

Spring Issue 10

August 2021

GARDENS

B O T S W A N A

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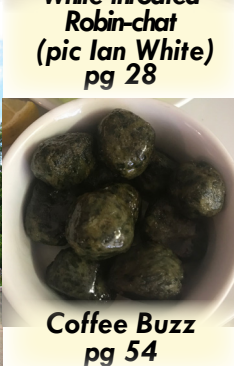


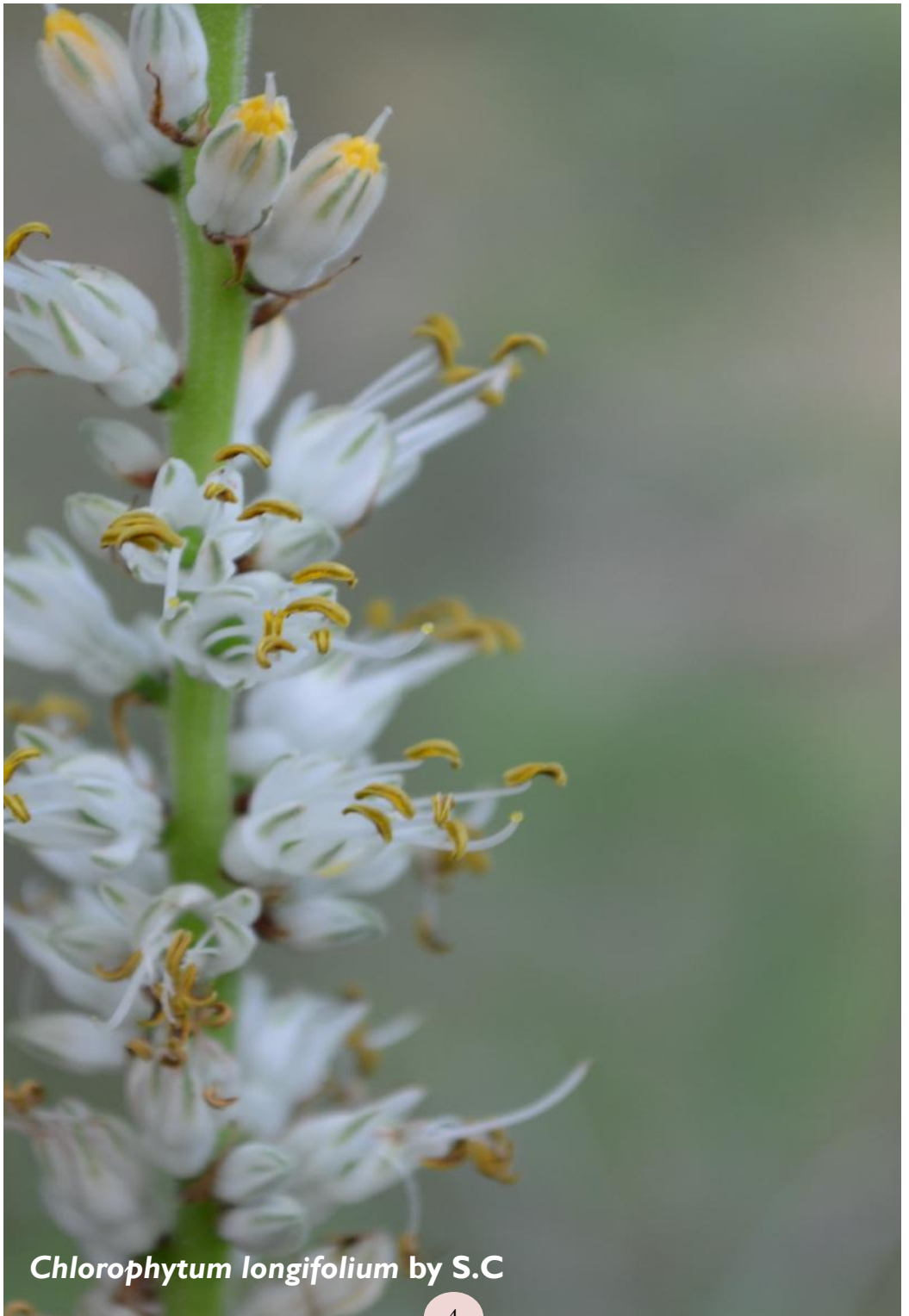
Cover: *Ferraria glutinosa* by S.C

Above: *Chlorophytum recurvifolium* in flower by S.C

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Chlorophytum longifolium by S.C

Editorial

With Winter not yet done it's hard to think that Spring is already here, especially when it's still so cold. If you look around however, you'll see that plants aren't easily confused. Erythrina trees have started flowering, Narcissus bulbs too, and in nurseries and supermarkets a flood of Spring flowers are appearing on the shelves.

