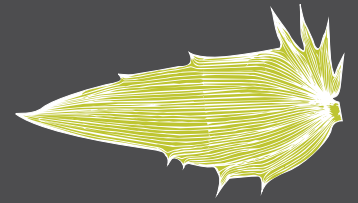


# WOODIANA

N°004  
2016



Cultivating People and Plants

Environmental Education Outreach

Wickedly Odd - The Night Garden

The New Butterfly Habitat Garden

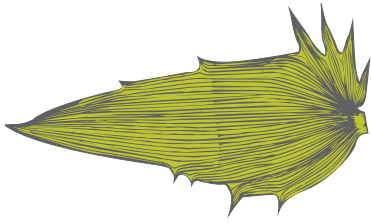
A Botanist for our Times

Majozi on the Move with Old Mutual's Music At The Lake

A Publication of the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust



*Papilio dardanus* (Mocker Swallowtail)



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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CURATOR

Martin Clement - Curator: Durban Botanic Gardens

### Gardens as a Legacy

According to the Philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.

What is it about legacy that resonates with us? While the celebration of legacy might be that of looking backwards at someone's life, it is in a sense very much the living forwards of that same legacy that inspires us. Legacy is part of our human quest, knowingly or unknowingly: that what we have strived for will somehow remain as something of worth for others who follow. A well-established public garden such as the Durban Botanic Gardens is blessed with rich legacies that continue to inspire and which have served as the foundation for many of our programmes and projects over the years. However, legacy is not only visible through people who are no longer with us, it is being continually created, often in a quiet and humble manner.

This edition of Woodiana acknowledges those who have already devoted a lifetime to the pursuit of botanical or horticultural excellence. However, it is also about those intrepid individuals who are currently in their own way stepping beyond the norm to extend the value and reach of the Gardens to as many people as possible.

In many cases these legacy-makers provide fresh perspectives and invite new ways of viewing our place in the world. Leadership is closely interwoven in legacy – from developing active citizens among our young learners, to fostering a new understanding of wildlife gardening at our indigenous Butterfly Habitat Garden, to practical training for horticulture students. The Gardens is blessed with legacy-makers who understand that our heritage is always fresh and inspiring, and offers a connection for our many visitors. It's this legacy thinking that inspired the writing of the recently published Durban Forest book.

I recently attended a memorial service at Pigeon Valley for the late tree enthusiast, Chris Riem who was very much a gentleman of the forest, a person who tirelessly devoted his time to identifying, documenting and helping to label the trees in the Durban Botanic Gardens. Reflecting on the venue for his memorial, it struck me how fitting this remnant patch of coastal forest was for honouring a life devoted to knowing trees. Chris's knowledge, generosity and patience were instrumental in bringing the Trees of the Durban Botanic Gardens booklet to fruition, a publication which has proven to be of value to lay and professional botanists alike. In these modest and humble acts lies much of the legacy from which we benefit today.



Image by Clinton Friedman



Image by Clinton Friedman

## A CHAIRMAN'S VIEW

Ivor Daniel – Chairman: Durban Botanic Gardens Trust

### Stability and Change

The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead advised that leadership requires an engagement with the symbols of change while simultaneously re-visioning those of tradition and stability. As 2016 draws to a close I wish to reflect on a year in which the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust has given practical expression to this idea.

Perhaps most importantly the Trust has sought the services of new Trustees to complement the existing Board. In this regard it gives me great pleasure to welcome Aarif Saib, Hilary Dudley, Lizl Coppejans, Lorraine Shandu, Mfundo Thango and Sershen Naidoo. These Trustees bring with them experience spanning media, education, botany and citizen science, food security, fundraising, schools outreach, legal, fiduciary, business and green innovation skills. Welcome to our new Trustees, I look forward to working with you. Our new Board brings fresh energy, perspectives and ideas, while understanding that the Gardens' history and continuity are a valued backdrop to the charting of new directions.

This rich theme was reflected in the Trust's awarding in September 2015 of the John Medley Wood Medal to Dr. Elsa Pooley in the category of exceptional service to botany in KwaZulu-Natal. In this case, Dr. Pooley's long service to Botany in many of its classical aspects has, in concert with her vibrant personality, placed plants firmly in the public consciousness at a time when this is much-needed. So too with our new Butterfly Habitat Garden, a major Trust-funded project on which we have to date spent over R 430 000. This is perhaps the Trust's most instructive addition to the Gardens, designed to make vivid the intimate interdependence between plants and the butterflies that pollinate, feed and breed on them. This living, un-caged outdoor classroom will appeal to indigenous gardeners and landscapers, butterfly lovers, natural historians and school groups, and is emerging as a citizen science hub under the auspices of the Durban branch of the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa.

Similar themes attend the articles in this edition on the Durban Botanic Gardens Environmental Education Programme, our hosting of the most avant-garde of theatre, our role in the Contact Course for Unisa's Diploma in Ornamental Horticulture and the Gardens continuing emergence as a premier outdoor music venue for both local and international acts. Across this range of projects and others, the Trust is close to finalising a Memorandum of Understanding with the eThekweni Municipality that will formalise our working relationship to enhance our joint effectiveness in supporting the Gardens.

Finally, in all such endeavours, funding is needed to maintain the Gardens – both in terms of their stability and continuity as a refuge for City residents; and as a place of innovation and aspiration in changing and challenging times. For those who wish to leave a legacy that will assist the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust to continue with our many projects and to maintain the Gardens as a place of welcome and excellence for all, please consider making a donation to the Trust. Our banking details appear on the inside of the back cover.

UNISA AND THE DURBAN BOTANIC GARDENS



Unisa's Diploma: in Ornamental Horticulture is highly respected, and enjoys an excellent reputation in the horticulture industry. The Diploma equips students for a wide range of careers in horticulture, including horticultural conservation, garden design, nursery management, plant propagation, amenity horticulture, Botanic Gardens and research, and retail and wholesale nursery work, among many others. The Diploma's curriculum is designed with input from the horticulture industry, and prepares graduates for the real-world demands, quality and environmental standards of the profession.

In part, this outcome is accomplished through Unisa's Contact Courses, which expose students to the hands-on practical skills that are the bedrock of horticulture, and form part of a module which students must complete in order to qualify for their Diploma. Week long Contact Courses are run annually for both first and second year students, covering plant identification, pruning, tree planting, irrigation, soil and growth media, plant health, pest and invasive alien plant control. Participants also visit retail and wholesale nurseries to learn about nursery design and layout, responsible nursery management, plant breeders' rights and horticultural mechanisation.

The role of Botanic Gardens in training botanists and horticulturists has historical roots dating back to the establishment of the earliest Gardens in the 1500s, and many Gardens have maintained this role into the present day. The relationship between the eThekweni Parks Department, Unisa and other academic institutions involved in Botany and Horticulture goes back 20 years, and its involvement in the Unisa Contact Course is a legacy of which the Durban Botanic Gardens is proud; the Unisa Contact Course has been hosted by the Gardens, with the assistance of the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust since 2009, and this supportive and administrative role is central to both the Trust's and the Gardens' broader objective to strengthen the horticultural profession.

