



ORTHOLOPHA

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

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Issue 17-07 July 2017

Hi Everyone,

This is a bit of a bumper issue mainly because we had the opportunity to go to the Lowveld, not expecting to see much botanically but boy did we get an awakening!!! Unfortunately you will have to wait for the next issue of Ingens to meet all the Bulky Buddies that I encountered but for the record here are a few of the absolutely amazing plants we found flowering and growing in profusion along the way. We even found a rock-eating tree, a world First!!!!

Cheers,
Mafungi.



Your Committee

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Your Society has been invited to Ruzawi School, just outside Marondera for the July monthly meeting. This is as a result of the amazing efforts of young Sean Sagonda, one of our junior members. He had the idea to invite the Society, has arranged the hire of the Ruzawi School Bus and overtime for the driver, to take us out there and has already paid for this through his own plant sale receipts!!!! An exceptional effort and is part of the leadership training that the School encourages.

This means that at no cost other than fixing your own sandwiches you will get a trip to sunny Marondera just when there is a hint of spring in the air. They have beautifully landscaped grounds and after touring these we will proceed to the home of Dave and Wendy Dolphin who previously lived at Barwick School near the Dyke, so they have a good collection of all types of plants.

You will have a fun trip in a bus.

Have free teas.

Not be bothered by the attentions of the Police.

We meet at Cresta Lodge on Samora Machel Avenue at 8.30am on Sunday 30 July.

Bring your own packed lunch and drinks and a chair. Warm clothing is essential.

You can also bring a friend, or two.

We will return from Ruzawi at 3.00 pm and the journey back will be less than 1,5 hours so by 4.30 pm you can be in your own car heading home.

We need to know numbers in advance, because the School has two buses and we will take the bigger one if need be. Please confirm your attendance to:

aloesocietyzim@gmail.com

Flowering Plant: July

You can win a box of chocolates!!!



The plant to the left, is the July entry.

What is it?

Photograph taken by
Zim Aloe Chick

What is this, above? A clue, there may be clues elsewhere in this publication!

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

The 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 June will be announced on the bus to Ruzawi!!!
Don't miss it!**



Another question, what is the above photograph, taken in habitat of the same area where this month's mystery aloe occurs? A crocodile's eye???? Think again!

Annual Membership: Members are encouraged to make payment for 2017 as soon as they can, thanks to all those that have already paid.

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 #: 901 649 1871 Reference: kindly include your names as a the deposit reference.

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



Lowveld Bizarre Bazaar

Right by Birchenough Bridge itself, you can find this little ensemble of some of our favourite plants. The *Adenium multiflora* or Sabi Stars were in full flower as were the huge groups of the very bright *Aloe aculeata*.

Morning light catching the stems of huge baobabs is perfectly complemented by the aloes and euphorbias flowering on the nearby hillside (right). The rural scene is captured here as somewhat whimsical but later in the year, come October, the harsh reality of the real Lowveld will kick-in. Not a place for softies.

I cannot even begin to tell you how our weekend sprint down to the Lowveld went from one botanical treasure to the next. It was Heaven!



And in your gardens if you had the foresight twenty years ago to plant *Sterculia rogersii* as a dominant architectural tree then your own patch of the aloe kingdom could well look like the photo on the left. You almost need to wear dark glasses just to peek at this group. Of interest to the botanical types amongst you are the obvious hybrids to be seen here.



Aloe cryptopoda

We were looking for a colony of cycads reputed to exist along the gravel road that runs up from near Rupisi Hot Springs to Chipinge. We didn't find them but my wife Sheila's sharp eyes spotted this absolutely stunning collection of *Aloe cryptopoda* on the first small hill at the beginning of the road.

Nestling amongst the outcrops of the aloe were many other interesting plant species including sanseverias and dry-country trees like Baobabs (above) and Sterculias (right). Below, the early-flowering plants mark the road up to Chipinge, which is very passable!



We can highly recommend a therapeutic journey to the Lowveld in the month of July every year. Soak your old bones in the hot mineral-rich waters of the Hot Springs Resort along the way and take a deck-chair and sit amongst some of these aloe colonies and enjoy the view, the wildlife and the ambience of Nature at its very best.



Aloe globuligemma



Interesting isn't it? Our very own Zim Aloe Chick has a family that is very much into archery and above we see a hapless Baobab caught in the cross-hairs of a colony of *Aloe globuligemma*. On the left, Professor Barbara Maasdorp gazes on a group of the same aloe in which she found sheltering a colony of stapeliads. When they flower we shall post a picture and hopefully identify it as well. Below we see how well this aloe has done in heavily overgrazed and eroded mopane woodland near Birchenough Bridge in the South-east Lowveld. Not even goats can eat *A. globuligemma* it is just pure poison but definitely eye-candy!



I know that some of you will find this hard to believe, but if I hadn't seen and recorded it myself, I, too would also be a trifle doubtful. However I tell you the story for what it is worth. One of our party asked innocently "Where is Mt Rudd?" We had intended climbing it at some stage. Well, blow me down if perhaps the sharpest *Aloe aculeata* specimen I have ever encountered slowly revolved and bent down and a deep voice boomed and the sound reverberated up and down the length of the Save River,

“It is over there!

And indeed it was!



The Health Corner: If this photo below brings a smile to your face, you are healthier already! Visit The Traveller's Baobab near the Devure River Bridge on the Masvingo Road!



So there you go Folks, another month and you can see I spent it wisely! See you on the 30th at Cresta Lodge for the Ruzawi Expedition! We can do this!!!! Cheers, Mafungi