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

CYTHNA LINDENBERG LETTY: The doyenne of botanical art in South Africa passed away in Pretoria on 3rd May 1985, aged 90.

Born in Standerton, Transvaal, on 1st January 1895, Cythna was the first of five children of the marriage between Walter Edward Letty of Greenwich, England, and Josina Christina Lindenberg of Worcester, Cape Province. She grew up on the Highveld and received her first lessons in painting wild flowers from her mother who, although largely self-taught, had the same delicate touch which was to develop in Cythna. After completing her schooling in Pretoria in 1914 she held various positions until, in 1925, she was appointed as artist to the Veterinary Laboratories at Onderstepoort. In 1927 she was transferred to the then Division of Plant Industry, to-day known as the Botanical Research Institute, where she remained, except for a short break from 1938 to 1945 during her marriage to Oscar William Alric Forssman, until her retirement in 1967.

Probably her greatest contribution has been to the series "Flowering Plants of Africa", to which she has contributed about 730 plates, representing the equivalent of 15 volumes of this work, as well as illustrations in colour and black and white to other publications of the Botanical Research Institute. But no doubt she is best known for the floral designs which appeared on our decimal coins in 1961, and for her own book on "Transvaal Wild Flowers" in 1962. International recognition followed and she was included among the world-famous botanical artists invited by the Hunt Botanical Library to exhibit their work in the United States in 1968. Shortly afterwards, in London, she was awarded a Silver Medal by the Royal Horticultural Society.

Over many years she gathered information towards a revision of the genus Zantedeschia and this finally appeared, with each taxon illustrated in colour, in *Bothalia* 10: 5 - 26 (1973). A fitting recognition of her contribution to botany in South Africa came in 1974 with the award of an honorary doctorate by the University of the Witwatersrand. SAAB awarded their Certificate of Merit for 1981 to her; this was presented to her during the combined SAAB-AETFAT Congress in Pretoria in January 1982. Her artistic ability extended beyond botanical art to poetry and she

published "Children of the Hours", which combined her botanical artistry with her poems, in 1981.

Cythna Letty had no formal training in botanical art and reached the pinnacle of achievement in this field through her great talent, coupled with dedication, tenacity and great perseverance. Her fame arose from her ability to satisfy the exacting demands of the taxonomist, while producing a work of art which had an aesthetic appeal which reached beyond mere representative craftsmanship. She will live for as long as botanical science exists in the pages of "Flowering Plants of Africa" and in the more than sixty publications, both scientific and popular, which contain her art.

L.E.C and W.G.W.

REPORT ON THE ELEVENTH AETFAT MEETING, Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, USA, 10 - 14 June 1985. The AETFAT (Association pour l'Etude Taxonomique de la Flore d'Afrique Tropicale) meeting was attended by about 115 delegates, including 19 from southern Africa and 15 from tropical Africa. Papers were contributed to symposia on modern systematic studies, biology of Madagascar and the Mascarenes (which included some zoological papers), pollination and breeding systems, ethnobotany in Africa, African lichenology and bryology, and conservation in Africa. In addition, papers presented in the general sessions covered taxonomy of particular plant groups, vegetation studies of particular areas, phytogeography of taxa and of areas, historical botany, successional studies, and policy for the production of the great African floras. Poster papers on a variety of topics were permanently displayed in the general meeting room.

At the Plenary Meeting reports were received on the ongoing AETFAT projects: the AETFAT Index, which is now back in production (!!), the vegetation map of Africa, the atlas of ecologically important species in Africa, the checklist of plant taxa recorded in tropical Africa, and the catalogue of plant families dealt with in the main tropical African floras. A register of plant taxonomic and related projects in Africa will in the future be compiled and permanently maintained by the Botanical Research Institute, Pretoria.

G.E.G.R.

NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES BECOMES NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH

In 1972 the National Programme for Environmental Sciences (NPES) was established to coordinate existing and initiate new cooperative research

ventures relating to environmental problems in South Africa. The NPES originally comprised six sections, on Inland Waters, Terrestrial Biology, Lower Atmosphere, Solid and Toxic Wastes, Marine Pollution and on Human Adaptability. Over the years, several of these sections have grown into major national programmes in their own right, or have been linked to other existing programmes.