In 2010 the Gardens' curator, Martin Clement was tasked with identifying staff to assist the Gardens in continuing to host the Unisa Contact Course. He approached the Assistant to the Curator, Leigh Edy-Roderick and the Gardens' then acting Information Officer, Jennifer Rampersad.

Following Martin's appeal, Leigh and Jennifer went to work. During her many years as an Information Officer, Jennifer had gone out of her way to help local DUT and Unisa horticulture students,



Images by Leigh Edy-Roderick

many of whom come to the Gardens in search of information. She had acquired a thorough grasp of the curriculum along the way. Leigh, with ten years behind her in the Curator's office, knew her way around the horticulture industry, and was ready to put her knowledge and contacts to use.

Leigh handled the bulk of the admin – co-ordination, registration, transport, catering, student support, liaison with facilitators and readying of the venue and teaching materials, among others. Knowing the teaching resources available both locally in the private sector, and in the Parks Department, Leigh and Jennifer assisted with recruiting green industry professionals who kept the course current, and offered a diversity of inputs and specialities.

As Jennifer and Leigh persevered, the Gardens' reputation as a host grew, and according to Unisa lecturer and Contact Course co-ordinator Queline Bersiks, the Courses run like "a well oiled machine". Jennifer was encouraged to study horticulture by Queline, and, recently qualified, she is now both a course organiser and facilitator.

The Unisa course is now, arguably, an industry-leader, and as a

compulsory module for Unisa students, those in employment take leave in order to attend. As Leigh says, this is one of the reasons "the course must deliver." As part of this delivery, the Gardens are a perfect venue, offering a dedicated teaching facility at the Education Centre, and the use of the Gardens themselves as an outdoor classroom.

Leigh and Jennifer speak with unguarded affection about an involvement that continues to inspire them. It is also obvious that their friendship adds quality and purpose to the work they do, and that the students benefit greatly from their energy and enthusiasm. This view is echoed by Queline, who describes them as "a tight team who can think out of the box and make things happen", adding that they are "professional, resourceful, extremely well prepared, and an integral part of the Unisa course's implementation."

As for Leigh and Jennifer, one suspects that their involvement will be long-term. Jennifer wants to see "horticulture grow and thrive" and for Leigh, a plant lover in her own right, the course is part of who she is; in her words: "I hold the course close to my heart."



Image by Clinton Friedman

▲ Assistant to the Curator, Leigh Edy-Roderick and Parks Department Horticulturist Jennifer Rampersad, whose commitment to the Unisa Contact Course has enabled the Durban Botanic Gardens to maintain its role as a host and facilitator, and helped the Trust to support the Gardens in this work.



Images by Leigh Edy-Roderick

▲ Horticulture is a hands on discipline that requires students to work directly with plants in real life situations and applications. For this reason, exposure to Unisa practical sessions are crucial, especially in a subject which many students pursue through correspondence. Here, Unisa students prepare stem and tip cuttings at the eThekweni Parks Department's Farewell Nursery.



Image by Leigh Edy-Roderick

◀ (Previous page, picture bottom right) Responsible nursery management is crucial to horticultural practice, and the Unisa Contact Course offers field trips to both retail and wholesale nurseries in and around Durban, providing students with practical experience in the horticulture work environment. The Unisa contact courses link with theory modules that are offered in the Unisa Diploma: in Ornamental Horticulture. These demonstrate practical elements that strengthen theoretical understanding of the modules required to graduate for the Diploma. In this picture students are speaking with Sean O'Connor of Bloemendaal Floral Farm.



Image by Leigh Edy-Roderick

▲ As the world urbanises and our environmental challenges grow, horticulture remains a dynamic discipline with multiple applications to urban ecology and sustainability. As just one example, roof top gardening may prove relevant to climate change adaptation and even the provision of food. Field trips to sites such as this can help keep horticulturists on the leading edge of what their profession has to offer. In this picture students inspect an inner city rooftop garden created by Priority Zone in Durban.



Image by Leigh Edy-Roderick

◀ There are many facets to horticulture which cannot be experienced in a lecture theatre, and it is important for aspirant horticulturists to get to grips with what the work environment may demand of them. In this picture Unisa students mix growth media at the eThekweni Parks Department's Hillary Nursery as part of a plant propagation exercise

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OUTREACH - a morning in the Durban Botanic Gardens

It is a sunny morning and Mark Mattson is trailing Grade 7 learners from the Tholamandla Senior Primary School in KwaMashu as they explore the Durban Botanic Gardens under the direction of the Gardens core team of ten volunteer guides. These learners have come to the Gardens under the umbrella of its growing Environmental Education outreach programme, a curriculum driven initiative which affirms education as a primary role of the Gardens and has seen 4906 children guided through them over the past year. The programme is structured around the themes of Citizenship, Biodiversity, Ecology and Conservation; and while shadowing various groups I hear mention of climate change, resource degradation and alien plants, reflections on the Gardens' history, the role of plants in supporting all life on earth, the origins of tree names and various plant-animal interactions.

These themes are interspersed with snippets of plants in culture and cuisines, traditional plant lore and ethnobotany, plants in medicine, history and religion. By the end of their tour the children have grubbed around on a forest floor with magnifying glasses,

collected pond life in jars, watched birds feed and marvelled at the Orchid House. They have stood next to, touched, smelled and sensed some of the largest, oldest, rarest and most magnificent plants they have ever seen.

The programme is well networked and collaborates with a number of organisations in South Africa's public and private environmental sectors.

While such affiliations provide vital direction and resources, the real teaching, it is evident, is in the Garden itself, and in the dedication of the volunteers who seek to share its treasures with their charges. While classroom-based learning may impart crucial knowledge, it is ultimately time spent in nature itself that fosters the felt connection leading to care. In this sense, and for these learners, the Durban Botanic Gardens is a precious resource for the children that they are, the adults they may become, and the environment it will be their responsibility to protect.



Images by Jody Fuchs



*"It's only going to build and encourage that young individual to take our environment more seriously, and to protect it and sustain it. And I think, with the Botanic Gardens Programme here in Durban we are really going to be successful in changing the mind-set of our learners."*

Mr AS Khan, Principal, Hillgrove Primary School, Newlands West, Durban.

## "IT'S NOT ALL FUN AND GAMES!" - Climate Change Education Practices at the Durban Botanic Gardens

By Jody Fuchs, Education Officer, Durban Botanic Gardens

The Durban Botanic Gardens (DBG) is Durban's oldest public institution and is managed by the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Unit. The City is well aware of the threat of climate change to biodiversity conservation and is actively engaged in a number of awareness programmes.

