



BOTSOC NEWSLETTER

January / February / March 2009

Dear Botsoc Member

March already and we are all well into the swing of the 'New Year'! We trust that all have enjoyed the rain, not suffered too much damage and not been too delayed with the various projects that are on the go.

The Botsoc year began with a guided walk in the Gardens on 7 February and the next one will take place this coming Saturday, 7 March at 08h00. We do need to have more people on our list of available guides so that guiding does not become an onerous task for the few. Please think about it – these walks are becoming more and more popular among tourists as well as locals and it would be a pity to have to curtail them. You do not need to be a specialist on all botanical aspects – that would be TOO MUCH! Obviously though, some knowledge on what is found in the Gardens is needed.

Forthcoming events are listed elsewhere and the Annual General Meeting is one of them. We have a core group of willing volunteers at the moment but would welcome new folk as well. Why not be adventurous and try something new? ! Membership fees are also payable before the AGM, either at the walk or at the NBRI. Fee structure is listed elsewhere.

Those who were not able to see the lilies in situ (myself included) can ogle Carol's photographs and try to make a plan next year – that's if the rains be good!

From all of us, to Helmut zur Strassen, our sincere congratulations for his 80th birthday. What a wonderful milestone to reach and still have such an interest in life and hobbies. For his availability to us on so many occasions, for his friendly smile and cheerful nature – Helmut, we salute you!

I look forward to seeing you along the way during this coming year.

Diana Thompson

BOTSOC / NEWS outing to NaDEET, Friday 1st May 2009 to Monday 4th May 2009

We are extremely fortunate in having been asked to partner with NEWS (Namibian Environment & Wildlife Society) for their annual outing to NaDEET at NamibRand Nature Reserve. **Attached** please find details regarding the outing and I would advise you to reply directly to them if you would like to participate in this outing. I shall be going and will have space in the 'bakkie' for at least one other - let me know.

Diana Thompson

UPCOMING WALKS AND TALKS OF INTEREST

WALKS:

The next **guided walk** in the **National Botanic Garden** will take place on **Saturday, 7 March 2009**
Meet at **08:00** at National Botanical Research Institute, 8 Orban Street, Windhoek
Entrance for non-members is N\$10. Muffins and tea/coffee will be on sale.

Saturday 4 April 2009 at 08h00 – Guided walk in the Botanic Garden

AGM and TALKS:

Thursday **19 March 2009 at 18h00 – Annual General Meeting at the NBRI**

Followed at **19h00** by a presentation by **Jay Bolin** on –

“From Fungus to Foul Flowers: unearthing the parasitic genus / Hydnora” *read more on page 3*

Refreshments and social afterwards

Monday **30 March 2009 at 19h00 – Presentation by Kirk West** at the NBRI on

“Guidelines on Flower Photography” *read more on page 3*

Refreshments afterwards

Thursday **16 April 2009 at 18h30 – Presentation at the NBRI**

More details will be sent out later.

***Crinum paludosum* (bushveld vlei lily)**by **Carol Steenkamp**

The small town of Maltahöhe's most interesting attraction is undoubtedly the spectacular show of vlei lilies on the farm Sandhof ± 30 km north of Maltahöhe. Normally between mid February and March after good rains and when the pan fills to a depth of 30 cm the pan becomes covered in a spectacular show of pink and white lilies. But you need to hurry once the word gets out that the lilies are flowering, since this show only lasts 3-5 days.



Photos: Carol Steenkamp



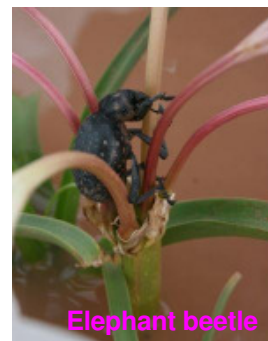
"Thousands of lilies at Farm Sandhof"

**Description**

Crinum is a fascinating genus of the large and equally captivating [Amaryllidaceae](#) family.

