



## BOTSOC NEWS

### February / March / April 2008

Dear Botsoc members,

*“the mountains and hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands” (Isaiah 55:12).* This is the feeling I get when I drive in Namibia at this time of the year and marvel at the green countryside. Added to the green is an array of flowers in the veld. Never before did I visit Etosha for the sole reason of seeing the flowers!

Thanks to the wonderful rains virtually the whole of Namibian flora is in full flower and bloom. Reports from all corners of the country tell of the splendour and apparently the far south east of the country is a site worth visiting.

Enjoy your travels if you are so lucky to have holidays or are able to get out into the veld.

#### REPORTS ON PREVIOUS ACTIVITIES, TALKS AND WALKS

Since the last newsletter, just before the end of 2007, we had the privilege to welcome Mr David Palacios who gave a very interesting talk on the flora of the Iberian Peninsula, which being situated where it is forms a bridge between European and African flora. The peninsula boasts some 8000 – 9000 different vascular plants species and 80 – 90% of all European plant species on only 4.5% of the surface of the European Union. There are some 1500 endemic species. This must be a haven for the botanist!

Coleen Mannheimer introduced her audience to “Shrubs of Namibia”. Coleen is thanked for her insightful and delightful talk. One cannot help but love each plant after listening to Coleen. A “re-run” has been requested and Coleen’s arm will be twisted a little later in the year. Although not the same topic members are urged to diarise Wednesday, 14 May for another talk by Coleen on “Namibian Flowers”.

Sonja Loots is thanked for her interesting talk on the status of two succulents in the Namib. Also thanks to the audience who braved the heaviest downpour of the season to listen to the talk. It was well worth the effort.

The regular walks on the first Saturday of the month have become very popular and are well supported by guests, tourists and visitors to Windhoek. In February the Garden only had a green hue, which, of course, had changed for the March and April walks. There is so much to see! Sincere thanks go to our ever willing and well informed guides: Luise, Hildegard, Coleen, Silvelyn, Silke, Ezekeil, Etta, Carol, Salome, Hartmut and ????. No Saturday walk is complete without Diana’s muffins and tea and coffee. Thanks go to Diana and the tea/coffee ladies. Please note that the next guided walk will take place on **10 May 2008** and not on the first Saturday of the month.

#### UPCOMING WALKS AND TALKS OF INTEREST

##### WALKS:

A guided walk in the National Botanic Garden will take place on **Saturday, 10 May 2008** at 08:00. Thereafter guided walks will be held as usual on the first Saturday of each month i.e. 1 June, 6 July, 3 August. Entrance for non-members is N\$10. Muffins and tea/coffee will be on sale.

##### TALKS:

**Saturday 19 April at 18:00** by world-renowned botanist, **Prof Eugene Moll**, at the NBRI. Prof Moll will be speaking on his personal experiences and **observations of Namibia and Australia**, stressing **“Why we are so similar, and yet are very different”**. Although plants will, of course, receive some emphasis, he will be dealing with wider issues as well.

**Notice is hereby given of the AGM of the Botanical Society of Namibia to be held on Wednesday, 14 May 2008 in the lecture room of NBRI at 18:00**  
**Coleen Mannheimer will present a talk on “Namibian Flowers” after the AGM.**  
**Refreshments will be served.**

Further talks are planned for Thursday, 19 June and Thursday 17 July. Please watch the notices to members and the media for information.

Please diarise OPEN DAY on Saturday, 11 October 2008 to co-incide with Arbour Day.

## BOTANIC GARDEN NEWSFLASH

The garden is looking fabulous with all the rain we had during the past months. The trees and shrubs are covered in a lush green canopy, the herbs are still in flower and the Windhoek Aloe adds a splash of colour with its red candelabra-like inflorescences. The grasses too are in peak condition and can be identified relatively easily (with a little help from our experts) this time of the year. If you want to learn more about this astonishingly diverse family, be sure to participate in our walk in May. Alternatively you can visit the garden at your own leisure (remember to bring along some refreshments, a pair of binoculars and a fieldguide), but be sure not to miss the opportunity to see this area at its best.

