Greetings from the Stone Cottage!

1 to 7 September was Arbor Week, and the Branch marked the occasion by planting a Silverleaf tree, Leucadendron argenteum, in the grounds of the Stone Cottages. Our thanks go to BotSoc member, Jim Brayson for donating the Silverleaf sapling to the Branch. Jim donated a further 30 Leucadendron argenteum seedlings which will be used by Kirstenbosch to mark the Centenary in 2013.

September is also Heritage Month. Botanical Society members are invited to help conserve our natural heritage of biodiversity by participating in one of the Bioblitzes organised by the Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers (CREW) and SANBI – see page 7.
Kirstenbosch Branch AGM

The Kirstenbosch Branch Annual General Meeting was held on 21 August. The meeting was very well attended, no doubt in large part due to our guest speaker, Dr Guy Midgley, whose talk—Cape Town’s special place in context of climate change—was enormously relevant and challenging to all of us as BotSoc members (see page 4 for a summary).

The Branch received five nominations for Committee all of whom were duly elected into office, bringing the total to nine members which is provided for in the Constitution of the Branch. Peter Ryan, Treasurer, whose term of office had come to an end, was co-opted onto the Committee for a further year as an additional member (the Constitution makes allowance for three such members).

Fiona Ballantyne, Patrick Fraser, Belinda Gebhardt, Eugene Moll and Rosanne Stanway join existing members, Rupert Koopman (Chairman), Dirk Muller (Vice Chairman), Janette Yeats and Melissa Stander.

We move forward into 2013 with a Committee of 10 strong, an exciting and challenging year as we celebrate the Centenaries of both BotSoc and Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden!

Meet your new Kirstenbosch Branch Committee members

Fiona Ballantyne

I graduated from UCT with a masters degree in Botany in 2010 and have been a BotSoc member since 2006.

On weekends you will find me outdoors with my family enjoying nature whatever the weather. I am a country person at heart but have fallen in love with the diversity that Cape Town offers: whether its biodiversity, food, wine or people. I have a go at growing my own food and am working on making my home more environmentally friendly. I am always trying to learn more about plants and hope to help grow the Botanical Society and support the good work it already does.

Patrick Fraser

I was brought up on a farm in the Stellenbosch area and spent many years exploring the Hottentots Holland and Western Cape mountains.

Professionally a yacht builder, I have a good knowledge of the coastline and marine life.

I have served as Chairman of the Cape Town Boatbuilding Initiative for three years, and since retiring have spent the last four years working with the CREW ‘C’ Team.
Belinda Gebhardt

Although originally from the Eastern Cape, I spent most of my childhood in Cape Town and have just loved gardens as long as I can remember! After school I did a Honours degree in Landscape Architecture at the University of Pretoria. Back in Cape Town, I worked at an NGO based in Khayelitsha and Nyanga running a School Greening and Environmental Education Programme. I completed a Master’s degree in Environmental Management at UCT in 2003 and went on to work for a consulting company doing predominantly EIAs and State of the Environment Reporting.

I am currently taking a break from my career, following the birth of our third child. I am very excited about joining the Botanical Society Committee and am looking forward to getting involved!

Eugene Moll

I am semi-retired and teaching part-time at UWC, CPUT, Varsity College, as well as nature guiding and writing books and articles.

Previously my roles have included Professor in the School of Natural and Rural Systems Management and Dean of Studies in the Faculty of Natural, Rural, Agriculture and Veterinarian Science; Director of the Southern African Wildlife College at Hoedspruit; Foundation Chair in Natural Systems Management and HoD of Management Studies at the University of Queensland; Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor, Professor and HoD of Botany at UCT; and Botanical Survey Officer and Officer-in-Charge of Natal Herbarium in Durban.

Rosie Stanway

I grew up in Johannesburg and moved to Cape Town to study environmental science, where I discovered the joy of fynbos! I completed my undergrad in Botany and Zoology and Honours in Botany at UCT, and later a Masters in Botany from the University of Stellenbosch.

I have worked in a broad range of environments, from threatened Renosterveld to the tropical rainforests of Peru and savannas of Kruger National Park. I now work for Conservation South Africa in sustainable agriculture, as co-ordinator of the Green Choice Alliance. My love and wonder for plants started at University and was imprinted during my fieldtrips and work with CREW.