One such programme is the Durban Botanic Gardens Education Centre (DBGEC). The DBGEC is mandated with the cultivation of a sense of citizenship in learners of eThekweni. It does this by teaching learners to love nature through semi-structured contemplative nature-based practices in the DBG. Emerging research demonstrates how contemplative practices like those offered at the DBGEC can shift learner consciousness and promote changes in behaviour.

One important practice at DBGEC is a child-centred climate change adaptation game. WESSA's Climate Change Picture Building Game was introduced into the DBG because of the threat that climate change poses to plant biodiversity, and the need to increase climate change awareness among learners in the eThekweni Municipality. The aim is that the game's contemplative

nature will help learners develop the necessary competencies to confront a future with a changed climate.

The game is played outdoors with two large teams, a facilitator and two supervising adults. There is a game board, sixteen facilitator cards with pictures and text, and two sets of sixteen playing cards with pictures only. The cards are arranged in four themes i.e. thinking about climate change, causes of climate change, effects of climate change, and mitigating activities for climate change. Each theme has four cards. During the game questions are posed to the two teams, each of which must choose the card that answers the question, before giving it to their nominated runner, who delivers the card to a facilitator. The team runner delivering his/her card first wins the point for their team. The cards are presented at random and there is much excitement about who will win the challenge. At the end of the game there is a more measured and sedentary discussion during which cards are grouped under their respective themes. The process of grouping and attendant discussion builds literacy around each of the four themes, leading to a broad grasp of differing facets of climate change.

The DBG education portfolio is managed by the Gardens' Education Officer, Jody Fuchs, with the assistance of Thami Mbhele and the Gardens' group of volunteer guides. Two programmes are offered; the first of these are guided schools programmes for which schools are charged a nominal fee for curriculum-related and/or grade-specific courses, while the Gardens Outreach Programme caters for children from under-resourced schools. Such schools face a number of challenges in accessing the Gardens, such as transport and the provision of food for learners during their courses. For this reason the Education Programme is constantly in need of funding so that it is in a position to assist these schools to bring their learners to the Gardens.



▲Runners at the ready – WESSA's Climate Change Picture Building Game makes thinking about climate change exciting by turning it into a competition between two teams who must dispatch runners to register their answers to a series of questions about climate change.

## WICKEDLY ODD - THE NIGHT GARDEN

The Durban Botanic Gardens Trust's efforts to promote the Gardens took a quirky and crepuscular turn in November last year when sunset saw the start of the Trust's collaborative foray into the year-end corporate functions market for a fusion of dining and entertainment aimed at bringing the Gardens alight...at night, through dance, music, puppetry, décor and a botanical tour with a difference. This medley of the marvellous was hosted by none other than the illustrious Beauty Ramapelepele, aided and abetted by fauna and flora-inspired characters highlighting the magic and mystery of the Gardens. Beauty had the following to say:

*Hello my Sweeties. I am Beauty Ramapelepele. Last year I joined the Durban Botanic Gardens in hosting the celebration of "Wickedly Odd – The Night Garden". What a fantastic experience. The Garden was brought to life at night with theatre, dance, music and one of the finest 5 course meals the city has to offer. The garden makes the perfect canvas for a mystical, bizarre and intriguing night out with its stately tall trees, hidden nooks and crannies and beautiful grassy spaces. Wickedly Odd – The Night Garden is to be a regular event on the calendar. So if you are not a member of parliament and have missed your chance to experience the weird and hilarious side of South Africa first hand, do yourself a turn and head to the Gardens this November/December. I must admit that my Jimmy Choos and Versace handbag took a hammering but there is something about being outdoors, at night, in a garden under the stars that beats a R5000 pair of shoes. Also it is a dress up. So if you have an alter-ego*

*that needs letting loose then this is your chance to 'just do it'. Warren from Accounting can be Wanita from Accra and be celebrated for it. Viva Wickedly Odd Viva! Viva Botanic Gardens Viva!*

In the Night Garden is a creative collaboration between the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust, event production company Experience This, Beauty Ramapelepele aka Ben Voss and set installation designer Clint McLean. The collaboration offers a bespoke event aiming to diversify the entertainment landscape while promoting talents and skills germane to the area where the event takes place. The event also aspires to deploy its profile as a vehicle for positive change.

In this regard, the event, among other goals, will create publicity for the Gardens and its mission in novel ways; promote positive, green values and botanical awareness; provide platforms for local artists, transfer skills and knowledge and connect people in a safe, social and thought provoking environment while generating revenue for the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust.

The Durban Botanic Gardens Trust looks for fun innovative ways to fundraise and by hosting "Wickedly Odd - the Night Garden" the Trust earns a percentage of the surplus which we can then re-invest in the Durban Botanic Gardens. Come and support this fantastic experience - "Wickedly Odd - The Night Garden", visit [www.wickedlyodd.co.za](http://www.wickedlyodd.co.za) to book.



[www.wickedlyodd.co.za](http://www.wickedlyodd.co.za)

MUMFORD AND SONS COMES TO DURBAN

In collaboration with long-established partner Impi Concept Events, the Durban Botanic Gardens maintained its momentum as a go-to outdoor music venue when it hosted Mumford and Sons earlier this year. Mumford are arguably one of the most sought after live acts in the world and played single shows in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg – it wasn't enough! South African audiences have been hungry for Mumford for the past several years, and for Durban fans of their singular folk rock sound, the wait ended in February when Mumford played a sold out concert at the Gardens.

According to Stu Berry of Impi Concept Events, the hosting of Mumford shows that a growing number of international acts are seeing SA as an opportunity to interact with fans in a more intimate way, and the facilities and venue offered by the Gardens are perfect for this purpose. According to Stu, the success of the Mumford concert is a strong motivator to bring more similarly big name bands to the Gardens.

The concert has helped the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust significantly in its fundraising efforts, and Impi's relationship with the Trust continues as a rich collaboration for delivering on the Trust's mandate. By bringing world class acts to Durban, the Trust helps to attract new user groups. In turn, this expands the spectrum of appreciation for the Gardens, opening up new avenues of solidarity and support. Music currently brings some 30 000 people to the Gardens annually, representing a diverse spectrum of South African society. According to Stu, this opens up the Gardens to more of the ratepayers to whom the facility in fact belongs, helping the Municipality to deliver services to Durban's residents. As growing numbers of people identify with the Gardens, the definition of what a Botanic Gardens is, and what it can offer, begins to shift, helping the Gardens to move with the times, and to remain relevant.



▲ Multi-instrumentalist Marcus Mumford lets rip...a sight Durban fans waited many years to see.



▲ One of the world's most sought-after live acts, Mumford's genre-transcending folk-bluegrass sound has taken the charts by storm, and their sold-out concert at the Durban Botanic Gardens is a tribute to the City, the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust and the corporate and private sector participants who have collaborated around the Trust's over-arching mission to bring a socially relevant and humanitarian face to the Gardens.