The 'budding off' of programmes has been seen as a measure of the success of initiatives taken within NPES, and the evolution of a strong network of such cooperative activities has contributed very substantially to the identification, study and solution of environmental problems in southern Africa. This proliferation of programmes has brought with it the need for a forum for the integration of all environmental research activities administered within the Foundation for Research Development (FRD). Thus a new body, the Coordinating Committee for Environmental Research, will soon be appointed to bring the representatives of the various national programmes and senior decision makers in user agencies together.

The activities of the former National Programme for Environmental Sciences currently administered by the Ecosystem Programmes division of FRD will in future be referred to as the National Programme for Ecosystem Research which will report to the National Committee for Ecosystem Research.

The membership of the new National Committee, appointed for the three year term 1 January 1985 to 31 December 1987 is as follows: Mr J P de Wit (Chairman), CSIR, Professor P de V Booysen, University of Natal, Professor C F Cresswell, University of the Witwatersrand, Dr S S du Plessis, Transvaal Division of Nature Conservation, Mr A T Gouws, Department of Environment Affairs, Mr F J Kruger, South African Forestry Research Institute, Mr P J le Roux, Orange Free State, Division of Nature Conservation, Professor E J Moody, Development Bank of Southern Africa, Mr P E Odendaal, Water Research Commission, Dr P W Roux, Department of Agriculture and Water Supply, Professor W R Siegfried, University of Cape Town, Dr D F Toerien, National Institute for Water Research, CSIR.

DEPARTEMENT PLANTKUNDE, UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA: Prof. Albert Eicker is verkies op die Raad van die "International Society for Mushroom Science" (ISMS) wat sy hoofkantoor in Kent, Engeland het. Prof. Eicker is ook die verteenwoordiger van die Suid-Afrikaanse Sampoensboerevereniging op die ISMS. Een van die vernaamste funksies van die ISMS is die reëling

van internasionale Kongresse. Die laaste Kongres het in Augustus 1981 in Sydney, Australië plaasgevind terwyl die volgende een aanstaande jaar in Kanada, waarskynlik in Ottawa, gehou sal word.

PLANTKUNDE-EKSKURSIE NA DIE SUID-KAAP: Professor N Grobbelaar, mnr A E van Wyk en mev E du Plessis het die derdejaarklas op 'n ekskursie tydens die afgelope Paasvakansie vergesel. Daar is vanaf Pretoria via Jansenville en die Suurbergpas tot by die mond van die Grootbrakrivier digby Mosselbaai per bus gereis en toe daarvandaan via Willowmore terug Pretoria toe. Naby Uitenhage het dr Helmuth Zimmermann van die Onkruidlaboratorium van die Departement van Landbou 'n interessante uiteensetting van hul werk gegee. 'n Ongewone aspek van die praatjie was die benutting van sulke onkruid soos turksvye deur bv. die jong blaaie vir slaai te gebruik!

Mnr Coert Geldenhuys van Saasveld het die geheime van die Knysnowoude met die groep gedeel. Dit was interessant om te verneem dat die Staat ongeveer netsoveel geld jaarliks uit die gekontroleerde oes van die sg. seweweekvaring (Rumohra adiantiformis) uit die inheemse woude maak as wat hy jaarliks uit houtverkope uit dieselfde woude maak.

Op die nabygeleë berge waar die woude vir fynbos plekmaak het mnr Johan Breytenbach, ook van Saasveld, die toergroep van die interessante wisselwerking tussen veral die miere van die omgewing en die plante vertel. Miere vervul skynbaar 'n baie belangrike saadverspreidingsfunksie in daardie soort plantegroei.

RHODES UNIVERSITY, GRAHAMSTOWN

Research on Host-Parasite Relationships of Mistletoes: A number of studies have been undertaken in this Department on the autecology of mistletoe species and their distribution on host trees. In 1986 it is planned to extend this research programme and prospective research students are invited to write to me. Students completing their B.Sc. or B.Sc. (Honours) degrees in botany will be considered for research projects for the B.Sc. (Hons) or M.Sc. degrees respectively. Funding may be arranged for suitably qualified students.