I look forward to contributing to the BotSoc however I can!
Cape Town’s special place in the context of climate change
—summary of a talk by Dr Guy Midgley

One of the critical elements in the evolution of fynbos is the unusually predictable winter rainfall pattern that has been in place for millions of years. While we are currently in the stable but very recent Holocene interglacial period, climates up to 5° cooler have prevailed for 90% of this time. How the Fynbos and Succulent Karoo biomes will respond in this unusually warm interglacial period superimposed with a warming trend is worrying. The fossil pollen record shows that fynbos has occurred as far north as Namibia during colder climates, but retreats into the refugium of the Cape Fold Belt, and is likely to retreat further as the climate warms. Interestingly, the Cape Fold Belt is also responsible for limiting extinctions, as migrations on a slope are easy: 1km in altitude represents a 6 to 8° shift in temperature. South Western Australia has similar coastal lowlands, but our species richness is much higher mainly due to these topographical escape routes.

Dr Midgley explained the real significance of a 2 to 3° change in global temperatures, which can be hard to comprehend. Just 5° cooling changes the planet drastically: an image of the Earth 18 to 21,000 years ago at 5° lower temperatures showed significantly more ice cover, which in turn lowered sea levels to the extent that False Bay was dry land for approx 100km into the ocean, and would have been covered with limestone fynbos. Critically, warming is likely to alter the path of frontal bearing systems such that these systems are pushed further south; many will miss land and winter rainfall on the west coast will be reduced.

Natural rainfall variability can also bite us if not taken into account. A terrible drought occurred in the 1920s and 30s, with reports of farmers leaving land and giving up recording rainfall because it never rained! Rainfall increased to a peak in the 1980s, but by 2004, there was a relatively severe drought during which time Cape Town nearly ran out of water. Imagine the drought of the ‘20s - would we survive as severe a drought again?

Natural solutions have to be considered: the development costs of the Skuifraam Dam are reported at R2.6 billion, with a resultant storage capacity of 81m$^3$, while Working for Water reports that an investment of R116 million in clearing riparian areas of alien invasives resulted in a release of more than 30 million m$^3$ of water, i.e. 40% of the Skuifraam provision. Clearing and controlling invasive aliens, especially pines, is crucial for Cape Town. Leaf area transpiring water is increased by several orders of magnitude by pines.

Dr Midgley concluded by challenging BotSoc to:

- **Advance** a clear message about the Cape’s uniqueness in an African and global context;
- **Demonstrate** clearly the linkages between today’s and tomorrow’s challenges and solutions;
- **Promote** opportunities for much needed new research and engage young botanists;
- **Start** using climate change as a motivation and opportunity for advancing sustainable behaviours.
BotSoc Volunteers at Kirstenbosch

Restio Garden Volunteers taking a well-earned break

There have always been volunteers at Kirstenbosch. The earliest record we can find is in Professor Pearson’s diary from 1913 under an entry named ‘Acorn Account’. Volunteers collected acorns from the oak trees on the estate to sell as pig food. In April of that year 1500 bags were collected and sold for the princely sum of £78 2s 6p.

A common definition of a Volunteer is someone who, willingly and without receiving any payment, does a specified task that needs doing for a non-profit organisation. Volunteers do not replace a position that could be filled by a paid member of staff, rather they do tasks that the organisation cannot afford to pay people to do. In 2009 the Kirstenbosch Curator’s office officially estimated the value to Kirstenbosch of the Kirstenbosch Branch Volunteer input at R1,365m.

BotSoc Volunteers who have given two years of continuous service to the Branch and Kirstenbosch are awarded gold Volunteer badges in recognition of their dedication and hard work. This year we are delighted to award gold badges to:

Walk Leaders: Liz Barnett, Margie Herron, Bruce Mackenzie and Jean Stephenson;
Garden Guide: Erica Forder; Bookshop Volunteer, Helen Waltham
Collections Nursery Volunteer: Fay Anderson;
Chairman of the Branch: Rupert Koopman.

Volunteer Open Day: Tuesday 6 November

Would you consider Volunteering at Kirstenbosch? If so, we would love you to join us on Tuesday 6 November on the Kirstenbosch Estate to meet our team of Volunteers and see firsthand what it is they do for the Botanical Society and for Kirstenbosch Garden! For more information please contact Catherine Gribble, Volunteer Co-ordinator on 021 671-5468 or gribblec@botanicalsociety.org.za.
Looking for a fun, relaxing way to spend a few hours on a Sunday? Visit the market and support both your Branch and local crafts people. The market is situated on the grounds of the historical Three Stone Cottages in Kirstenbosch Drive, Newlands, diagonally opposite the main entrance to Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden. It was initiated by your branch, the Kirstenbosch Branch of the Botanical Society, and the objectives of the market are to raise funds for the development and improvement of Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, to encourage people to visit Kirstenbosch, to provide an excellent venue for crafters and to add another dimension to craft markets in general. The first market took place on Sunday 30 August 1992 and the market will turn 21 in 2013, the same year we celebrate BotSoc’s and Kirstenbosch’s centenaries.