Images by Jethro Snyders Photography

◀ Mumford and Sons arrival on the music scene has been meteoric, bringing a once strictly localised American folk tradition to a global audience, including this one, in eThekweni, South Africa.



DURBAN BOTANIC GARDENS  
butterfly  
HABITAT GARDEN



Image by Clinton Friedman

▲ Soon to be covered in butterfly-attracting creepers beneath which Lepidopterists, school children and other Gardens users will gather. Surrounding the dome are systematically laid out butterfly habitats which vividly reveal the relationships between pollinators and plants, the lifecycles of butterflies and the plant species requirements of different butterfly groups in and around Durban.

▼ The Butterfly Habitat Garden is partitioned into modules; each module is planted to meet the needs of particular butterfly groups requiring the same host- and nectar plants to complete their life cycles.

THE NEW BUTTERFLY HABITAT GARDEN

The need to re-purpose the COP-17 Living Beehive has led in the direction of diversity and delight. The beehive is now the centrepiece of collaboration between butterfly specialist Dr Americo Bonkewitz (<http://www.butterflying.co.za/>), the Gardens and the Trust, in what is surely one of the Gardens' most exciting projects.

With the dome retained as a multiple-use focal point, the surrounding area has been planted up and landscaped with a diverse collection of indigenous butterfly host- and food plants. The dome, which is now the home of the Durban branch of the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa, also serves as a trellis for a host of butterfly-attracting creepers, while its concrete floored interior may be used for lectures, butterfly gardening courses and by school groups.

The beautifully landscaped surrounds are designed to reveal the intimate interdependence between plants – both host- and food species – and the butterflies that pollinate, feed and breed on them; and the manner in which bio-diversity is underpinned by this delicate, fundamental interconnectedness.

This Web-of-Life presentation is systematically laid out, greatly enhancing its educational impact i.e. the garden is made up of sub-gardens that are planted to concentrate both the host- and nectar plant species specific to different butterfly groups. This will enable observers to form a picture of the different groups of butterflies in the Durban area and the specific host- and nectar-plant requirements of these groups.

LAYOUT OF THE BUTTERFLY HABITAT GARDEN

The Butterfly Habitat Garden is sub-divided into gardens which incorporate host and nectar plants specific to the needs of different butterfly species

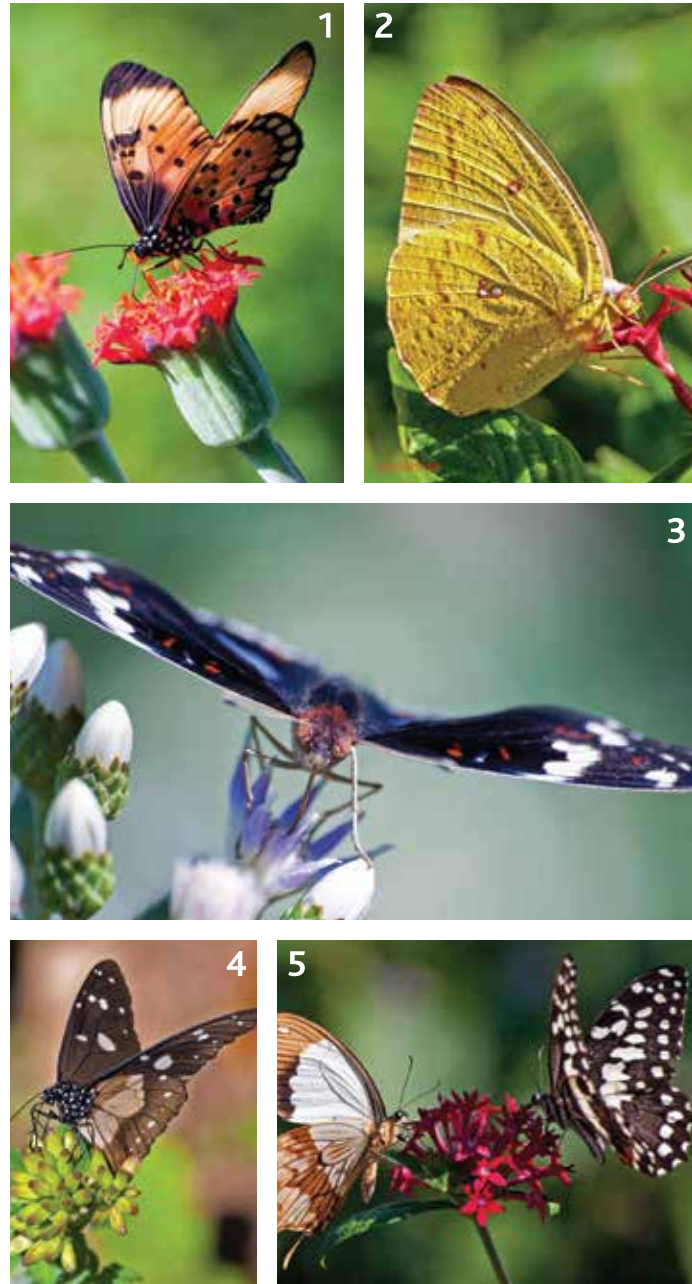


Furthermore, the layout makes it easier to predict where specific butterfly species may be found, increases the chances of butterflies breeding locally and aids in locating eggs, pupae and caterpillars. When the garden hosts butterfly gardening courses, then its layout will make it possible to showcase butterfly plants for a particular butterfly group. Thus, this approach makes for an ecologically instructive presentation that will inform indigenous gardeners and landscapers, butterfly lovers and natural historians. Soon, each sub-garden will be identified with signage, and its associated plant species named, enhancing its impact and creating a living, outdoor classroom for the Gardens' Environmental Education outreach programme. The use of QR codes and a linked website are also planned. Already, butterfly gardening training courses are on offer at the Gardens with Americo, and the garden has attracted significant interest from the public. Its atmosphere is greatly enhanced by the fact that the butterflies are not caged, and can be observed in a setting that feels very natural.

The Durban Botanic Gardens Trust has spent over R 450 000 on the Butterfly Habitat Garden thus far, and the Gardens will be officially launched following the completion of interpretive signage and plant labels, some of which have been sponsored by Goodrick's Attorneys. It is anticipated that the dome will accommodate Gardens-hosted talks and training courses, and in particular butterfly gardening courses and Lepidopterists' Society meetings.

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► Butterflies recorded in the habitat garden –1: a female of Natal Acraea (*Acraea natalica*) on Coral Senecio (*Kleinia fulgens*) 2: female of African Migrant (*Catopsilia florella*) feeding on *Pentas lanceolata* var. *coccinea* 3: Ox-eyed pansy (*Junonia orithya madagascariensis*) 4: a Layman (*Amauris albimaculata*) on *Solanecio angulatus* 5: a male Mocker Swallowtail (*Papilio dardanus cenea*) and a male Citrus Swallowtail (*Papilio demodocus*) feeding on *Pentas lanceolata* var. *coccinea*.