There are 60 -100 species of *Crinum* world-wide, occurring in America, Africa, southern Asia to Australia. Africa has the most species. 22 species are at present recognized in southern Africa.

The name *Crinum* originates from the Greek *Krionon*, which means white lily. The genus *Crinum* consists mainly of bulbous herbs, the bulbs of which are relatively large and often contracted into a neck. They sometimes split to form clumps. The leaves of members of this genus range from linear, limp and strap-shaped to sword-shaped, sheathing at the base, arranged in a rosette. Flowers vary in numbers, colours and shapes.



Elephant beetle

Crinum paludosum (vlei lily) is a low-growing plant that is found in large colonies in marshy areas.

The leaves are stem-clasping at the base. The species is characterised by arching leaves, which are often described by collectors as 'like young maize'. They are pale green, soft and have wavy margins..

The vlei lily has a long flower stalk that carries flower tubes that are ± 120 mm in diameter. The flowers are white to pale pink with a darker pink keel. They only open fully at midday and are slightly sweet-scented. After flowering, the leaves die off and the plant goes dormant (Archer, 2004).

Archer, 2004. *Crinum*. from <http://www.plantzafrica.com/plantcd/crinum.htm>



More information about our talk on

Thursday **19 March 2009** at **18h00** – **Annual General Meeting at the NBRI**

Followed at **19h00** by a presentation by **Jay Bolin** on –

“From fungus to foul flower : Unearthing the parasitic genus / Hydnora”

We are privileged to have this presentation by Jay Bolin, a Ph.D Candidate at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia USA and a Student Fulbright Scholar to Namibia. His Ph.D co-supervisor is Dr Erika Maass at Unam.

‘The parasitic genus / Hydnora / (Hydnoraceae) are among the strangest plants in the world and have an apparent center of diversity in southern Africa. Due to their parasitic habit, the adult plants lack many features typical of green plants and are without roots, scales and leaves. Most flowers of / hydnora emerge from the soil only to flower and the most intriguing of the group. /Hydnora / /triceps/, flowers underground. This presentation will cover diversity and evolution in the genus, its history of discovery, and will emphasize their fascinating pollination biology which includes a “catch and release” insect-trapping mechanism, thermogenesis, and foul odor production.’

More information about our talk on

Monday **30 March 2009** at **19h00** – Presentation by **Kirk West** at the NBRI on

“Guidelines on Flower Photography”

Kirk West is a member of the Port Elizabeth Camera Club, at present with a 5 star grading. In 2008 he was awarded the Dux trophy, best Landscape, best Salon achievements in Nature and Highest no Salon first time entries by the club. He was also awarded Associate membership of the Photographic Society of Southern Africa and is a regular judge at club level (P E, George and Cape Town), as well as having judged Nature for an International Salon.

His talk, which will last approximately one hour, is aimed at giving people some guidelines on flower photography, including why one does flower photography, basic equipment, accessories in order to enhance your photography, 9 factors that play a role in flower photography (composition, focus, colour, exposure, lighting, backgrounds, depth of field, height and make-up). The talk is well illustrated with examples and also touches on post processing and will include references for further reading. Anybody can attend – although the talk is aimed at DSLR and SLR cameras, even users of prosumer and point and shoot cameras will be able to pick up some valuable tips.

MEMBERSHIP FEES:

Individuals	N\$ 60,00
Family	N\$120,00
Students	N\$ 20,00

Bank Account: Botanic Society of Namibia

Bank: Nedbank

Branch: Main Branch

Account number: 11000111289

E-mail confirmation to: rafhom@mweb.com.na please.

These fees were set at the AGM 2008 and are applicable up to and at the AGM on 19 March. Changes may come into effect after that.

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

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National Botanical Research Institute)	Web: www.nbri.org.na
National Herbarium (8 Orban Street, Windhoek, Tel 202 2111
Botanic Garden)	open to visitors Monday – Friday 8h00 – 17h00, no charge

Kind regards

Diana Thompson and CAPP