There are about 180 crafters at each market. The crafter must be present to sell their craft. In this way the customer can enjoy personal attention and can ask questions about the product they are purchasing. A very wide variety of quality crafts are on sale: clothing, jewellery, home furnishings, pet products, knitwear, and much more. Many food stalls cater to all tastes. Plenty of free parking is available in the field off Kirstenbosch Drive and entry is also free. A credit and debit card facility operates in the Market Information Office in the Kirstenbosch Branch office during market hours for purchases from crafters.

Craft Market dates for 2012

30 September  
28 October  
25 November  
9 and 16 December   
from 09h00 to 15h00

Hope to see you there!

Tessa and Nic van Rooyen,  
Conveners – Kirstenbosch Craft Market  
Tel. 021 697-2853/ 082 3654063; email: tessnic@iburst.co.za

BotSoc remembers Annica van Gylswyk

The Volunteers and staff at Kirstenbosch Branch were very sad to hear of the death of Annica van Gylswyk in July. Annica and her husband, Niek have been dedicated and loyal BotSoc Volunteers for many years, Annica in the Bookshop and Niek in the Collections Nurseries.

Originally from Sweden, Annica settled in South Africa in the 1950s when she married Niek. Annica’s commitment to human rights saw her throw herself into the work of civil rights organisations during the apartheid era including the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, the Black Sash, the Detainees’ Parents Support Committee, the Dependents’ Conference of the South African Council of Churches and the Winterveld Action Committee.

In June 1986 Annica was arrested under the State of Emergency and held in solitary confinement for six weeks, before being deported to Sweden along with her family. 10 years later, in 1996, Niek and Annica returned to the new South Africa and settled in Cape Town.
Come “Bioblitzing” with SANBI

The Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers (CREW), a programme executed through the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), has invited members of the public from all walks of life to join them on a series of Bioblitz events.

During a Bioblitz, experts and members of the public work together to survey a natural area, seeking, identifying and recording as many species as possible in a single day. Photographs of a range of animals from small creatures like spiders and butterflies to beautiful birds and rare plant species are taken and loaded onto the recently launched iSpot southern Africa portal www.ispot.org.za. Sites selected for Bioblitz are relevant for conservation or are areas requiring attention and data collection.

CREW invites the public to join the exploration of some of our country’s most captivating areas. To take part in a Bioblitz, you do not need to be a scientist or even an avid gardener, just a keen nature enthusiast who likes to use your digital camera or electronic tablet, and who wants to do their part. The valuable monitoring data that you help to collect is used to assess species’ status against the internationally accredited Red List Categories and Criteria developed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Knowledge of biodiversity leads to better understanding, to better management and thus to better conservation and protection of our biological resources. Based on the vastness of South Africa’s biodiversity, it is important for residents to show interest and get involved in assisting the scientists to monitor and preserve our heritage.

Over the next few weeks, CREW will be hosting Bioblitz events at several venues:

- 7 October: Riverlands Nature Reserve, Malmesbury area
- 21 October: Romansrivier / Tulbagh
- 4 November: Silvermine Nature Reserve

Please contact Ismail Ebrahim on 076 475 5321 or I.Ebrahim@sanbi.org.za.

Anti-tetanus injections for Kirstenbosch Ground Staff

In February 2012, Cherise Viljoen, Manager of the Kirstenbosch Wholesale Nursery and the Kirstenbosch Team decided that the ground staff working in the Garden should be given anti-tetanus injections.

It took several months to arrange this project: Dr Malcolm Henry of Fish Hoek Medicross very kindly agreed to order the vaccine. Finally on 8 May 2012, 64 members of staff received their injections. A further 19 members received their injections in July. The staff were very grateful to Kirstenbosch for their care. The injections were administered by BotSoc Volunteer, Anne Larkin (SRN PN) in a voluntary capacity, longstanding volunteer in the potting shed, ably assisted by Chantal Paadties.

