevorderde kursus in taksonomie vir die honneurstudente. Sy navorsing is toegespits op die biosistematiek van die genus Pelargonium. Sy bewerking van die seksie Pelargonium wat bestaan uit ondersoek van die α -taksonomie, anatomie, stuifmeel, merikarpe en sitogenetika, is feitlik gereed om vir publikasie ingestuur te word. Sy MSc-studente is mej A Rabie (Knopafsnoering by Prunus persica cv Kakamas) (voltooi einde 1983) mnr B E van Wyk (Biosistematiese studie van Virgilia) (voltooi einde 1983), J Swart (Vergelykende xylotomiese studie van die Lauraceae), mej J J M van der Merwe ('n Morfologies-taksonomiese studie van die Lauraceae), en mnr A Scheltema ('n Morfologies-taksonomiese studie van die seksie Jenkinsonia van Pelargonium). Mnr R O Moffett (Taxonomic revision of Rhus) is ingeskryf vir PHD.

Prof Visser hanteer kursusse in oorsigtelike plantfisiologie vir die eerstejaars; fotosintese, respirasie en N-metabolisme vir die derdejaars, en ekochemie vir die honneursstudente. Sy navorsingsaktiwiteit is hoofsaaklik toegespits op parasitisme by blomplante, met besondere aandag aan saadontkieming, oordrag van metaboliete tussen gasheer en parasiet, en anatomiese en ultrastrukturele verhoudings in die haustorium. Hy behartig ook 'n weefselkultuurprogram tov suspensiekultuur van Guayule, rooibostee, en Alectra waar die voedingsbehoefte bestudeer word om vas te stel presies waarom dit 'n parasiet is. Sy MSc-studente is mej C Thomas (Weefselkultuur van pruime), mej E Nel (Saadontkieming by Alectra), mej I Trautman (Weefselkultuur van Alectra), mnr J J Hunter (Nitraatreduktase-aktiwiteit van parasitiese plante), en mej C de Kock (Gasheergebondenheid van parasitiese plante). Sy PhD-studente is mnr J Gouws (Oordrag van metaboliete tussen Alectra vogelii en gasheer), mnr C Malan (Invloed van atrasien op mielies), mnr A C de la Harpe (Invloed van somersnoei op Vitis vinifera cv Cape Riesling), en mev A Botha (Plante as bio-indikatore van lugbesoedeling). Gedurende Desember en Januarie was prof Visser by die Universiteit van Kiel om inligting te dokumenteer vir 'n hoofstuk oor die haustorium van Striga vir 'n boek oor "The biology of Striga" (CRC Pers). Gedurende Junie sal hy na die VSA gaan om 'n voordrag en 'n plakaatreferaat te lewer by die 5de internasionale Guayule-kongres in Washington.

Dr J C Smith behartig kursusse oor die biologie van virusse, bakterieë, wiere, en swamme vir die tweedejaars; en ekologie vir die derdejaars. Hy doen navorsing oor die voortplantingsekologie van enkele plantgroepe in die winterreënstreek, o.a. Pceella (Campanulaceae), en die fenologie van 'n aantal plante in die winterreënstreek. Sy MSc-studente is mnr A Britz (Aspekte van voortplanting by Proteaceae), mej R Pool (Faktore wat voortplanting van Leucospermum cordifolium beïnvloed), en mnr I Kruger (Fitoplankton aan die weskus). Sy PhD-student is mnr C Boucher (Studie van laaglandfynbos).

Dr J H Jooste bied kursusse aan in selbiologie vir geneeskundestudente (eerstejaar), elementêre plantfisiologie vir die derdejaars, en minerale voeding en ekofisiologie vir die honneursstudente. Hy doen navorsing op die opname van voedingstowwe deur gewone en proteoïde wortels by die Proteaceae, en die meganisme van soutbestandheid. Sy MSc-studente is mej A Smith (Minerale voeding by Proteaceae), en mej H Botha (Die halofietgeaardheid van Senecio elegans). Sy PhD-student is mnr L Raitt (Meganisme van soutbestandheid by halofiete). Gedurende Augustus sal dr Jooste die MEDECOS-kongres in Perth bywoon, waar hy 'n voordrag sal lewer.

Mnr J E Watts is vanjaar op studieverlof. Normaalweg behartig hy kursusse vir die geneeskunde-studente (eerstejaar), plantbiochemie (derdejaars), en sekondêre metabolisme (honneursstudente). Hy doen navorsing op die meganisme van die werking van 2, 4, 5-TP in Packham's Triumph-peerbome. Hy is ook betrokke by 'n jaarlikse opknappingskursus vir onderwysers.

Mnr R B van der Merwe doseer morfologie en sistematiek vir die eerstejaars; morfologie en sistematiek van Bryophyta, Pteridophyta en Gymnospermae vir die derdejaars; en plantegroei van Suid-Afrika vir die honneurskursus.

Mnr A D Spreeth is verantwoordelik vir die biologiesekursus vir landbou- en bosboustudente (eerstejaar), plantkunde vir landbou- en bosboustudente (tweedejaar), en blomplantsistematiek vir die honneursstudente. Saam met mnr R B van der Merwe werk hy aan 'n boek oor die flora van die Stellenbosch-distrik. Dit sal sleutels bevat tot al die families en genera, met kleurfotos van 'n paar voorbeelde uit elke genus. Mnr Spreeth is ook betrokke by die jaarlikse opknappingskursus vir onderwysers.