Images by Vikramaditya Vedalankar

**Butterfly Habitat Garden needs volunteers!**

As the host- and nectar-plants surrounding the butterfly dome grow and mature, it is expected that large numbers of butterflies and moths will be attracted to the area, and it will be a valuable exercise to record the changes in butterfly numbers and diversity as they occur. Volunteers, and specifically members of the Lepidopterists' Society are needed to conduct this monitoring, and to take photographs of the butterflies and other insects recorded, ideally twice weekly.

**Support the Durban Butterfly Habitat Garden**

If you would like to contribute towards further maintenance and development of this exciting project, please will you get in touch with us.

This opportunity to contribute to Citizen Science would suit retired people or school groups. You do not have to be an expert on butterflies, moths or photography - enthusiasm and a willingness to learn, and donate your time, are all you need. As well as helping with an exciting project, you will learn a great deal about butterfly gardening in Durban.



Images by Americo Bonkewitz



▲ Dr. Americo Bonkewitz (at L) addresses members of the Durban branch of the Lepidopterists' Society of Africa, who have made the dome their home, and will introduce an enhanced public awareness both of butterflies, the value of indigenous gardening and the joy of observing butterflies in an uncaged, natural environment. At R, Americo addresses members of the public attending a butterfly gardening course hosted by the Gardens in May.

**GARDENS' JUBILEE GATES RE-INSTALLED**



Image by Clinton Friedman

For those interested in the Gardens' heritage, the new entrance through the Visitors' Centre now provides an added attraction. As one approaches the lovely *Tabebuia* growing just beyond the VC complex wall and enters the Gardens, there on the right, with the magnificent three sisters in the background, are the newly re-installed Jubilee Gates. Also fondly known as the John Medley Wood Gates, they were acquired by the Durban Botanic Society in 1898, where they stood at the Gardens' historical main entrance in St Thomas' Road for 100 years before being removed when the Gardens were fenced in the 1990s. In a bid to maintain the Gardens' historical character, the Trust, among other projects, recently brought the gates out of storage and re-installed them at the Gardens' new entrance, where they provide historical continuity with the entrance of old. The Trust would like to thank Corobrick for providing both paving and the bricks required to build the Gate's adjoining wall.

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## A BOTANIST FOR OUR TIMES - the John Medley Wood Medal is awarded to Dr. Elsa Pooley

The Durban Botanic Gardens are most closely associated with the person and curatorship (1882 – 1913) of John Medley Wood. A prolific collector after whom approximately sixty species of plants are named, Medley Wood published the first flora of Natal and established an herbarium of some 46 000 specimens at the Botanic Gardens. To honour the memory of this singular botanist, the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust bestows at its discretion an award to an individual deemed to have made a comparable contribution to the botany of the province.

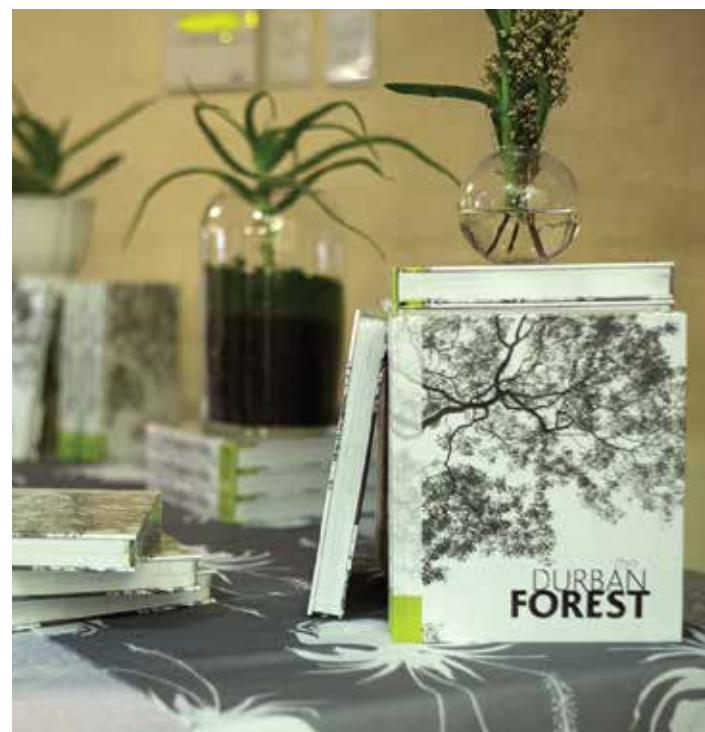
Following nominations by Di Higginson Keath and the Medals previous recipient the late Roddy Ward, the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust chose the occasion of the official launch of the Trust's publication, *The Durban Forest*, to confer the John Medley Wood Medal on Dr. Elsa Pooley in the category of exceptional service to botany and/or flora in KwaZulu-Natal.

Married to game ranger Tony Pooley and stationed in northern Zululand's remote Game Reserves as a young woman, Elsa is self-trained. Schooling herself in the classroom of her own passions and observations, and through the rich community of botanists

among whom she was known, she is one of KwaZulu-Natal's pre-eminent field botanists, authors, botanical artists and landscapers. Of perhaps equal importance, she has shared her expertise widely among both students of botany and the public, authoring eight field guides, including KZN's beloved, standard guides to the province's trees and wild flowers. In all these endeavours, her affection for her subject, and her generosity of spirit have infused her botanical gifts to plant lovers from all walks of life – academics, artists, gardeners and growing numbers of the public eager for knowledge about the environment, indigenous gardening and natural history. Such have been the quality of these contributions that Elsa was awarded an Honourary Doctor of Science by the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 2008, while she has also been honoured by the Wildlife and Environment Society, the South African Association of Botanists, Kirstenbosch, the Botanical Society of South Africa and the South African Landscaping Institute. She was a founder member of the Botanical Artists' Association of southern Africa and has worked closely with the CSIR, HSRC, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and the South African National Biodiversity Institute.



▲ Dr. Elsa Pooley, 2016 recipient of The John Medley Wood Award and Ivor Daniel, Chairman of the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust.



▲ The Durban Forest – the first in a series of books to be published by the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust as the umKhuhlu Series, intended to promote a model of plant use with an urban, humanitarian and restorative focus.

From this perspective, the joint launching of The Durban Forest and honouring of Dr. Pooley was apposite.

The thesis of The Durban Forest is that for a sustainable urban future to be possible, a new botanical discipline is needed to deepen our understanding of the relation between People and Plants. This discipline is needed at a time when formal academic botany appears to be disappearing. Natural history and field-based studies are increasingly being replaced by genetics, molecular biology, biotechnology and other narrow specialisations, while taxonomy and plant identification, once the bedrock of botany, are in acknowledged decline. Such decline is tragic, because the botanical discipline we now seek will need to link environmental management concerns with those of human welfare and wellbeing, specifically addressing the use of plants in ecosystem-based adaptations to climate instability, food security, ecological restoration and social and economic justice.