Research on Dune Stabilization and Coastal Zone Management: A study on the natural succession of dune plants, artificial dune stabilization and coastal zone management along the Eastern Cape coast has been in progress for the last eight years at Rhodes University. A number of projects are being undertaken for local government authorities and prospective research students interested in becoming involved in this applied botanical

research programme should contact me. At least two new projects must be initiated next year which could lead to a higher degree. Funding for the project can be arranged. Please contact: Professor R A Lubke, (Phone 0461-7108), Department of Plant Sciences, Rhodes University, Grahamstown 6140.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

South African National Scientific Programmes (SANSP) Report Series

The following SANSP reports have recently been published and are obtainable at no cost from Ecosystem Programmes at CSIR, P O Box 395, Pretoria 0001.

- No. 88 A synthesis of plant phenology in the Fynbos Biome. Shirley M Pierce. December 1984. 56 pp.
- No. 89 Aquaculture in South Africa: A cooperative research programme. O Safriel and M N Bruton. June 1984. 79 pp.
- No. 91 Monitoring in South African Grasslands. M T Mentis. September 1984. 55 pp.
- No. 92 Conservation of threatened natural habitats. Anthony V Hall (Editor). November 1984. 185 pp.

Vegetation map of Africa

A previous issue of this newsletter carried a short description of the map, which is made up of three separate sheets and a companion memoir of 22 chapters by Mr Frank White (Oxford University) titled "The Vegetation of Africa".

In addition to the overseas outlets listed in the previous newsletter, this publication is also available in South Africa from Russel Friedman Book Enterprises (Pty) Ltd., P O Box 73, Halfway House, 1685, telephone 011-7022300, at R77,00 including GST and postage. Russel Friedman does not charge for packing or postage anywhere in South Africa.

Dr B M Campbell's 'A classification of the mountain vegetation of the Fynbos Biome' has been published as Memoirs of the Botanical Survey of South Africa No. 50 (1985). Local price R7,60 plus GST, post free; overseas R9,60, post free. Obtainable from Division of Agricultural Information, Private Bag X144, Pretoria 0001.

PALAEOFLORA OF SOUTHERN AFRICA MOLTENO FORMATION (TRIASSIC)

Vol. 1 : Part 1 Introduction; Part 2 Dicroidium.

By J M & H M Anderson, Botanical Research Institute, Private Bag X101, Pretoria 0001, South Africa.

A4, 227 pp, >100 figs, 28 tables, 110 pls (\pm 1 600 photos), 66 maps.
Publication date: October 1983.

This volume consists of two parts. The first being a survey of Gondwana Triassic megafloral formations, localities and literature; and a synopsis of the Molteno Fm. palaeoflora in which are provisionally recognised some 112 foliage and 45 fruit and seed taxa. The second consists of a detailed taxonomic revision of the seed fern Dicroidium, the most abundant diverse genus in the Molteno flora and indeed throughout the Gondwana Triassic Realm. This revision of the genus, supported by cuticular studies, recognises 9 species including a total of 31 infra-specific taxa.

SOUTH AFRICAN ORDERS

In view of the present adverse exchange rates this volume which sells at \$45,00 from Rotterdam has a retail price of R75,00 (plus 12% GST) in South Africa.

We have consequently negotiated a special price of \$20,00 (R40,00) for copies ordered via the authors (Botanical Research Institute).

or Order from:

A A Balkema, P O Box 1675, 3000 BR Rotterdam, Netherlands.

A A Balkema, 99 Main Street, Salem, NH 03079, USA

A A Balkema, P O Box 3117, Cape Town 8000, Republic of South Africa.

Another book (by the same authors) is in press and should be available July 1985, namely:

PALAEOFLORA OF SOUTHERN AFRICA PRODROMUS OF SOUTH AFRICAN MEGAFLORAS DEVONIAN TO LOWER CRETACEOUS

This study is ultimately concerned with floristics and evolutionary trends witnessed in the preserved South African megaplants over the 300 million year span from the Devonian to L. Cretaceous; from the appearance of vascular land plants to the dramatic rise of the flowering plants; or that interval coinciding broadly with the Pangaeic phase of Earth history. To achieve these aims it has been necessary to fill out the most obvious gaps in previous sampling and thence to undertake a comprehensive standardised taxonomic revision of all the available material in the country.

PROTEA CONFERENCE AND PROTEA RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

The International Protea gathering taking place in South Africa from 25th August - 1st September this year will be a combination of two events. On the one hand there will be the 3rd International Protea

Conference (IPC) organised under the auspices of the International Protea Association, and on the other, the 1st International Protea Research Symposium (IPRS) of the International Society for Horticultural Science.