It makes for such a contrast having the dry tawny coloured landscape as the backdrop to our gardens that are filled with such brightly coloured flowering bulbs. I'm sure many gardens have suffered from frost this season, so prune back the dead branches and quickly fill your beds with all the brightness you can find. This August issue is all about the bulbs, rhizomes and tubers that turn our gardens into a festival of colour. Happy Gardening! S.C

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The views of the authors do not necessarily reflect those of the publishers.

What's on

markets & pop ups

Saturday 7th August –Farmer's Market at the Rugby Club, 11am-4pm

Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th

August – Farming Workshop at Kingfisher Farm, Notwane

Saturday 21st August – Masterclass on Organic Farming, at Greenhouse Technologies, Glen Valley, 8.30am to 3pm

Saturday 28th August –Masterclass on Organic Farming at Greenhouse Technologies, Glen Valley, 8.30am to 3pm

Saturday 4th September –Farmer's Market at the Rugby Club, 10am-3pm

Saturday 18th September –Spring Market at the Botanical Gardens, 10am to 3pm (to be confirmed)

Saturday 25th September - Plant Market, Phakalane 10am-3pm (see next pg advert for details)

Saturday 25th September - Spring Open Farm Event in Notwane, 10am to 4pm

Land Events: contact Nancy (pg 52)

Francistown, Palapye & Mau

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petra@tulia-blueclay.com

Plant market

p50 entry

24th September
10am - 3pm

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phakalane

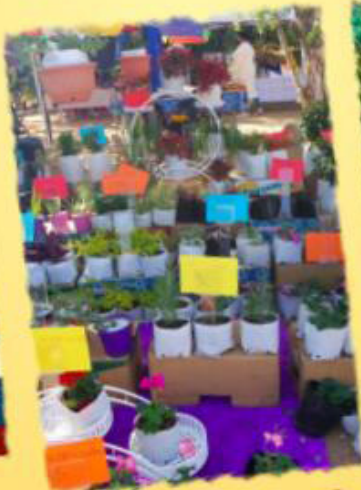
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Agapanthus and Dietes are both reliable outstanding performers in the garden, and indigenous to South Africa. Agapanthus are perennial bulbs, and Dietes are rhizomes. Both are incredibly low maintenance, and do really well here in Botswana.

Agapanthus are flashy flowers, in beautiful shades of purple and blue, and even white, with green straplike leaves. Dietes have architectural sword-like leaves that form clumps, and when in flower are incredibly attractive, South Africa's version of an iris.

Water weekly in the spring and summer, keeping the soil lightly moist and allow the soil to dry out in the winter. Amend soil with compost or composted manure to avoid water-logging your plants. Full sun and well-drained soil are key for these flowers to bloom well, although both will tolerate light shade. *S.C (pics Pixabay)*

Dietes grandiflora; Dietes bicolor



Agapanthus species



growing ~ *Strawberries*

Fragaria × *ananassa* is the most commonly grown hybrid of strawberry (*Fragaria*). There are over a hundred species of strawberries and according to Kew's Plants of the World Online, none are native to Africa.



WHY - For the fruit, which is widely appreciated for its aroma, sweetness, and delicious taste. It can be eaten fresh, or made into jams, or preserves, as well as dried.

HOW TO PLANT - Plants are susceptible to pests and disease, so it is easiest to grow strawberries in pots, or raised mounds mulched with straw around the base of the plants. Plugs planted in plastic covered mounds helps reduce competition from weeds. They like fertile, free-draining soil and to be watered well. They also like good light but can suffer if not watered sufficiently.