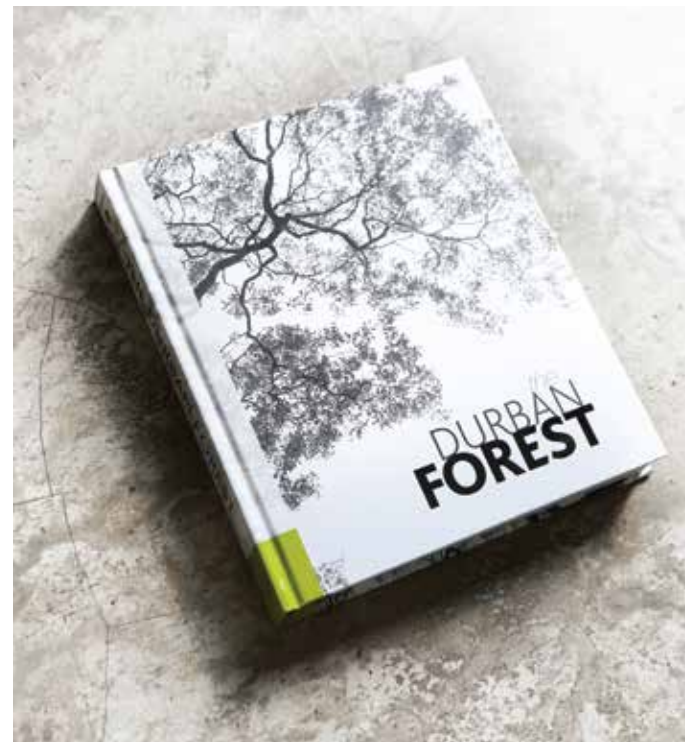


Image by Clinton Friedman

The Durban Botanic Gardens Trust has published The Durban Forest in an effort to establish a manifesto for this much-needed new approach, and the overlapping themes of the book launch and the award's bestowal are not difficult to spot. The fate of botany reflects a declining general interest in plants and their felt relevance, and a growing disconnect between botanists and living plants in their natural environments.

Close friend and fellow botanist Geoff Nichols attributes Elsa's impact to "her perceptive nature, and very nice way of dealing with people". According to Geoff, this ability "to talk to anyone"

has been crucial in the authorship and project management of her field guides, which have set new standards for quality and accessibility for such texts. Her books, which are now standard references for academics and lay botanists alike have done much to place plants more firmly in the public consciousness. As the need to fully appreciate plants, and the necessity for a botanical citizen science becomes ever more pressing, Dr. Pooley's brand of botany and the breadth of its expression resonate strongly with both The Durban Forest's subject matter and the broad aims of the Gardens and the DBG Trust.

Elsa Pooley's life as a botanist paints an inspiring picture of a rich relationship between a botanist and her subject. Through the medium of her personality, her books, her paintings and her gardens, this relationship is extended to all at a moment in which it is urgently needed as an antidote to our times.



Image by Di Higginson Keath

▲ Plantswoman Elsa Pooley showing how botany should be practiced!

**THE DURBAN FOREST** Can be purchased at all leading bookstores or from the Durban Botanic Gardens Information Office.

This book is a beautifully illustrated 300 page hardcover book written by a collection of authors and published by the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust.

MAJOZI ON THE MOVE WITH OLD MUTUAL'S MUSIC AT THE LAKE



*"The Gardens makes everything feel natural and relaxed."*

- Majozi -

A Durban boy born and bred, Majozi had been to the Durban Botanic Gardens for picnics, birthdays and concerts. As he says, "It's part of Durban's heritage, one of those places you just hear about when you live here." But in 2014, just as his music career was starting to take off, Stuart Berry of Impi Concept Events, and organiser of Old Mutual's Music at the Lake series "was kind enough to invite me to open for the mighty Mango Groove, and give me a platform to take my career further." Recalling the occasion, Majozi says "I was really nervous. I had never played to so many people before, but the crowd was really nice, the sound was great, and we had such a good time." Since those early days Majozi's recognition has grown, seeing him play the OppiKoppi and White Mountain Music Festivals, the Mr Price Pro Concert, and touring with the Lumineers. In 2015 Majozi returned to the Gardens, this time opening for the Parlotones with "a lot more confidence" and enjoying "a great vibe". With his career firmly set on an upward trajectory Majozi has signed with Universal Records and the songs, albums and fans have kept on coming.

Looking back on his early exposure through Music at the Lake, Majozi speaks of the Gardens as a venue where "the vibe is awesome, the stage is big and the sound is great and powerful."

But the Gardens provides more than this, offering a venue where nature and culture seem to be in accord, a theme that resonates strongly with many of the bands that have taken to the lakeside stage. Mango Groove's Claire Johnston, Johnny Clegg and Freshly Ground, among others, have paid tribute to the natural setting, its importance to society, and the privilege of playing in it. Such comments also resonate with sponsors. As Old Mutual's Sponsorship Manager Bandile Mngoma notes, the Music at the Lake series takes place in "a multi-cultural comfort zone that is close to nature, family friendly and a top class music venue."

Majozi too has opinions in this regard – "My genre of music goes really well with the whole outdoorsy feel. The Gardens makes everything feel natural and relaxed."

For those who wish to see them, the links between the Garden's broad social-environmental agenda and Music at the Lake are clear. As Majozi says "Environment always plays a big part in music."



▲ A Durban boy born and bred, Majozi describes his music as Indiefolk with subtle influences of electro. An infectious beat, meaningful lyrics and a humble demeanour have been a hit with South African audiences.

◀ Majozi's well known tattoos are part of his identity. Paying tribute to his faith and his mother, they inspire his music and remind him of all that he loves.



Images by Timothy Lubbe

Old Mutual's Music at the Lake is organised by Impi Concerts in support of the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust and is proudly sponsored by Old Mutual, Durban Tourism and East Coast Radio.

NEW JOB, NEW WORLD - Vishnu Moodley's change in career

Coming off the back of 12 years in the car rental business, Vishnu Moodley moved to Durban when he was offered a job by a relative taking golf cart tours of the Durban Botanic Gardens for Blue Dolphin, an established tourist services company that regularly brings its customers to visit. To say that Vishnu knew nothing about plants would have been an understatement; his first few months on the job were "a steep learning curve" during which he was loaned books by the DBG Trust, did a week's crash course with the DBG guides and absorbed knowledge accumulated over decades of visits from elderly people brought to the Gardens by TAFTA. Vish was further rescued by his love of reading, which he focussed diligently on matters botanical. As his interest in the Gardens grew, so did his confidence, and his desire to share a growing store of knowledge, augmented by his "behind the scenes" mining of the internet, and up-to-date observations. Three months in, Vish took a few DBG guides, along with the Curator, on a tour – they returned "flabbergasted" by his unique take on his subject matter.

