

# ORTHOLOPHA



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

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### INTO AUTUMN

With very little time left in the season, it seems obvious that we have had another unusual year. Only one month this season—January—has given us above-average rainfall and February was less than 20 per cent of normal. With two weeks to go to the official end of the rainy season, we have had just two-thirds of our long-term average rainfall. This sort of erratic weather certainly emphasizes the value of water-wise succulents in our gardens.

An important thing to note—there will be **no** outing this month because of the early arrival of Easter. See below for further details.

### Your Committee

Chairman - Manfred Spindler – 0712 416 722

Vice-chairman - Malcolm Thackray - 303494

Secretary/treasurer - Lynn & Bill Kinsey – 0772 782 493, 0776 404 950 or 302812

### *Committee members:*

Val & Hamish Brown - 0772 423 344 or 883724

Ros Houghton - 0772 115 364 or 333975

Rob & Sheila Jarvis – 0779 888 180 or 0772 262 150

Mike Kimberley – 339175

Hans Wolbert – 581364, 573592 or 0772 653 110

### **Future Events and Outings**

Because the last Sunday in March this year is Easter, your Committee decided that no outing would be planned for that day and that moving the event to another day this month would not work either.

Here is a short overview of plans for the next few months:

**April** In April we'll visit the garden of Phil and Ann Ineson in Greystone Park.

**May** There are two major events in May. First is the AGM on the 19th. Your Committee would welcome some new and enthusiastic blood, so we are hoping for both nominations and volunteers. The second event is, of course, the first plant sale of the year on Sunday the 26th. And now is the time to start getting your plants ready. The promotional flyers are being printed now and the advertising is ready to go. Further details will follow, but anyone wanting to sell for the first time might want to contact Hans Wolbert for information.

**June** We have now postponed the symposium until next year, so the last Sunday in June will be a visit to Ewanrigg at peak Aloe time.

**July** The July outing is tentatively planned as a visit to 'Over the Moon' nursery in Umwinsdale.

Full details of all these events will be published in forthcoming issues of the newsletter.

## Subs & Ingens

Everyone should now have received their copies of *Ingens* #47. Work is now underway on #48, which will feature a new format. The editorial team would very much welcome contributions—whether textual or photographic, or better both!—from enthusiasts and cognoscenti. Or anyone with a good plant story to tell.

Opening the CABS account for the Society is taking longer than anticipated as it turns out to be a bit like getting a high security clearance. So for the time being, subs will still have to be paid by handing your form and \$20 to a Committee member. The 2013 form was on the reverse side of your *Ingens* mailing label. (You didn't discard it, did you?) All subs expired at the end of 2012, and 2013 subs are now due for the 56 per cent of our membership who have not yet paid.

**Please** fill in your details accurately and completely so that we don't lose contact and pass your completed form to any of the current committee members or bring them to the April outing.

## Resources

Everyone who reads this will have had the experience of coming upon a flower or a plant and asking: "What *is* that?" Well, here is one way to go about getting an answer to your question. It's called—in shorthand—Zimflora.

Zimflora refers to <http://www.zimbabweflora.co.zw/>. As we go to press, Zim flora has **14,012** images for **3059** species, of which **2934** are native or naturalised and **125** are purely cultivated. A [Site history](#) page gives details of the latest additions to the site. There is also a [frequently asked questions page](#).

Post your pictures and questions on the website, and we'll almost guarantee you that you'll receive a well-informed and probably authoritative response.

This is a website that needs to be widely publicized among all plant-lovers in Zimbabwe...and further afield.

There is a good article on the Aloes of Malawi in the 30/2012 issue of *Bradleya*. Entitled 'The genus *Aloe* L. (Asphodelaceae: Alooideae) in Malawi', the authors are Ronell. Klopper, Stewart. Lane, Gladys Msekandiana-Mkwapatira and Gideon. Smith.

With its rich mosaic of habitats owing to the varied topography, altitudinal ranges and rainfall found in different areas, Malawi harbours at least 21 different aloes, three of which are endemic to the country. Because of extreme population pressures on the limited land area, aloes in Malawi are severely threatened by habitat destruction and many species are in dire need of conservation.

The article provides a key to the aloes of Malawi, as well as a description, illustration, distribution map and information on habitat, flowering time, and conservation status for each of the species. [Note that both distribution maps and flowering times are missing from the magnum opus published by Kew Gardens, *Aloes: The Definitive Guide*.

## Another reminder

The plant sale is our real showcase event, so do get busy now repotting, doing labels and making sure your plants will look their best on the day.

Until next time

Lynn & Bill