

ORTHOLOPHA

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



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Issue 15-03 March 2015

Hi Everyone,

AGM this coming Sunday at Liz and Denis Lapham's house in Greystone Park. A time to air your views but the theme this year is vegetarian so no stall-fed, but free-ranging beefs definitely will be entertained. We welcome any criticisms that are accompanied by corrective proposals or volunteered services. We have had a grand year where the International congress Xerophytica was once again successfully held and put Zimbabwe firmly back on the Global Succulent Map. We are punching well above our pachydermatous hides. New species of aloe have been identified and there is much going on behind the scenes in the cycad, aloe and euphorbia Worlds. We have funds in the bank, new friends from all over the planet and a vibrant committee and some big plans for the future. This is a ship you must sail on!!!! *Pay your subs!!!!*

Cheers,

Your Committee

Chairman - Malcolm Thackray
0772 516644

Vice-chairman – Doreen Richards
0772 255784

Committee members:

Ros Houghton - 0772 115364
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Mike Kimberley – 04 339175
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Hans Wolbert – 0772 653110
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Monthly Meeting & AGM : Sunday 29 March 2015

This month's meeting and the AGM is at the home of Liz and Denis Lapham in Greystone Park.

The time: 10.00am for 10:30am

Address: 6 Loxley Close, Greystone Park

Directions: From the Western suburbs heading East on Harare Drive, cross over Borrowdale Road, take 2nd road to the left Charlecote and then turn right at the T junction onto Stratford Drive then 2nd road to the right, Loxley Close, it's on the right about half way down.

From the Northern and Eastern suburbs heading Northwest on Harare Drive, pass Rolf / Gaydon Road intersection, then take 4th road to the right into Leamington Road and then take 3rd road to the left into Guys Cliff Road then 1st turn left onto Stratford Drive follow the road round and turn 1st left into Loxley Close, it's on the right about half way down.

Liz's contact number is 0712 601679.

Please remember to bring a plate of eats to share. Don't forget to bring chairs and hats, as well as a labelled plant or other contribution for the raffle and/or auction. Liz has been a landscaper for many years, she has an amazing garden with a wide variety of plants. Liz's long standing passion is for cycads and has a big selection, included in the garden. Once we have finished with the formalities of the AGM, Des Paul, will give us a talk on the Moringa tree—the herbal plant and its remedies.

Flowering Aloe: March

We are continuing with our series on a currently flowering aloe every month. Let's have a few more entries from you all!!! We would also encourage you, if you have a known aloe flowering in any particular month, to take and submit a photograph and we can use your photograph for that month. Or call one of our Committee to take the photograph for you if you are still operating a Kodak 120 box camera or similar. There are some moves to rewrite the definitive book on Zimbabwe's aloes and one of the key needs for this will be maps, photos and flowering times of all the species, so you can all contribute to this important scientific effort.

What is this aloe, on the right?

Send your considered opinions to bo.hoom52@yahoo.com. The judge's decision is final and the winner will get a box of non-fattening, non-addictive, temperament ameliorating, eminently shareable, Belgian chocolate.

Last month's entry was **A. ballii** which makes a perfect hanging basket specimen. In fact in the botanical world, if you don't have one of these in your collection you are virtually a nobody, which is not a good place to be.

Lucky winner in February was Debra Wolbert !!!!!



The Aloe above is this March's entry. What is it? A clue: It is a clumping, short-stemmed, maculate aloe and does not have any patterns under the leaf.

Photographs were taken by Mafungi near Turk Mine in Matabeleland in March 2015. The second one, left, may be a different aloe.

You would be well advised to try and win this competition and the prize for the correct answer to this month's query is a box of chocolates!!!! Send your entries to Mafungi at bo.hoom52@yahoo.com.

You cannot win it, Unless you are in it!

If you don't try it, We might bin it!

That would be sad, wouldn't it.