BENEFITS - Raw strawberries are 91% water, 8% carbohydrates, 1% protein, and contain negligible fat. They are also a good source of manganese and provides several other vitamins and dietary minerals in small amounts. They are very attractive in hanging baskets or in the garden, and the red fruit are a favourite so make sure to harvest quickly before the birds or bugs get to them. The aroma and dainty flowers are also lovely.

PROPAGATE - The easiest way of propagating strawberries is from runners (stolons).

WHERE - Strawberry plants can be bought from many nurseries around the country, and a wild variety is usually available at Sanitas. *S.C (pics Pixabay)*



Julia's veggies ~ Onions

Just when we think that we are having a mild winter a cold-front hits! It seems that winter starts from the 21st June rather than it being the solstice! But the good news is that any pests who were tempted out (I have seen aphids enjoying my broccoli!) must have surely been knocked back, which means a great start to the spring vegetable season. I have already planted the seeds for some of my summer seedlings in seedtrays in the greenhouse so that I am ready to plant them out when all signs of frost are over. Onions can actually be planted all year round but they will get off to a good start if planted out in late winter/spring.

by Julia Farmer

Pics of Leek, Red onion, Garlic Chives. **(Julia Farmer)**



How to grow: You can grow onions from seed planted in situ or as seedlings. They tolerate being transplanted well so if too many of them germinate just move them once large enough to handle. Onions prefer a rich, well-drained soil and full sun. When the days are long enough to expose onion plants to enough light, they will start to produce a bulb. Don't plant onions too deep otherwise it will restrict bulb formation. Water well during growing period but it is best to reduce watering during the end of bulbing as this encourages them to dry off.

When to grow & How to harvest: All year round. They have a long growing season. Best planting times are either early autumn or early spring (after all sign of frost has gone) so that they get established before extreme weather sets in which can cause them to bolt and set seed instead of forming a bulb. The green part of the plant will start to bend over when an onion has reached full size. Move the foliage to one side to allow maximum sunlight to penetrate, which will aid the maturing process. At this stage lift each onion slightly with a fork to make it easier to harvest when the onion is fully mature. Once harvested dry onions on a rack in the shade.

How & Why to eat: Onions are such a healthy and tasty vegetable – no wonder they are part of our daily diet. They are rich in vitamins, especially vitamin C, and minerals like calcium, magnesium, phosphorous, potassium, folic acid, beta carotene, sulphur and the rare quercetin. Raw onions are rich in natural antibiotic substances, so they boost the immune system, cleanse the blood, flush the kidneys and fight infections. They reduce spasms and tension in asthma and thus are a natural antispasmodic. Onions may also remove parasites from the body, clear cholesterol, strengthen gut health, reduce inflammation and enhance digestion. I don't think you need me to tell you the many ways onions can be incorporated into the diet! Raw onions can be eaten in all kinds of salads and sandwiches, while spring

Healthy Growing. Healthy Eating

Vegetable of the Season – Onions: According to Margaret Roberts, “The onion family is huge, easy to grow, and a staple food all over the world. It is so rich in diversity and in variety, it has to be one of the most fascinating crops to grow!” The onion or allium family, includes brown onions, red onions, scallions, shallots, spring onions, leeks, garlic, wild garlic, garlic chives and chives. They are classified as bulb vegetables and are very useful as companion plants to deter pests and can even be used in natural pesticides.

Companion plants: Carrots, beetroot, lettuces, cabbages, fruit trees, roses, spinach, kale, tomatoes and strawberries. Pics of Onions, Onion seed and an Onion flower (Pics Pixabay)



onions can be consumed on their own or with a dip. Onions and garlic can be added to almost any cooked dish including soups, stews, stir fries, curries, etc. . . Leeks are normally only eaten cooked. Raw onions, especially the chopped leaves and chives, can also be used as a garnish and fried onion rings are a popular topping too.

Organic Gardening Tips

- Do not plant any member of the allium family near beans and peas as it will stunt their growth.
- Only thin out onions when the soil is moist to avoid damaging the seedlings.
- Mulch with compost to help retain moisture around onions during the growing period.
- Keep the growing area free of weeds for a good yield.
- Watch out for aphids when the weather starts to warm up.