The main emphasis of the Conference will be on the technical excursions both in the Johannesburg area and in the Cape. These will allow participants comprehensively to observe South African Protea-growing techniques on Protea farms; to visit a national flower market where Protea cut flowers are auctioned; to acquaint themselves with production research; and as a highlight, to view commercial Protea species in their natural habitat. The emphasis of the Symposium will be placed on formal scientific meetings at which papers will be presented and discussions held on a variety of the most recent research aspects of growing Proteas, from breeding and propagation to post-harvest handling.

A brief background on the two International bodies concerned, follows: The International Protea Association (IPA) was formed in 1981 with the aim of developing the Proteaceae ornamental plant and cut flower industry, and every two years it holds an international conference with a view to furthering this aim. 1981 saw the First Conference take place in Melbourne, Australia and 1983, the Second Conference in Hawaii and Seattle, USA. Both these countries originally introduced South African Proteas from the Cape and having suitable climatic and soil conditions in some areas have been very successful in promoting their cultivation and laying the foundation for a new branch of floriculture. Similar developments have taken place also in New Zealand, Israel and elsewhere. This is the first time the Conference will take place in the country of origin of the Protea.

The general objective of the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) is the advancement of horticulture by the improvement of international co-operation in science and technology. The means by which the ISHS aims to achieve this objective are: (a) the arranging of international horticultural congresses; (b) the setting up of sections dealing with groups of horticultural plants, commissions engaged in various scientific and technical aspects of horticulture, and working groups of sections and commissions; and (c) the organising of symposia on specific topics for scientists and other specialists.

This first research Symposium on the subject of Proteas is the outcome of the work of the Protea Research Working Group recently formed under the Ornamentals Section of the ISHS.

The Conference will begin in Johannesburg on Sunday, 25th August. From Johannesburg the group will proceed to Cape Town on Tuesday, 27th August. The Symposium will take place in Cape Town and the following subjects will be discussed: Propagation, Growth and Development, Post-harvest Handling, Management and Insects and Diseases. Poster papers covering numerous aspects will also be on display. The Zimbabwe Protea Association is planning an optional Pre-conference tour to Zimbabwe. Delegates will be able to visit Protea plantations, meet local Protea growers and tour places of scenic interest. Two post-conference tours are being organized. The Cape Tour will cover the Boland, the Little Karroo and the South-Eastern Cape as far as Port Elizabeth. The Transvaal Tour will cover the Lowveld, the Escarpment and the southern part of the Kruger National Park. A short visit to Durban will link these two tours.

An additional feature of this important international gathering will be a unique exhibition, the opening of which will coincide with the Conference. This exhibition - "Proteas in Print and Picture" - will take place at the South African Library in Cape Town and will include rare books, prints, manuscripts, art, newspaper cuttings, pamphlets, illustrations and other items of Protea interest from the earliest illustrations dating to 1605 to the present time. The exhibition will be open to the public until at least the end of November.

NUUS VAN DIE SAGP-DAGBESTUUR

Uitstaande ledegeld van SAGP-lede: Aangesien heelwat lede traag is om hul ledegeld te betaal en dit die SAGP heelwat kos om tweede rekeninge of geregistreerde briewe uit te stuur, bring die Raad die volgende reglement in die konstitusie onder sodanige lede se aandag: "n Lid wie se jaarlikse ledegeld op 31 Maart van enige jaar agterstallig is, word as nalatig beskou en is nie langer geregtig op die ontvangs van kennisgewings en publikasies van die Genootskap of enige regte en voorregte van lidmaatskap nie". Die tesourier verskaf die volgende inligting soos op 30 Mei 1985: 1. 46 lede het nog nie hul ledegeld vir die 1983/84 boekjaar betaal nie. Die bedrag hierby betrokke is R614,00; 2. 214 lede het nog nie hul ledegeld vir die huidige boekjaar betaal nie. Die bedrag in die geval beloop R3 111,00. Lede word vriendelik dog dringend versoek om hul ledegeld so gou as moontlik aan die tesourier te betaal, Prof P D F Kok, Departement Plantkunde, Universiteit van Pretoria, Pretoria 0002.

SAAB : REDUCED JOINT MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR MARRIED COUPLES: Married couples could apply to the treasurer of SAAB (Prof. P D F Kok, Department of Botany, University of Pretoria, Pretoria 0002) to have their fees adjusted.

REDAKTRISE/EDITOR

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