Also, we are still selling indigenous trees, shrubs and succulents. If you need anything please contact us. Please also be reminded that the Open Day will be on 11 October this year, and not in April as has been previously done. Several new species will be released, so make sure you'll be there.

## WHAT'S FLOWERING NOW ?



### *Ipomoea obscura* var. *obscura*

*obscurus* (L) "dusky", possibly refers to the dull yellow colour of the flower

yellow ipomoea (E); wildepatat (A); babi (J)

Perennial herb with taproot. **Stems** mostly unbranched, prostrate or twining on other plants or fences, woody at base. **Leaves** deep green, smooth to slightly rough, elongate heart-shaped, deeply incised at base, usually carried on one side of stem; margin often wavy and fringed with short hairs. **Flowers** solitary or two to three together on stalk up to 80 mm long; corolla delicate, fused, funnel-shaped, up to 30 mm in diameter, whitish to pale yellow, darker along joins, throat sometimes red, purple or brown. **Fruit** a smooth, almost spherical or ovoid capsule up to 12 mm in diameter, with persistent style base at tip, pale brown when mature. **Seeds** ovoid with short, greyish hair. Flowering mostly summer but sporadically at other times.

This attractive twiner grows in sandy soils in a variety of habitats, including disturbed areas such as roadsides, and is a common sight in the Windhoek municipal area during the rainy season. It flowers profusely and over several months, so has some horticultural potential, although the flowers are not brightly coloured. It has an exceptionally wide distribution area, being common almost throughout southern and tropical Africa as well as occurring as far afield as Madagascar, the Mascarene Islands, the Seychelles, Asia, Australia and Fiji. The leaves are cooked and eaten as a relish, and the capsules are eaten by baboons. Feverish children are bathed with an infusion of the plant. In some areas of Namibia it is believed to ward off thunderstorms, predators and unwanted relatives who have announced a visit.

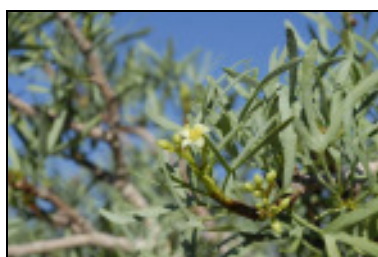
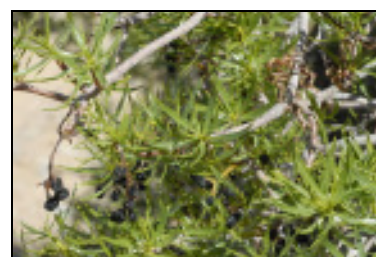


**FIELDTRIP TO THE ORANGE RIVER Unusual plants found along the Orange River**

In March 2008 staff of the National Herbarium undertook a fieldtrip to the Orange River to target under collected squares. The area was unusually green, and we encountered large pools of water wherever we went as well as washed away roads and rivers in full flood. The first couple of nights violent thunderstorms unleashed just as we had gone to sleep and we were very grateful that we did not have to endure this kind of weather in our little tents. Mr & Mrs Bonsaaier had kindly allowed us to stay in their old farm house.

*Brunsvigia namaquana*

Whilst working on a rocky hill slope on Farm Gaidip, we found an attractive lily in flower. The flowers were pink to almost white and resembled those of a *Nerine*. We immediately realised that this was something unusual. Herbarium specimens and photographs were taken and sent to an expert in South Africa. Dr Dee Snijman from Compton Herbarium confirmed it to be *Brunsvigia namaquana*. This will be the first record in the National Herbarium. Other less frequently collected plants recorded on this trip include *Crassula deltoidea*, *Ozoroa namaquensis* and *Jatropha orangeana*.

*Jatropha orangeana**Ozoroa namaquensis**Ozoroa namaquensis***VIOLATION OF TREES:**

**Municipality:** Parks & Gardens: Mr Pretorius, Mr Huysamen or Mr H Voigts      Tel. 290 3540  
City Police      Tel. 290 2239

**Forestry:** Mr Visagie, Mr Shilunga      Tel. 208 7349  
or Emmanuel Pieters of the Forestry Directorate      Tel. 208 7323

For the above mentioned persons to take legal action against the cutting down of trees there needs to be evidence in the form of wood from the cut tree, photographs, witnesses etc. Taking photographs or filming may even be an effective way of stopping the destruction.

