



ORTHOLOPHA

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

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Hi Everyone,

Switch on The Night!

We may not have realised it completely yet, but this past week, that is exactly what happened in Zimbabwe. I went away for a week and without my calming influence the whole country was turned upside down!!!! Sheila wants me to spend more time away!!!!

The lessons apply to everything we are involved in or do. Principles, not personal gain, should be our guiding light. If you want to switch on the night make sure your guiding principles are on rock-solid foundations.

We are currently in the process of building a retirement cottage and somewhere along the line we read, "When you build, build forever!" This certainly applies to the concrete, steel, glass, bricks and mortar in our case, but equally to the gardens and landscapes we surround the cosy nests with and the great thing

about the information age we live in is that there is no excuse for not getting the best advice available. By the way I am guilty of plagiarising the heading, I don't know who it is attributable to but it was seen embossed in gold, on the back of some black t-shirts worn by young men and women promoting an alcoholic drink, in Nigeria of all places. So the message I hope you take from this is let's all make sure that in everything we do, we do it to

Switch on the Night!!

Cheers,
Mafungi.

Your Committee

Chairman - Rob Jarvis
0783 383214

Vice-chairman – Hans Wolbert
0772 653110

Committee members:

Doreen Richards - 0772 255784
Malcolm Thackray - 0772 516644
Ros Houghton - 0772 115364
Caryl Stutchbury - 0772 611756
Debra Wolbert - 0772 515436
Gaudencia Kujeke - 0775 376600
Anne-Katrin Maseko - 0772 440131
Mike Caulfield - 0772 241286
Annah Pasipanodya - 0772 572044
Lillian Pswarayi - 0772 516 441

Monthly Meeting : Sunday 26th November 2017

This month's **Meeting** is at **Rene Dance** home at **Chelmsford Manor - 8 Chelmsford Rd., in Belgravia**, (just behind Reps). Rene has been changing her garden to be more water wise.

PLEASE remember to bring a delicious plate of eats to share. Don't forget to bring your chairs and hats, as well as a labelled plant or other contribution for the raffle.

The time: 10.00am for 10:30am

Directions: Travel to Belgravia Shops, turning off 2nd Street (Sam Nujoma St), turn onto Thurston Lane, pass Reps Theater and turn right at the crossroads into East Rd., the left into Chelmsford and look for No 8.

Rene's mobile number is 0775 464797

Flowering Plant: November

What is this, on the right?

Send your knowledgeable and considered opinions to bo.hoom52@yahoo.com.

This very respected judge's decision is final and the winner will get a box of choice Belgian chocolates, provided they are shared.

The lucky winner in October was a two-way tie between Caryl Stutchbury, and Gaudencia Kajeke. An attempt to bribe the committee from a well-meaning member from South Africa was deftly avoided.



You can win a box of chocolates!!!

Send your entries to Mafungi at
bo.hoom52@yahoo.com

The plant above is the November entry.
What is it?

Photograph taken by Mafungi

Christmas Outing : Sunday 10 December 2019

This year's Christmas meeting is at Kuimba Shiri out at Lake Chivero. Directions will follow in a separate e-mail.

The time: 11.00am for Bring and Share or Buy braai/lunch

Directions: See e-mail to follow

If you need further directions contact Ros on +263 0772 115 364

Please remember to bring your own drinks and meat for the braai / gas and a plate of salad / rolls to share. Don't forget to bring chairs and hats, no raffle. There will also be a Secret Santa event so bring a wrapped present, worth \$10, to put in the bag and to earn you the chance to get one in return.

Annual Membership: Thanks to all the members that have already paid. There are a few that haven't yet paid, please do.

Membership is \$20 per person/couple per year. Children \$5 per year. Foreign membership \$40 per year. Make payment to a committee member, the CABS account, or through EcoCash:

CABS Platinum: Aloe, Cactus and Succulent Society

Acc #: 1002616336 Reference: kindly include your surname as the deposit reference.

Alternatively send \$21-00 through EcoCash to **0783 911314** : kindly include a reference



Wow, that is all I can say!!!!

We are currently building a retirement cottage on the land behind our house. Natural woodland is the essence of the landscape and in the week that I have been away all sorts of changes have occurred. Please forgive me for taking you through this, but for us it is probably the most exciting thing we have been involved in other than the odd change of Government and of course, having Kids!!!!. We will have a roof over our heads long before the floor is laid and the walls raised. How many of you knew you could build a house this way? All too often the work grinds to a halt when the foundations have been laid and the walls start rising, and no roof! In our case if we run out of money, we will forever have a roof over our heads!!!! What more do you want in life. We can unfurl our sleeping bags and sleep comfy, probably not always warm, but definitely dry. We paid for the roof first, so that is a certainty. Whatever happens, we will be street kids, but with attitude!!!!

