

ORTHOLOPHA

The Newsletter of the Aloe, Cactus and Succulent Society of Zimbabwe



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False Start

The rain we had two weeks ago and then last Friday gave hope that we might be in for an early start to the rain this year. No such luck however, our rainfall is such that you can almost set a clock by its real timing. The 80% chance of getting a planting rain for the summer cropping season is around about the 15 November in Harare. However you would be well advised to look at your garden and activities and see what is really practical in a drying City. The authorities have stopped extraction of groundwater in the City limits for sale and imposed stiff taxes on any water that is pumped from dams and reservoirs around and about. It is not going to get any easier, the ground water is dropping, boreholes are either dying or gasping so before the rains come in earnest decide what is a practical garden for you and adjust accordingly. But water-thirsty trees, especially those that are not deciduous, should be minimised and plant mainly indigenous species that roll with the seasons. It's time to bring the Aloes back!

Watering your verge is definitely a no-no!!!!

Your Committee

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Monthly Meeting: Sunday 26 October 2014

The function this month is at the home of Neels Scott in Mt Pleasant. As I am sure most of you know, Neels is a World Class floral designer with many accolades to his name and we should be in for a very interesting time.

The time: 10.00am for 10:30am

Address: 2 Knowles Close, Mt Pleasant

Directions: Going out of town on Sam Nujomo Street (Second Street) at Gateway Secondary School turn right on to Norfolk Road, third on the left is Knowles Close, If you are coming from the other side of town get on to Norfolk Road from Quorn Avenue, and Knowles Close is third on the right. In case you cannot find it, his contact numbers are: 04 301238 or 301252.



Rare Plant Sale: Sunday 28 September

Even though a couple of our big sellers were not participating, the Rare Plant Sale went extremely well with probably record sales for recent times and the business was largely done and dusted by around 10.30 am. Taking part as a seller is great fun and there is definitely a need to engage with the numerous browsers that come to the event if you are going to make a sale. A big thank you to the organisers and everybody who helped including the staff of the National Botanic Gardens who were dealing with our event and the Food Fair down by the Restaurant area simultaneously. Receipts at our gate were around US\$900, giving the Botanic Gardens a tidy sum to put into rehabilitating infrastructure, hopefully starting with boreholes and then getting the stream, waterfalls and dam back into action.

The Wolbert youngster, showing great affinity for salesmanship in action at the Rare Plant Sale recently!

Flowering Aloe: October

We will be posting pictures each month of a flowering Aloe for this time of year, both to encourage you all to look to your roots when deciding what plants to include in your gardening plans and secondly because ecologically and from a preservation of plant diversity point of view it is a good thing to do. This month's Aloe is an unknown from my garden and to encourage you all there will be a free Chameleon Safari to the first person who identifies it correctly. Send your considered opinions to bo.hoom52@yahoo.com. The judge's decision is final and the winner will get an invitation to a prestigious Chameleon Safari in January 2015 when they kick-off.



Indigenous tree:

We will also be posting each month a photo of an indigenous tree which you can consider for planting in your home landscapes. This month's is *Sterculia quinqueloba* which many of you will recognise as a starkly beautiful tree on the granite kopjes of Mashonaland. In winter it sheds its large leaves and stands proudly in the winter sunshine and lets the warmth through to the ground level. Which is what you want, because as we get older we need to warm our bones quickly so that we can move about freely during daylight hours gardening.



Sterculia quinqueloba Taken on Rwanga River, Umfurudzi Wildlife area, near Hippo Pools. Perfectly deciduous and adapted to summer rain, winter dry.

Hope to see you all on the 26th.

Mafungi