**INDIGENOUS NURSERIES:** The Forestry Nursery at Okahandja - Contact: Andries, Cell 081 260 7864  
Forestry Nursery at Grootfontein - Tel: (067) 242128 / 242129 or Fax: (067) 242106

**REGULAR INFORMATION & CONTACT NUMBERS****Botanical Society of Namibia - THE CORE OF ACTIVE PLANT PEOPLE (CAPP)**

Luise Hoffmann	Tel. 239415	luisehof@iway.na	Tree Expert
Ellen Gudde	Tel. 227783	stpc.ge@iway.na	Secretary and publicity
Diana Thompson	Tel. 226871	rafthom@mweb.com.na	Treasurer & Membership
Silke Rügheimer	Tel. 202 2014	silker@nbri.org.na	Curator of Botanic Garden
Gillian Maggs-Koelling	Tel. 202 2020	gmk@nbri.org.na	Head of NBRI
Ezekeil Kwembeya	Tel. 202 2021	kwembeya@nbri.org.na	Snail mail, talks+walks co-ordinator
Coleen Mannheimer	Tel. 202 2016		NBRI rep. and WEBSITE
Percy Chimwamurombe	Tel. 206 3358	pchimwa@unam.na	Research indigenous tree diseases
Christa Schemmer	Tel. 225 191	schemmer@iway.na	Committee Member
Hildegard Becker			Advertising PRO
Carol Steenkamp			Committee Member
Uschi Kirchner Walter	Tel. 234 610	uschi@safarisuk.ch	Newsletter co-ordinator

<b>National Botanical Research Institute</b> )	Web: <a href="http://www.nbri.org.na">www.nbri.org.na</a>
<b>National Herbarium</b> (	<b>8 Orban St. Windhoek, Tel 202 2111</b>
<b>Botanic Garden</b> )	open to Visitors Monday – Friday 8h00 – 17h00, no charge

With kind regards

Luise Hoffmann and CAPP of Botsoc

Enclosed:  
Membership form 2008  
CAPP nomination form



# Botanical Society (BOTSOC) NAMIBIA

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

### 2008

Name and title: .....

Postal address: .....

Tel: (code - if not Windhoek) ..... (H) ..... (W)

Cell: .....

Fax: ..... Email: .....

Special interests: .....

Are you prepared to help with any activities, such as: talking minutes; writing letters; posting newsletters; publicity; fund raising; PR; organising talks; organising outings? Other (please specify):

When would suit you best for meetings? Day ..... Time .....

When would suit you best for outings? Saturday/Sunday

Type of member:	Individual (N\$ 50.00)	N\$ .....
	Family (N\$ 80.00)	N\$ .....
	Student (N\$ 10.00)	N\$ .....
	Donation	N\$ .....
	<b>Total</b>	<b>N\$ .....</b>

**Direct payments:**

Name of account: Botanical Society of Namibia

Bank: Nedbank

Acc No: 11000111289

Branch Code: 461 609

Please fax your deposit slip to Fax No 061 226335, to ensure that payment is recorded.

Cheque payments: please mail NOT TRANSFERABLE cheques to [Private Bag 13184](#), Windhoek or deposit at any Nedbank branch.

Cash payments can be made during walks, talks or outings and must be recorded by means of a receipt.

Who is prepared to help the Botanical Society with any activities, such as: talking minutes; writing letters; posting newsletters; publicity; fund raising; PR; organising talks; organising outings?

**NOMINATION FOR CAPP (THE CORE OF ACTIVE PLANT PEOPLE)**

I hereby wish to nominate \_\_\_\_\_ as a member  
of the Committee for the Botanical Society (CAPP) for the period 2008/2009.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of proposer

I hereby accept the nomination and would make myself available for election.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of nominee

Date:  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Please hand in this form latest at the AGM on Wednesday 14 May 2008)