And in the building there have been other considerations to take into account. We had to sectional-ly title the land years ago to get funds to push our daughters through University and give them a chance to make a life elsewhere in the World. Many of you know that Rockyvale is probably the world centre for Flap-necked Chameleon Safaris. In January and February each year, we have a growing army of safari regulars who love to be part of the Chameleon Safari experience at Rockyvale. We have had to up our game. Pundits no longer want to just see the baby chameleons clinging precariously to grass stalks in torch-light at the dead of night. So we have strange beasts populating the bush along the way, we have well-armed protectors who defend us from lions, elephants and other such types that inhabit this wonderland. This ethos has rubbed off on our partners, the co-owners of the land, the architects, the builders and the contractors we engage. So a tree frog has right of way, nightjars nesting, must raise their brood and above all, despite the army of trucks that ferry in sand, cement, granite chips and the like, the baby chameleons must have every chance to scabble their way out of the ground, clamber up the grass stalks and entertain us in the coming season.

On the right we see a baby chameleon that hatched out last year in late December and is seen learning to surf on a out-of-season jacaranda flower. Photo was taken by Jarvis Eyes of Perth, Australia who had specially jetted-in for the Chameleon Safari Season. No matter how small, each one of us can make a difference with a part of the garden set aside for natural wildlife to blossom. This year at Rockyvale we have for the first time ever, been blessed with francolin calling in the early morning and our dogs sprung a wild-hare that luckily managed to escape their snapping jaws. We never used to see Grey Turacos, Glossy Starlings and Woodland Kingfishers, but these birds add to the daily kaleidoscope of song we hear as dawn breaks each day.



Each year we find a nest of Fiery-necked nightjars in the land at the back of Rockyvale. It is taking great ingenuity during this building process, to make sure that these birds are not disturbed in their annual journey down the procreation avenue. The dogs have to walk elsewhere, the builders and contractors advised of the no-go area. We watched the egg-sitting and now we know that the fledglings are underneath and getting closer and closer to flight. In fact on the bottom left of the picture you can just about make out the blood-feathers of one of the baby birds snugly resting under the mother.

Everywhere we look there is wildlife thriving, on the bark of trees, whether spiders, mantids or wasps, wildlife abounds. Of course it has little to do with the plants that we treasure in ACSSZ, but the holistic picture is that there is space for all forms of life in balanced eco-systems. Don't fight nature, go with the flow! Spot the mantid!



So when we finish the building, this is the view we will have out of the bedroom window! Does any man, or woman, really have the right to interfere with such a view? Would you even want to anyway?

Go with the flow Folks!

Switch on the Night!

So there you are Folks, maybe not a lot about the plants that we love, but to finish a snippet of shots that make life better for us, including this collage of rocks, land-snail shells, *Huernias*, cacti and intriguing flowers. Oh how I would love to know everything, about everything!!!!!!



And on the left we see a perky picture of someone who also finds it very comforting to live in an environment that is comforting to his bright plumage. It is birds like this that let us know unequivocally that at least some part of our gardening is right!!!!

Long may it last. And when even the Cycads are coning, not in ones and twos, but in threes, then we know that our gardening is more or less on track. The rain so far has been good!



The Health Corner:

I must admit that I find it quite difficult writing a health column these days. The euphoria of the place that we call home right now, is, I am sure, doing more for our collective good-health than any words I can tap out on the computer. Let's hope it can be consolidated into a sustainable, repeatable but fair system. At the same time the stresses, trials and tribulations we have lived through for the past four or five decades, I am sure have damaged our health beyond normal attrition. I recently spent a week away in a country in West Africa that has been considered for many years to be one of the worst in Africa. From my first visit in 1983 to that country, to this latest one, I can assure you that absolutely everything has improved beyond measure. On arrival at the Airport here, I met someone returning from the UK who had just spent six weeks trying to look after a son suffering from a stroke. The NHS had failed them completely. Maybe, just maybe, it is time to bring the Prodigals Home! You decide, you have finally.....

Switched on the Night!

Well bye everyone, see you at the monthly meeting this weekend and the Christmas Lunch on the 10th December. Cheers, Mafungi