Science Expo prize winners

Kirstenbosch Branch donated prizes for learners participating in the Eskom Cape Town Expo for Young Scientists. Aliyah Naidoo and Sameera Bibi Ebrahim of South Peninsula High School, and Alexia Zetner, Tayla Goldberg and Joshua Goldberg of Herzlia Middle School each received a copy of the Table Mountain Flower Guide. Congratulations to the winners!
Eco-project:

Make your own seed planters from household objects

Spring is here – the days are getting longer and warmer, and the time is right to start planting seeds. To make your own seed starting pots is very simple.

First, take a sheet of newspaper and fold it lengthways so that it is about the height of a cold drink can and then just wrap the newspaper around the can. Fold in one end of the newspaper to make the bottom and secure. Remove the can, and you have a quick and cheap pot for starting seeds that you made from newspapers.

When the seedlings have sprouted you can plant the whole thing in the ground where the newspaper will eventually decompose.

You can also create seed pots from toilet paper rolls. Simply fill them with potting soil and place them in a plastic container so that they're touching. Fill the container with water and allow the water to be absorbed by the paper pots. Keep your paper tube seed pots a minimum of 10 centimetres in length so when the seed sprouts there will be plenty of soil for the roots to grow into. These can also be planted in the ground when the seedlings are ready for transplanting.

Egg shells make fantastic biodegradable planters. Poke a drainage hole in the bottom of empty, washed eggshells and place them in a cardboard egg carton which provides a stable base with room for drainage. Fill them with potting soil and plant your seeds.

When the plants grow too big for the shells, gently crack them and plant them straight into the garden or a bigger pot. The shell will eventually biodegrade, and the roots will grow out of the shell. The shell supplements the calcium in the soil (and deters slugs and snails).
Cape Dwarf Chameleon (Bradypodion pumilum) on Bird of Paradise (Strelitzia reginae) by Claire Sadie
Congratulations to our June colouring-in Competition winner, Luke Magnussen, who won a gift voucher to spend in the Bookshop! A selection of the best entries is on our Facebook page.

Print and colour-in the picture on page 9 and drop it in the Colouring-in Competition Box at the Botanical Society Bookshop in the Visitors’ Centre at Kirstenbosch by 1 November.

The winner will receive a Gift Voucher to spend in the Bookshop! Don’t forget to write your name, age and telephone number on the back of your entry.

_**Strelitzia reginae**_ is a monocotyledonous flowering plant indigenous to South Africa which flowers in the winter and early spring. Common names include Strelitizia, Crane Flower or Bird of Paradise.

The Cape Dwarf Chameleon, _Bradypodion pumilum_, is a chameleon native to the region around Cape Town. As with most chameleons, its tongue is twice the length of its body and it can be shot out of its mouth using a special muscle in the jaw. This gives the chameleon the ability to catch insects some distance away.

**Congratulations to our June colouring-in Competition winner, Luke Magnussen, who won a gift voucher to spend in the Bookshop!**

A selection of the best entries is on our Facebook page.

Now available from the Botanical Society BOOKSHOP

_A must-have companion for any eager young adventurer setting off into Cape Town’s much-loved garden._

R95.00
The Cape Orchids

a regional monograph in two volumes

by William R. Liltved and Steven D. Johnson

This long-awaited work is truly magnificent. The book will be launched on 10 October and will be available in the Botanical Society Bookshop from 11 October.

The cost is **R3500** (no member discount applies). Only 1000 copies are available!

To reserve your copy, please contact Moira or Corrie in the Bookshop on 021 672-1621 or johnsonc@botanicalsociety.org.za.
The ever popular walks programme continues with regular half and full day walks of varying intensity led by BotSoc members.

**Wednesday 19 September: Constantia Corner**  
Quite a strenuous morning walk via Camel Rock to De Villiers Dam. Meet at 09h00 at Constantia Nek parking area.  
Leaders: Margaret Herron 021- 685-5579; Jean Stephenson 021 531-7468; Gisela Mittendorf 021 422-1394; Margaret Kahle 021 762-3170.

**Saturday 29 September: Botanical Ramble**  
Please contact walk leaders for details: Jenny and Peter Ryan 021 783-2868; Liz Barnett 021 531-8605.

**Sunday 7 October: Cape Point**  
Meet at the gate at 09h00. Route will be decided on the day according to the weather. Duration 6 hours – relatively strenuous.  
Leaders: Dirk Muller 021 762-2473; Pat & Tony Rebelo 021 712-7816; Liz Barnett 021 531-8605; Jill Blignaut 021 794-4836; Catherine Burnett 021 788-1778; Di Franklin 021 712-9830; Moiragh Girdwood 021 671-6990; Ray Green 021 683-5249; Wendy Hitchcock 021 712-3966; Alison James 021 786-4142; Rupert Koopman.