Indigenous Tree: *Acacia xanthophloea*

This is one of the most iconic trees of Africa and was immortalised by Rudyard Kipling in his story, “The Elephant’s Child”. The Child wanted to know what crocodiles eat for dinner and he was referred to the “*great grey-green, greasy Limpopo, all set about with fever trees,*” to find the answer to this most perplexing of all questions by the Kolokolo Bird. Read it and your own life will be improved immeasurably as a result.



The pictured tree was planted in the terrible drought season of 1991/92 and is claimed by us, its owners, to be the largest one of its kind in the World. This may or may not be true, but as politicians well know, a big lie, said emphatically, with authority and with dissent drowned out by a stentorian voice will bring the masses to your way of thinking quite quickly. Or they may dismiss you as a buffoon, in which case a home truth might even sink home.

Rarely without birdlife, they are a favourite nesting site for weavers and paradise flycatchers. Purple crested turacos hop gleefully through their branches and at night they are the first port of call for the lesser night-ape who relish the gum which exudes from stress fractures in the stem bark.

They look their best on a green lawn where they pick up more than their standard share of rainfall and this one is fed by the length of our roof. The gum is a sign of stress, so the extra rainfall gathered, is not enough for such a giant tree’s needs. However we love it and it shall stand until it drops of old age and hopefully not on our heads!

On the 22nd March 2015, this tree measured some 3,42 metres in circumference around the trunk at chest height. If you know of any larger, let me know and I’ll take a chain saw to them to preserve our integrity!!!

The big advantage of the trees is that they provide filtered shade and because they are leguminous, they fix nitrogen and a small copse of them, in a low spot on an extensive lawn, is a treasure to behold.

Don’t plant them too near a swimming pool and plumbing because they have voracious roots that find the slightest hair crack into any source of water. Their leaves and flowers will carpet a pool every day inches deep in the deciduous season.

However they are fast-growing and a valuable addition to any large garden and greatly contribute to the wildlife needs of suburbia.

The gum on its own is a sight to behold when catching the light from the hot African sun.

Photos by Mafungi, Rockyvale, Harare.



Annual Subscriptions:- Gaudencia and Debra are collecting subs and handing out new badges for 2015, at the meetings, the subs are only \$20 per person/couple. If it's more convenient people can pay the CABS account:

CABS Platinum: Aloe, Cactus and Succulent Society

Acc #: 901 649 1871 Reference: kindly include your full names as a reference in any deposit.

Alternatively send \$21-00 through EcoCash to 0783 911314

Remember your committee is entirely made up of volunteers and one of our most tedious tasks is chasing up subscriptions. We want you all to be active members and have access to the amazing collective knowledge, meetings, library and publications of the Society This depends on us having a steady stream of subscription income to kick-start the year. The next issue of Ingens will come out soon after the AGM and you need to be sure you will continue to get it!!!! You do your bit and we will do ours!!!!



Is moss not one of the most waterwise plants of all? Together with lichens they seem to grow almost everywhere, green and luxuriant when the rainy season is on and brown and almost dead when the dry season is at play. The Japanese have perfected a style of gardening whereby simplicity is the main ingredient and a whole section of a garden could be occupied by some whorls in the sand and a solitary rock. Perhaps we should encourage our own Zimbabwe-style of such gardening, but let nature be the determinant of what thrives and what doesn't. Each year this rock comes into its own with the very first rains and then browns off during the long dry season. No water needed, no cultivation and yet depicting perfect serenity, completely in balance with its environment. Photo: Mafungi

Remember that the next Rare Plant Sale will be at the end of May 2015 and now is the time to get your plants into tip-top shape if you want to do well. If you are buyers, start saving now so you can come with wallets and purses bulging with expendable cash. Take advantage of the sale and sunshine and good fortune will come your way even if you only buy dollar plants and ticky creepers!!! See you on Sunday at Greystone Park!!!! Cheers, Mafungi