Winter Workshops & Events

Saturday 7th August -Farmer's Market at the Rugby Club, 11am to 4pm/ Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th August - Introduction to Organic Gardening/Farming Workshop at Kingfisher Farm, Notwane
Saturday 21st August - Masterclass on Organic Farming: Part One at Greenhouse Technologies, Glen Valley, 8.30am to 3pm/ Saturday 28th August -Masterclass on Organic Farming: Part Two at Greenhouse Technologies, Glen Valley, 8.30am to 3pm/ Saturday 4th September -Farmer's Market at the Rugby Club, 10am to 3pm/ Saturday 18th September -Spring Market at the Botanical Gardens, 10am to 3pm (to be confirmed)/Saturday 25th September - Spring Open Farm Event in Notwane, 10am to 4pm

Email: jellyfishfarmer@yahoo.com for more details or to receive our weekly newsletter.
Also visit my Facebook Pages for more information - Kingfisher Farm, Farmer's Natural Produce, Farmer's Markets, Grow and Cook with Julia.

herb guru



Edible - Jerusalem artichoke (*Helianthus tuberosus*), is as its name suggests a tuber, but neither from Jerusalem nor an artichoke. From the same family as the sunflower, it has lovely aromatic flowers, edible tubers that are usually smaller than a potato, but delicious, with a nutty 'oyster' like flavour and can be harvested throughout winter and early spring.

S.C text & pics



Medicinal - *Chelidonium majus*, Greater Celandine is a herbaceous perennial that grows from a rhizome. The plant is used to treat different ailments such as ringworm and gall bladder inflammation. Harvesting the plant for medicinal use is done when it is flowering. It grows well in moist conditions with good drainage.



Edible - *Allium cepa var. aggregatum*, shallots, scallions or spring onions is a clumping onion that is used in cuisines around the world. The leaves can be cooked and eaten like a vegetable, along with the bulbs, and harvesting can be done year round. They are a lovely feature to have in the herb garden for their attractive flower heads, as well as being a useful companion plant. Scallions have a milder taste than most onions, but they lack a fully developed bulb.



Flavouring - *Curcuma longa*, or turmeric, is a perennial plant in the ginger family, native to the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. Plants are grown for their rhizomes which are used fresh or boiled in water and dried, after which they are ground into a deep orange-yellow powder commonly used as a colouring and flavouring agent in many Asian cuisines. Turmeric has a distinct flavour often found in curries.

When taking herbs, one should always consult one's health practitioner for the safe and appropriate use of that herb.

forager's tips

edible plants - *Nymphaea* spp.



Nymphaea nouchali var. *caerulea* & *N. lotus*; Tswii, Water lily

These two *Nymphaea* species are commonly found in northern Botswana. The flowers, seeds, and rhizomes are edible raw or cooked, but are usually harvested for their seeds. After the flower is pollinated, it retracts underwater, and closes. It then develops into a hard, green globular fruit which contain the seeds. The rhizomes and seeds are commonly dried and ground into a flour.

In Bangladesh the seeds are fried in ghee or oil until they pop and are consumed as a snack like amaranth or quinoa.

medicinal plants - *Gloriosa superba*



Gloriosa superba, flame lily, is a perennial herb growing from a fleshy rhizome. The plant has long been used as a traditional medicine in many cultures, for a long list of ailments including gout and cancer. It is grown commercially as a source of colchicine which is used to prevent gout attacks (sudden, severe pain in one or more joints caused by abnormally high levels of a substance called uric acid in the blood) in adults, and for treating inflammation and pain. It is also extremely poisonous and only low doses are used in medicinal applications. This species is also the national flower of Zimbabwe.

poisonous plants - *Boophone disticha*



Boophone disticha, tumbleweed, is an attractive, deciduous bulbous plant readily identified by its fan-like appearance and dried tumbleweed that breaks off after flowering dispersing its seed wherever the wind blows it. The etymology of the genus is from the Greek bou = ox, and phontes = killer of, a clear warning that eating the plant can be fatal to livestock. It has been commonly used as an arrow poison, and reported concoctions of the bulb taken orally cause sedation, analgesia, visual hallucinations, irrational behaviour, coma or death.

invasive plants - *Alternanthera* species



Alternanthera caracasana & *Alternanthera pungens*

A. caracasana and *A. pungens* are a species of flowering plant in the family Amaranthaceae known by the common names khaki weed and khaki burr or paper thorn. They are native to Central and South America but are well-known elsewhere as noxious weeds.