Wanting to do the job "to the best of my ability" Vish grasped that there would always be more to learn, and kept on learning, relying less on his "script", becoming more interactive, and gauging the needs of his clients with growing intuition and versatility.

The compliments from very happy customers began flowing in – finding their way to the Curator, the Trust and onto Trip Advisor. Vish continued to tailor his service, offering everything from two hour tours with lunch, accomplished photographs mailed electronically to clients, and befriending less mobile visitors who simply wished to be dropped off at the Tea Gardens and picked up when ready...and everything in between.

Many visitors arrive at the Gardens during the half-day city tour, a standard fare for many tour operators. With limited time, and clients in need of both a 'breather' and a snack, it made sense for the Visitors Centre to offer good coffee, that snack, and the means to see as much of the Gardens as possible in their 45 minute stay. For this reason, the perfect complement to the coffee stand is the golf cart, which boosts quick access to the Gardens for the elderly, and for those who do not have the time to walk. Through the Trust's business relationship with Blue Dolphin, 30 minute tours are available for such visitors, while those with more time to spare can book the golf cart for up to half a day. A percentage of the proceeds generated by the coffee stand and golf cart tours accrues to the Trust, and is used for Garden projects.

Through all these endeavours, Vish's upbeat nature and infectious enthusiasm found an outlet; the Gardens seemed to draw the best out of him, and people began booking his tours in advance.

A year-and-a-half since he first walked through the gates, Vish continues to "love my job", and has been joined by his fiancée, Natasha, who runs the popular coffee stand with its pleasingly situated chairs and tables, from which the Gardens may be enjoyed with a good filter coffee and Master Chef Penny Pritchard's muffins!

Vish now feels "part of the Gardens family" and the feedback received by the Gardens points to his role as a valuable and knowledgeable ambassador. Vish makes a habit of arriving early to work so that he can walk around the Gardens on his own before his clients arrive; and when they do he is ready for them. I am "loving the Gardens" he says ..."this is my office now."

Image by Clinton Friedman



▲ Natasha & Vishnu, with the golf cart (and some geese) that was a getaway vehicle to a new life.

## BUTTERFLIES AND BELIEFS AND THE STORY OF SINDISIWE

Sindisiwe Khanyi arrived at the Durban Botanic Gardens as a temporary worker in 2013 with a Diploma in Agriculture and Plant Production, some work experience as a typist, and on a midlands herb farm. In 2015 she was selected by the Gardens' Curator Martin Clement and Senior Horticulturist Janet Gates to work with butterfly specialist Dr Americo Bonkewitz in the Butterfly Habitat Garden. Under the guidance of Americo and his assistant, Kay Shabalala, Sindisiwe's openness to learning revealed to her a new world. Moving on from her agricultural background, she embraced the art of landscaping, while exploring the world of butterflies, the flowers on which they feed, and the host plants they require to complete their life cycles.

As it began to take shape, Sindisiwe also began to notice how "very engaging" the butterfly garden was to visitors, especially children, and how much she enjoyed their arrival, and their many questions, more and more of which she was able to answer. According to Sindisiwe, many visitors are surprised to discover that butterflies have names, and many express the desire to start their own butterfly gardens, or ask whether the Gardens runs courses they can attend.

Sindisiwe says that "for success there must be sweat", and took pride in the "labour and energy" of the planting up phase of the garden. But as her enjoyment of the garden's outreach and extension components grew, she began to feel that she had "been given a new direction"; and she is now considering studying horticulture, and wishes to work in natural areas.

*"I like to teach" says Sindisiwe, "and the butterfly garden has given me an insight into my own talents. Plants are like people; when you plant them with love and joy they respond."*

Looking towards the dome at its centre, butterflies fill the air over the garden Sindisiwe has spoken of with such feeling. *"I have loved it" she says of the butterfly garden project – "it has broadened everything for me."*



Image by Clinton Friedman

◀ Sindisiwe Khanyi found a change in perspective in the Butterfly Habitat Garden.

## umPHAFa TREE CAMPAIGN

The \*umPhafa Tree Campaign is the Gardens' latest legacy project. The project aims to elaborate on the Gardens growing status as an outdoor music venue by asking bands that have played in the Gardens to plant trees in a newly-developed area – named umPhafa - that requires greening. The project will enable musicians to add their own voices to our celebration of the importance of trees and urban forests, and to promote the ideals of urban conservation. In the past, various bands who have played in the Gardens have spoken movingly about the specialness of performing outdoors in a natural area, about how much this has added to their music, and about how important green spaces are to the City. These comments point to the potential richness of a designated area in which the arts community can continue this conversation between the art that they bring to the Gardens and the natural environment in which it finds expression.

The umPhafa site available for greening thematically links the indigenous butterfly garden, permaculture centre and forest margin edge into a new Biodiversity & Human Wellbeing space. South Africa's famous house band Mi Casa were first to add their voice to

the project by planting a specimen of *Baphia racemosa*, the Natal Camwood or isiFithi. It is hoped that many more bands will add their own trees to umPhafa, along with their music, their words, and the inspiration they bring.

*\*The umPhafa tree or Buffalo Thorn, refers to the notorious thorns, one pointing forward and one pointing backwards. In Zulu custom this is believed to remind us of where we are going and where we have been. In the Afrikaans language it is known as the wag-'n-bietjie tree.*



Image by Matthew Clement

▲ Members of Mi Casa planting an isiFithi or Natal camwood tree (*Baphia racemosa*) at umPhafa.

## THE DURBAN BOTANIC GARDENS BEE CONSERVATION AND RELOCATION PROGRAMME

As part of its Bee Conservation and Relocation Programme, the Durban Botanic Gardens is installing bee catch boxes in an attempt to manage the wild swarms that nest in the Gardens' trees. With the support of the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust and McGladdery's Beekeeping Shop, the project started in April 2015, with ten boxes having been installed to date. The occupation of hollow trees in the Gardens by bees is regarded positively; as pollinators, their presence is good for the Gardens, providing a valuable, and free ecological service, while serving to conserve bees themselves as part of urban biodiversity. Global concern over declining bee and other pollinator species (e.g. birds, beetles & butterflies) is growing, and with 75% of the world's food crops dependent on pollination, the loss of these pollinators could threaten both global food supply and wild flowering plants. Thus, the presence of bees in Botanic Gardens helps to raise awareness of their role in nature, and this awareness is now urgently needed.

The installation of catch boxes encourages wild swarms to occupy them in preference to trees, helping Garden staff to attract swarms to locations minimising their exposure to visitors. Additionally, the removal of problematic swarms by beekeepers may damage trees, which sometimes need to be cut so that the hives can be reached. Given the value of the Gardens' trees, and its many centenarian specimens, there is an imperative to avoid such damage, which renders irreplaceable trees susceptible to disease. The removal of catch boxes, when necessary, is easily accomplished, and the bees are donated to beekeepers associated with the Durban Beekeepers Club.