**Wed 17 October: Cape Point Shipwreck Trail**  
Lovely morning walk encountering both inland and coastal fynbos. Meet at Park entrance at 08h30. Wild Card or entrance fee required.  
Leaders: Sheila Robinson 021 782-0773; Jean Stevenson 021 531-7468; A dré Marshall 021 762-1943.

**Saturday 27 October: Botanical Ramble**  
Please contact walk leaders for details: Jenny and Peter Ryan 021 783-2868; Liz Barnett 021 531-8605.

**Saturday 10 November: Silvermine**  
Meet at the dams at 09h00 for a morning walk. Duration 3 hours – reasonably strenuous.  
Leaders: Ivor Jardine 021 689-9031; Margaret Herron 021 685-5579; Margaret Kahle 021 762-3170; Ann MacGregor 021 785-7276; Bruce Mackenzie 021 531-1777; Frans Viljoen 021 531-4596.

**Wednesday 21 November: Mont Rochelle Nature Reserve, Franschhoek**  
Duration all day – reasonably strenuous. Hike in beautiful Boland mountain fynbos with spectacular views. R20 permit required. Meet at Vista Nova School, Rondebosch at 07h00.  
Leaders: Margaret Kahle 021 762-3170; Teresa Raposo 021 674-2874; Moiragh Girdwood 021 671-6890.

**Saturday 24 November: Botanical Ramble**  
Please contact walk leaders for details: Jenny and Peter Ryan 021 783-2868; Liz Barnett 021 531-8605.

Always take wind and waterproof clothing, adequate water and sunscreen, particularly in summer, when participating in walks.

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**Who’s who at Kirstenbosch Branch**

Meet Astrinita Matthews who runs the BotSoc Bookshop at the Garden Centre near Gate 2.  
Astrinita processes customer orders and enquiries, as well as maintaining the online bookshop and processing the online sales. She has been with BotSoc for six years and is an extremely valuable member of our team!

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Contributions to the quarterly newsletter are welcome. Please contact Catherine Gribble:  
gribblec@botanicalsociety.org.za  
tel: 021 671-5468; fax: 021 671-7146

Kirstenbosch Branch would like to welcome Vida e Caffè, who have opened at Kirstenbosch in the space previously occupied by Café Botanica in the Visitor’s Centre.
What’s on at Kirstenbosch

10-20 September  Constantiaberg Art Society Exhibition 09h30-17h30  
Contact: Fran Sexton 021 788-9222 or 082 967-0042

21-27 September  Professional Cape Artists Exhibition 09h30-17h30  
Contact: Jill Fearon 021 715-6500 or email jillfearon@gmail.com

29-30 September  Clivia Show 09h00-17h00  
Contact: John Winter 082 5757202

30 September  Kirstenbosch Craft Market 09h00-15h00  
Kirstenbosch Stone Cottages  
Contact: Tessa and Nic van Rooyen 021 697-2853/ 082 3654063 or tessnic@burst.co.za

4 October  Nature’s Treasure Box holiday art workshop 09h00-13h00  
Enterance fee R40.00; booking essential  
Contact: Chanelle Naidoo 021 799-8696 or C.Naidoo@sanbi.org.za

6 October  Swartland Wine and Olive Route: 10h00-16h00  
K’bosch Stone Cottages  
More than 60 stalls presenting the produce of this unique region.  
Activities for the whole family. Entrance fee R30.  
Contact: 022 487 1133 or swartlandinfo@westc.co.za

28 October  Kirstenbosch Craft Market 09h00-15h00  
Kirstenbosch Stone Cottages

25 November  Kirstenbosch Craft Market 09h00-15h00  
Kirstenbosch Stone Cottages

Wednesday Talks

19 September  Karen Watkins, Journalist/ Guide: Off the beaten track

3 October  Harold Mills, Keen Cape Town gardener: Growing vegetables for home consumption

17 October  Anthony Wain, Landscape Architect: Title to be announced

31 October  David Davidson, designer and exhibitor: Gardening World Cup 2012 in Nagasaki, Japan

14 November  Ernst van Jaaarsveld, Kirstenbosch Horticulturist: Waterwise gardening

28 November  Peter Steyn, owl specialist and bird lover: A delight of Owls

All talks are from 10h30-11h30 in the Sanlam Hall  
For enquiries please contact Cathy Abbott on 021 465-6440 or email cathya@wol.co.za