A. caracasana grows from a rhizome and often roots from its lower nodes, and *A. pungens* from a taproot. These are tough weeds common in lawns and disturbed roadside areas in sandy or rocky soil, and are drought tolerant and invasive.





Spring Gardens

The Spring Garden~ Bulbs & Daisies

From Europe's dazzling cultivated Spring Gardens to South Africa's natural and equally resplendent show of daisies in Namaqualand, we have enough inspiration to create our own Spring Garden splash. Recently new plants have been emerging for sale around Botswana that haven't commonly crossed our borders before.. like Hyacinths, Tulips, and Daffodils in amazing variety. Not that we should try to recreate these beautiful gardens of Keukenhof in the Netherlands... the plants for one, would just refuse to oblige you unless grown in an artificial environment. However we do have a huge variety of Southern African bulbs, rhizomes and corms that can achieve similar results such as: Gladiolus, Sparaxis,





Ixia, Watsonia, Crocosmia, Freesia, Bulbine, Clivia, Agapanthus, Amaryllis, Tulbaghia and dozens more. Add in a few of our own indigenous species like Boophone, Crinum, Ammocharis, Ornithogalum and Nerine. You can also use those exotic bulbs that do well here like Zephyranthes (rain flower) and Hymenocallis (Spider flower) or Cannas. However to add in that Namaqualand magic use Gazanias, Osteospermums, Euryops, Argyanthemums, Dimorphothecas, and then add in whatever appeals or whichever seedlings are available like Salvias, Pansies, and Petunias. Sprinkle in a variety of seeds like Snapdragons, Zinnias, Marigolds, Alyssum, Asters, and Lobelia, and you might be in for a sensational spring show in your garden. You can create rivers of flowers in your beds like those at Keukenhof, or dream up new designs on your own.

Text by S.C & Pics: Pixabay



sc gardens ~ *plant enthusiasts*



Drimias are common in seasonally dry regions and many of them flower in late spring or summer. *D. sanguinea* (left) produce a long spectacular inflorescence in spring and are a sight to behold in the Kalahari, where surrounding vegetation has died back, and these bulbs appear almost miraculously from the desert sands.

There are over 100 species of Drimia worldwide, and we have six species recorded in Botswana. They have been used since ancient times for various ailments such as dropsy, respiratory ailment, bone and joint complications, skin disorders, epilepsy and cancer, according to several journals. Toxic properties of some Drimia species have been traditionally used for rat control.

Two of the best-known species are the sea squill, *Drimia maritima*, and *Drimia intricata* (formerly *Schizobasis intricata* - right) which is sometimes cultivated as a bulbous plant.



Drimia species are usually deciduous, more rarely evergreen, growing from bulbs, and commonly found in central to southern Botswana. The bulbs may be underground or occur on or near the surface, and are easy to grow in sandy soil. Make sure to avoid watering throughout winter if growing in the garden.

Text and Pics by S.C

dry lovers ~ *Drimias*



Drimia altissima by S.C

GARDENS BOTSWANA ZOOM MEETING

Indigenous Bulbs

Saturday 4th September 2021, 2-3pm

P50 to join

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indigenous

You have to agree, these plants are unexpected and gorgeous.

There are many treasures hidden under our Kalahari soil, and corms are definitely one of them.

A corm is described as a short, vertical, swollen underground plant stem that serves as a storage organ that some plants use to survive winter or other adverse conditions such as summer drought and heat. Which explains how these surprisingly beautiful plants live and thrive here.

The colour of *Ornithoglossum viride's* (right) flowers are so purple-black that they should have been a star at Chelsea's Flower show ages ago, and *Ferraria glutinosa* (opposite page) is another show-stopper. Both are found in our sandier regions - Central and Kweneng districts. *Gladiolus* (below right) we expect to see in wetter regions, but this particular species grows in the rocky areas around the Kgatleng district, and the *Lapeirousia* (below left) is dainty but just as hardy, and also grows in our rockier regions. *Text and Pics by S.C*





Ferraria glutinosa by S.C

Mokolodi Nurseries ~ Bulbines

Bulbines are easy to grow, waterwise succulents that make a beautiful ground cover in the garden. A few species are actually indigenous to Botswana like *B. abyssinica*, *B. angustifolia*, *B. capitata*, *B. frutescens*, and *B. narcissifolia*.

