



# Forum Botanicum

Newsletter of the South African Association of Botanists  
Nuusbrief van die Suid-Afrikaanse Genootskap van Plantkundiges

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## South African Journal of Botany --The Future--

Professor J van Staden

Editor in Chief

There is little doubt that many Members of the National and International Botanical Community are greatly concerned as to the future of the official journal of the South African Association of Botanists. Your Council has been alarmed at the escalation of publication costs and the possible discontinuation of this long-standing journal, which serves as a publication vehicle for mainly South African Botanists.

At the Annual General Meeting in Potchefstroom the three co-editors were asked to investigate ways and means to ensure, if at all possible, the continuation of our Journal. Following a survey by Council it was quite clear that the membership wished to see the Journal survive and if possible thrive. As nothing is cheap, Council accepted that the membership would be willing to pay for what they want.

At an urgent Council Meeting held at Stellenbosch on 19 July 2000, all options

open to the Association were thoroughly discussed.

The following major decisions were reached: -

1. Prof. J van Staden was appointed as Editor-in-Chief for 3 years;
2. SAAB will continue to contribute R24 000 for the management of the journal by the Editor-in-Chief;
3. SAAB to sign a contract with NISC (National Inquiry Services Centre) who will take over the publication and distribution of the Journal for 3 years.
4. SAAB members will have to pay a journal subscription of R140 per annum. Membership fees were therefore separated from Journal subscription fees.
5. Until a profit is made page charges will be levied at R140 per page.

Management of the Journal was left to the Editor-in-Chief to do to the best of his ability.

What has so far been done: -

1. The contract with NISC was signed.
2. An Editorial Review Board consisting of 20 South African and International Scientists had been appointed. This will be reviewed regularly with the best interests of the Journal in mind.
3. The aims of the Journal have been defined.
4. The Editorial Office has been moved to Pietermaritzburg,  
  
Research Centre for Plant  
Growth & Development  
University of Natal,  
Pietermaritzburg  
Private Bag X01  
Scottsville 3209
5. The journal layout, format and cover will be changed and redesigned.
6. The Editorial Review Board will attempt to ensure rapid review and publication.
7. Every attempt will be made to increase the Citation Index of the Journal, which currently stands at 0.379.
8. We hope to encourage Botanical Scientists, both locally and from abroad to publish in our Journal.

It is only with Membership support that we can achieve our goals. I trust that we will be able to serve the Botanical Community in the years to come. Personally I would like to thank our Review Board for the time they have already invested. We are indebted to

NISC for their enthusiasm. We welcome all suggestions that could improve our Journal.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR J VAN STADEN F.R.S.S.Afr.  
Editor-in-Chief

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## **Nomination of Ph.D. Theses for Bronze Awards Junior Medal SAAB**

**SAAB council is awaiting nominations for the Junior Medal for the best Ph.D. awarded by South African Universities during 1999. Please forward one nomination from your department as well as the PhD thesis, accompanied by short Curriculum Vitae of the candidate, before 31 October 2000.**

**Send the thesis and CV to:**

**Dr EM Marais  
Department of Botany  
University of Stellenbosch  
Private Bag X1  
MATIELAND  
7602**

**\*\*This message was sent to all heads of departments in July this year. To date we have only received one thesis. Remember, it is the members who keep an organisation alive and if they do not respond to normal, annual circulars the association can no longer function properly. We are aware of the declining student numbers, but surely more than one Ph.D. student graduated last year. Please send in more nominations and at least make it a competition!!**

## 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

South African Association of  
Botanists

14-17 January 2001 – RAU

The second announcement and call for papers have been sent to all members. The deadline for abstracts for poster and papers were 29 September 2000. Late poster and paper abstracts will NOT be published in the programme handbook. Only electronic abstract submissions will be considered.

Registration fees were very reasonable at R200 for members, but late registration will be R500.

Professor Ermias Dagne (University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) and Dr Anthony Cleecker (University of Wisconsin, USA) have been invited as plenary speakers.

Delegates are responsible for their own accommodation arrangements. The second circular includes names and telephone numbers of no less than 190 accommodation spots.

<http://www.rau.ac.za/conf/saab2001>

## Special offer Sappi treespotting books

Jacana and Sappi have just launched their new addition to the **Sappi Tree Spotting** series - **Sappi Tree Spotting Bushveld**. The series already consists of Highveld, Lowveld and KwaZulu-Natal.

The Sappi Tree Spotting guides are easy-to-use with detailed descriptions of the most common trees. It is beautifully illustrated with artwork of leaves, flowers, fruit, pods and bark. Rina Grant and Val Thomas wrote the books with beautiful illustrations by Joan van Gogh.

Jacana would like to offer **20% discount to all SAAB members** on all the Sappi Tree Spotting books.

Orders can be placed on line with Jacana at [marketing@jacana.co.za](mailto:marketing@jacana.co.za)  
Fax: (27 11) 648-5516

They will verify your membership with the SAAB secretariat.

# Book Review

## Sappi Tree Spotting

### Bushveld Including Pilanesberg and Magaliesberg

**Grant R and Thomas V (2000)  
with illustrations by Joan  
van Gogh. 428pp. Soft cover  
Price R155**

At the launch of the book, Sappi Chairman, Eugene van As, said it was significant that the Bushveld is one of the areas in South Africa that remains largely untouched by the influence of industry and urbanisation. He emphasised that it was vital to protect the natural heritage and to guard against invasion by exotic species. Professor Kader Asmal, Minister of Education touched on the same point in the foreword, praising the Sappi books as a reminder of what we should treasure and conserve.