Mej E M Marais doseer plantanatonomie vir die tweedejaar- en honneursstudente. Sy bied ook 'n mikrotegniekkursus vir honneursstudente aan. Sy doen navorsing op die taksonomie van Pelargonium seksie Hoarea.

Dr P Vorster is nie op die doseerpersoneel nie, maar bied 'n kort kursus in plantnomenklatuur aan vir die honneursstudente. Sy navorsing behels die taksonomie van verskeie seksies binne die genus Pelargonium, tw Otidia, Ciconium en Cortusina. Hy administreer die geleende herbariumversamelings.

Die ondersteunende personeel bestaan uit mev J J Serdyn (sekretaresse), mnr P H C van der Merwe en B Hall (tegnici) en mev H Viljoen (bibliotekaresse). Hulle sorg dat die departement fungeer. Die bodes, wat ook behulpsaam is met die voorbereiding vir praktiese klasse, is mnr F Rhoda, J de Koker, W Muller, J Hofman en R Baartman. Mnr Baartman is ook betrokke by die verwerking van herbariummateriaal.

Gedurende 1983 het prof F Albers van die Universiteit Kiel sewe maande by die departement deurgebring met behulp van 'n WNNR-toekenning. Hy het gewerk op

die sitologie van Pelargonium en die Asclepiadaceae. Dr M Gibby van die British Museum (Natural History) het ook ses weke by die departement deurgebring ivm haar werk op die sitologie van Pelargonium en die Pteridophyta. Dr O Alborn, voorheen van die Plantkundige Museum by die Universiteit Lund in Swede, was drie weke lank die gas van die departement terwyl hy die Van der Byl-versameling bestudeer het ivm die volume oor lichene vir die Flora of Southern Africa.

GOLD MEDAL : The Royal Horticultural Society in England has awarded its Gold Medal to the Botanical Research Institute for an exhibit of botanical art sent to its recent show in London in February. The exhibit was entitled "Recent Contributions to the Journal Flowering Plants of Africa" and contained 25 original colour paintings of various subjects painted by the following eleven artists :

Rosemary Holcroft	5	Current Botanical Artists at the Institute
Gillian Condy	7	
Marquerite Scott	1	Artists who have been employed at the Institute
Herrat March	2	in the past
Rita Weber	1	
Claire Smith	3	
Jill Kimpton	1	
Fay Anderson	2	Free-lance artists
Elaphie Ward-Hilhorst	1	
Esmè Hennessy	1	
Auriol Batten	1	

THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SYSTEMATIC AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY, 1985 :

The Congress will be held on 4-10 July 1985 at the University of Sussex, near Brighton, England.

The following Congress Symposia are being organised :

Symbiosis in Evolution
Conservation of Tropical Ecosystems
Biogeographic Evolution of the Malay Archipelago
Adaptational Aspects of Physiological Processes
Co-evolution in Ecosystems and the Red Queen Hypothesis
Angiosperm Origins and the Biological Consequences
The Measurement of Rates of Evolution
Molecular Biology and Evolutionary Theory
Co-Evolution and Systematics
Molecules vs Morphology in Phylogeny : Conflict or Compromise?
Random and Directed Events in Evolution
Biochemical Innovation in Microbial Communities

There will also be Special Interest Symposia on other topics, as well as sessions for contributed papers, films and poster papers.

For further information write to : Professor Barry Cox, ICSEB Congress Office, 130 Queen's Road, Brighton, Sussex BN1 3WE, UK.

POST VACANT - FORESTRY SCIENTIST (Botany or Silviculture) :

Salary negotiable up to R21 684 per annum plus a pensionable allowance of 12% per annum.

Requirements :

BSc (Forestry) or a recognised appropriate 4-year Bachelor's degree with Botany as a major subject.

Duties :

- ° The successful applicant will be required, after a period of probation, to take on the curatorship of the Forestry Herbarium (PRF) at the SA Forestry Research Institute in Pretoria
- ° Direct the taxonomic research conducted by the Department
- ° Prepare dendrological handbooks, keys for the identification of tree species and descriptive notes on trees
- ° Investigate the silvicultural requirements, characteristics and uses of trees
- ° Communicate his knowledge by way of publication and reports to all such as may require information on these matters

Applications and enquiries, stating reference 14959, should be directed to :

The Director General, Environment Affairs, Private Bag X313, Pretoria 0001.
You are also welcome to phone Mr P A Kirkman on (012) 287120 to obtain further information.

PUBLICATIONS :

List of species of Southern African plants by Dr G E Gibbs Russell and staff of the National Herbarium, Pretoria, and P Gonsalves, PRECIS Database Manager, has just been published as no 48 in the series "Memoirs of the Botanical Survey of South Africa". It contains in computer print-out form and arranged according to the Dalla Torre & Harms system, the names and authors of the 24000 odd indigenous and naturalised exotic species and subspecific taxa occurring in Southern Africa, i.e. south of the Kunene and Limpopo Rivers.

The book is priced at R5,30 (GST incl) locally and R6,20 other countries, all post free, obtainable from : Agricultural Information, Private Bag X144, Pretoria, 001.

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