Contrary to their name, Bulbines do not have a bulbous base, but form spreading clumps that are easy to propagate by splitting. Their leaves are grey or green and fleshy, and quite architectural too. Planted *en masse* they make quite a phenomenal display.

The petals are either yellow or sometimes orange, and are incredibly popular with bees. Not only is it an attractive garden plant but it is medicinal too: the fresh leaf produces a jelly-like juice, like *Aloe vera*, that is wonderful for burns, rashes, blisters, insect bites, cracked lips, and scrapes.

Plant it in full sun on well drained soil and prune it back when it gets scraggly. It is very drought tolerant, so makes an ideal addition to any rockery.

Text by S.C & Pic by Karin Duthie

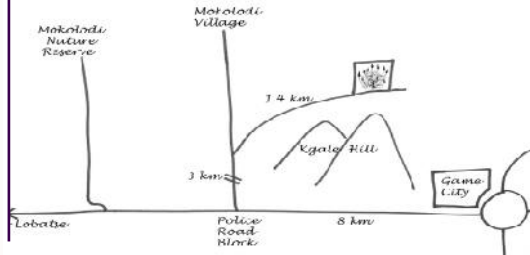


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ORGANIC FARMING

21 August 2021

P400

Part One

- **Introduction to the course**
- **The living soil**
- **Organic fertilizers/
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- **Compost making**
- **Worm farming**
- **Plant protection**

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Presented by Julia Farmer



ORGANIC FARMING

28 August 2021

P400

Part Two

- **The magic world of seeds**
- **How to plant seeds**
- **Caring for seedlings**
- **The importance of mulch**
- **Companion planting**
- **Crop rotation**
- **Pest and disease control**
- **Weed control**

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Presented by Julia Farmer

garden goings~on...



FLOWERING BETWEEN AUGUST - OCTOBER

- Daffodils
- Tulips
- Ixia
- Sparaxis
- Ornithogalum
- Irises
- Babiana
- Freesia
- Irises
- Chasmanthe
- Cyrtanthus
- Namaqualand daisies
- Hyacinth
- Tulbaghia

FRUITING BETWEEN AUGUST - OCTOBER

- Apricot
- Peach
- Strawberry
- Pineapple guava
- Loquat
- Pawpaw
- Mulberry

CHORES TO DO

- Turn compost - watch out for nests and beneficial insects
- Fertilize beds and lawns - best after rain/irrigate well
- Deadhead spent flowers
- Transplant seedlings
- Sow Summer veg and flowers
- Watch out for Bulb pests
- Store bulbs in a cool dry place once leaves have died back
- Harvest Spring veg and last of Winter rhizomes like Jerusalem artichoke
- Mulch Asparagus