In this edition of Jacana, information was published on NBI, Botanical Society of South Africa, the Dendrological Society, the Tree Society and Trees for Africa. This background makes it easy for interested readers to familiarise themselves with the activities of the different societies and it is also an exercise in public awareness exercise.

The largely untouched African landscape in much of the Bushveld region attracts tourists nationally and internationally. Tourism and especially eco-tourism is becoming an increasingly important source of foreign revenue and job creation. This book will offer a valuable service to eco-tourists travelling in the area.

A total of 150 indigenous Bushveld tree species are featured in the book. What might be frustrating to Botanists is that only about 65 species are covered in detail. However, one must keep in mind that this book was not produced exclusively for Botanists, but rather for the layperson and for children, who will hopefully become the Botanists of the future.

Non-botanists favour the book because of the absence of keys and the attractive, yet simple illustrations make identification pleasurable.

Many of the species discussed in the other books in the series are repeated in the Bushveld edition. However, this time round, there are photos as well as drawings with each specie to cater for both tastes.

The **Sappi Tree Spotting** guides are easy-to-use, professionally illustrated and contain a variety of helpful information, including seasonal grids, human and animal uses for different tree species as well as gardening ideas.

This book is a must for the tree enthusiast, holidaymaker and Botanist to delve into whenever an opportunity arises.

# Looking at the Past

On the first of December 1962, almost 38 years ago the first *Forum Botanicum* was published. The editors were JP Jessop and EGH Oliver. When looking at that publication a couple of things immediately catches the eye:

- The first is the changes in technology over almost four decades. Back to the days with a typewriter, wax sheets and no photocopies. To produce something like that was not as simple as today. For the information of the younger generation: no "cut and paste" facilities were available, and if a mistake was made on a page, the whole page had to be retyped.
- The second matter is the vacancy advertised for a Botanical Assistant. Those were the days when gender discrimination was rife and was even reflected in the salaries offered. The **annual salary** offered in 1962 is equal to what a qualified B.Sc person in 2000 will expect per **week**.
- Thirdly, the editors were based in the Cape Town area, just like today. They also emphasised that the success of the newsletter depends on the co-operation of members and their contributions.

Excerpts of the first publication follows:



## THE SOUTH AFRICAN FORUM BOTANICUM

NO. 1.

1 December 1962

This is the first issue of what is hoped will be a regular newsletter to keep botanists of Southern Africa in touch with each others work.

The response to the circular was most heartening and the editors wish to thank all who replied. The success of the newsletter will depend on the co-operation we receive in the future.

At present it is inevitable that there is too much news for the first issue. We have thus decided to report on the activities in Cape Town to indicate the type of news we have in mind. We hope those who have been <sup>left out</sup> ~~here~~ will appear in further issues during the next few months.

NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS - KIRSTENBOSCH: Next year will mark the Golden Jubilee of the Gardens and the Botanical Society of South Africa - a notable event in botanical circles in the Cape. A very full programme of celebrations is being arranged by the Jubilee Committee. The State-President will be the Patron-in-Chief.

The first major event will be a wreath-laying ceremony at the grave of Professor Harold Pearson in Kirstenbosch on 28th January, the 93rd anniversary of the date of his birth. He was Professor of Botany at the University of Cape Town and the founder and first director of Kirstenbosch

There will be a garden party and various other celebrations.

The first International Flower Show ever to be held in South Africa will be staged from 19-20 March in the City Hall. It is expected that the Show will attract world-wide attention. A Wild Flower Show combining flowers from nearly all the famous flower regions of the Cape will be staged from 18-21st September.

Vacancy: From January 1963 a Botanical Assistant for the Compton Herbarium entailing general work in systematic botany and herbarium routine. Minimum qualifications a B.Sc. in Botany. Starting salary for Woman R1260 per annum, for Man R1300 per annum. Those interested should contact the Director, National Botanic Gardens of South Africa, Kirstenbosch, Newlands, C.P. for further details.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN: Professor W.E. Isaac, marine algologist, left last year to take up a post at the Royal College in Nairobi. He was succeeded in April this year by Professor W.J. Lütjeharms from Bloemfontein. The professor is continuing his work here on soil fungi. Professor H.B. Rycroft continues his work on Proteaceae but finds his time completely occupied with the Kirstenbosch Jubilee celebrations.

S2A3 Diamond Jubilee Congress: This was held in July at the University of Cape Town. Papers on botanical subjects were read by Professor E. Roux, Professor E. van Zinderen Bakker, Dr E. Schelpe, Dr M.R. Levyns, Dr E. Plumstead, Dr A. Mogg, Dr H. Meidner, Rev. Dr D. Meredith, Dr N. van Schaik, Miss D. Olivier, Mrs A. Jacot-Quillarmod, Miss E. Lawson, Mr A. Hall and Mr R. Jones. Professor H.B. Rycroft delivered his Presidential Address to Section B on "Three and half Centuries of Proteas." There was an excursion to the Karoo Garden, Worcester, visiting on the way the University of Cape Town Botany Department field station in Bains Kloof where third year students carry out ecological survey work.

The editors regret that they were unable to mention the various staff vacancies in time for their closing dates.

J.P.Jessop and E.G.H.Oliver (Editors) Bolus Herbarium,  
University of Cape Town.

Distributed by the National Botanic Gardens of South  
Africa - Kirstenbosch.



**Please!!!!**

SAAB members (student members included) are asked to submit any news or information they want to share with colleagues to the editor for publishing. That is the only way to keep the association alive and the newsletter interesting.

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## **In Memoriam**

**Mr RI de Sousa Correira, one of our members passed away earlier this year. He was connected to the Research Institute for Reclamation Ecology. SAAB wants to convey their condolences to the bereaved family.**

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## **Contact addresses for SAAB Council members**

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