The catch box project is now an aspect of the Gardens' recognition of the importance of bees, and its desire to help conserve them, and to raise awareness of their importance to urban biodiversity and pollination.

## BEFORE PHOTOSHOP

The chance discovery of an as-yet-unseen aerial photograph of the Durban Botanic Gardens by DBG trustee Professor Donal McCracken casts an interesting light on the development of the Gardens. The photo, which is dated December 1931/January 1932, was taken by the Aircraft Operating Company of Africa (Pty) Ltd., which was based, at that time, in Johannesburg.

For those with an interest in the Gardens' history, the photo is both interesting, and revealing in a number of respects.

Firstly, the photo shows why Edith Benson Avenue (1) takes its bow-like shape; Cowey and Botanic Gardens Roads could not have been joined by a straight line because the Herbarium and Curator's house, palm walk and conservatory complex were already established. While the portion of the Gardens above Edith Benson (2) had not been cleared of bush, cleared sections had been set aside for a reservoir and the Durban observatory. The large size of the fernery, which can be seen next to the old Jubilee Conservatory (3) is notable; and it is sad that no photographs exist to show its interior. The Sunken Garden exists (4) – contradicting a number of accounts dating the year of its construction as 1934. The bottom of the Gardens' property (5) was a dumping site, from which old bottles and broken china can be retrieved to this day. The specimens of *Encephalartos woodii* (6) discovered by John Medley

Wood in 1895 and brought to the Gardens by James Wylie in 1907 can be clearly seen on the level stands below the Conservatory. The large canal (7) just beyond the lower section of the Gardens was part of a project to drain the large vlei which is now the Durban Race Course.



Image by Aircraft Operating Company of Africa

## A LETTER FROM COUNTY WICKLOW

In February this year, the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust received a letter of thanks confirming the Gardens' status as a place of interest and value to informed botanists the world over.

*Hi there Kerry,*

*I thought I'd send you a message to say THANK YOU for your amazingly warm welcome to myself and my group during our recent visit to Durban Botanic Gardens. We were all bowled over by such amazing hospitality and left the Gardens on a high. The Gardens were absolutely wonderful and it was also great to hear of the good work the Trust carry out.*

*Thanks again Kerry, Durban was one of the major highlights of our South African adventure.*

*Very best wishes.*

*Seamus.*

The letter in question came from Seamus O'Brien, Manager of the National Botanic Garden at Kilmacurragh, Co. Wicklow, a satellite of the Glasnevin Botanic Garden in Ireland. Seamus had

visited the Gardens in January as leader of a group of Irish botanists. The group were hosted by the Trust during their visit. The purpose of their trip had been to botanise in the Cape and in the Drakensberg, and to visit the Durban Botanic Gardens, Kirstenbosch and Table Mountain. Highlights for the group included seeing *Kniphofia caulescens* at Sani Pass and *Harveya speciosa* in the Tugela Gorge, named after one of Ireland's most famous botanists, William Henry Harvey, who was once based at the Cape. The Group were also particularly interested in the Irish botanist, William Keit, who came from the then Royal Botanic Gardens in Glasnevin to serve as curator of the DBG from 1873 to 1882. The group were eager to see where Keit was based and to hear first hand from DBG Garden staff about his life and work in Natal.

Obviously, the group had also savoured the chance to see the DBG's internationally famed *Encephalartos woodii*. In the words of Seamus, "It really was magnificent. Lasting impressions were the exuberance of the Gardens and the wonderful, warm welcome we received."



▲ From left to right are: Dermot Moore, owner of Prospect House, Co. Kildare, which is surrounded by an historic garden. Lesley Fennell, well-known Irish artist who has a famous garden around her home at Burtown House, Co. Kildare. Kristin Jameson, head of the Irish distilling family, owner of Tourin Gardens near Cappoquin, Co. Waterford. Debbie Bailey, who is a horticultural therapist and former student at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin in Dublin. Seamus O'Brien, author and botanical explorer, manages the National Botanic Gardens, Kilmacurragh in Co. Wicklow. Gail Gilliland owns an historic (private) garden in Killiney, Co. Dublin. Terry Smith, owner of Smith's Garden, Co. Carlow, a contemporary garden open to the public during the summer months. Neil Porteous, Head Gardener at Mount Stewart & Head of Gardens for the National Trust in Northern Ireland. Robert Wilson-Wright from the Coolcarrigan Estate near Naas, Co. Kildare.

## ABOUT US

The Durban Botanic Gardens Trust was established in 1993 as an Independent Discretionary Trust registered by the Master of the Supreme Court to ensure the stewardship and on-going development of the Durban Botanic Gardens – Africa's oldest surviving Botanic Garden.

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## HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT US?

### MAKE A DONATION TO THE DURBAN BOTANIC GARDENS TRUST

By donating to the Trust you are investing in the future work of the Trust in areas of plant conservation, education, heritage, research and horticultural excellence. You can choose to make a monthly, annual or once off donation.

### SPONSOR A PROJECT

The Durban Botanic Gardens has many projects in need of your support. By choosing a project close to your heart you will be able to help the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust provide essential support to key projects in the areas of biodiversity, education, horticulture and heritage.

### CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

Is your organisation focused on building communities and a greener future?  
We are! Would you like to become involved?

The Durban Botanic Gardens Trust is looking to develop corporate partnerships where we can work together to build a greener future.

### SUPPORT OUR MEMORIAL BENCH PROGRAMME

Do you want to have your own special place within the Gardens to remember a loved one? By supporting the Durban Botanic Gardens memorial bench programme you can.

To find out more, please contact Leigh Edy-Roderick \_ [Leigh.Edy@durban.gov.za](mailto:Leigh.Edy@durban.gov.za) \_ 031 322 4014.

### LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY

If you have a passion for the Durban Botanic Gardens we encourage you to help secure its future by leaving a bequest to the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust in your will. What better way to support Africa's oldest surviving Botanic Garden.

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**Contact:** Kerry Phillips \_ 031 309 9240 \_ [marketing@dbgt.org.za](mailto:marketing@dbgt.org.za)

**PayFast internet donation:** [durbanbotanicgardenstrust.payfast.co.za](http://durbanbotanicgardenstrust.payfast.co.za)

**Donate by EFT/Debit order:** Nedbank, Musgrave Branch [code 130126]

A/c number: 1301261246

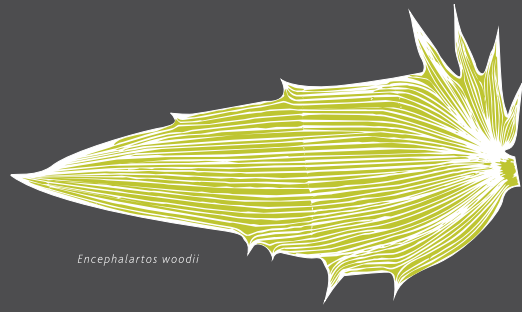
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*Encephalartos woodii*

Durban  
Botanic  
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