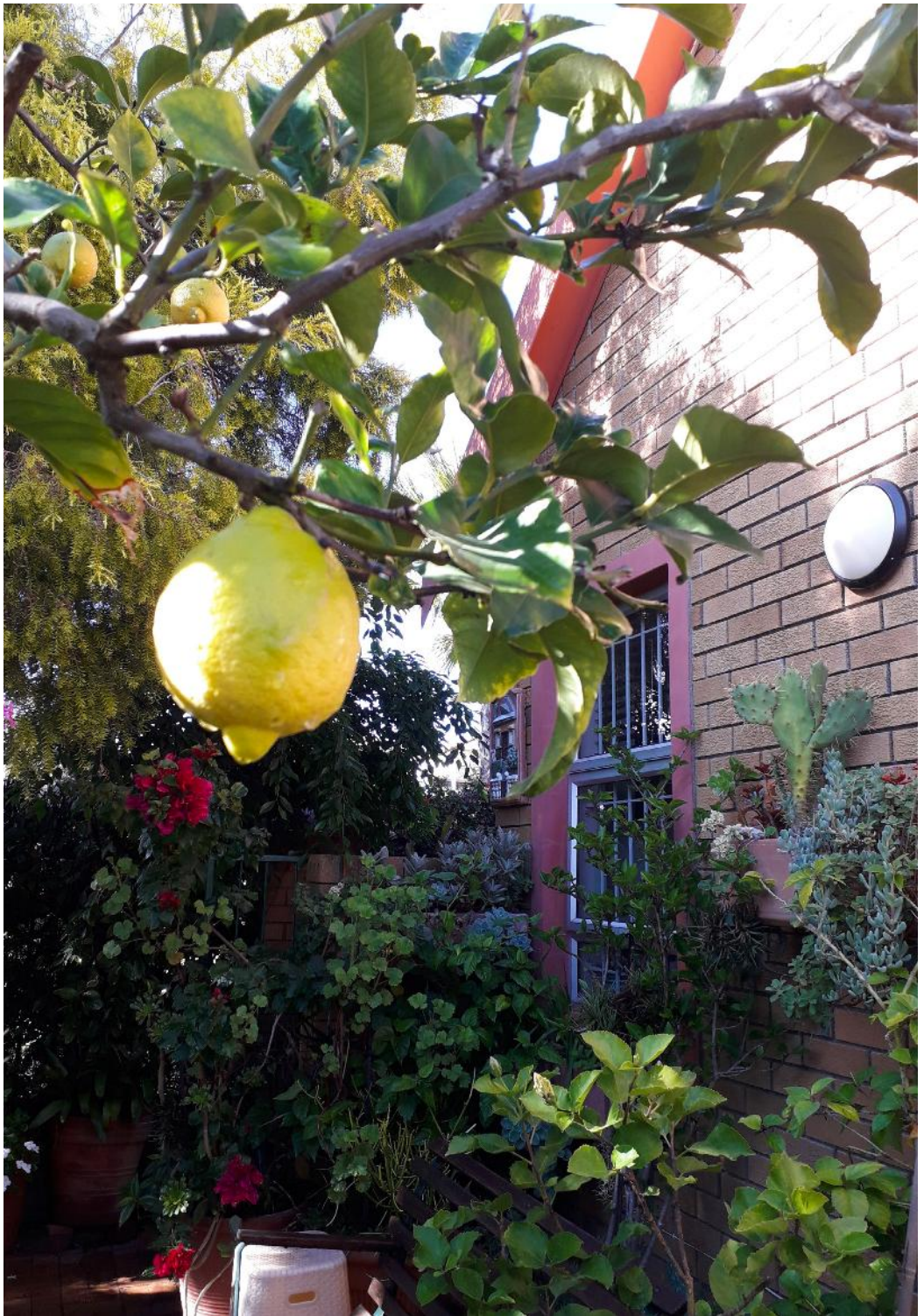
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Mimi's secret garden patch

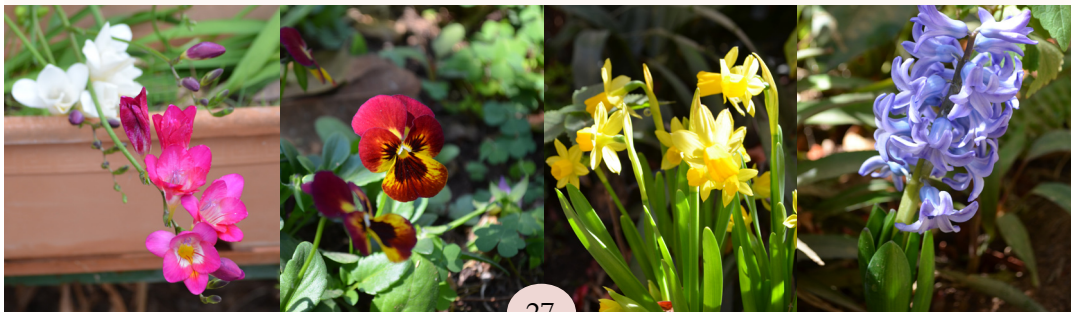
Early memories of the constant beautiful nature around us are those which never disappear with time. Whether it be the vibrant colours of plants or the whimsical little faces of pansies which look as if they have an expression all of their own, the atmospheric perfume conjuring up a specific memory, intensifying as we think back to a time or place, all these stay with us forever. Bulbs in themselves are part of that nostalgia, mysterious, nondescript rusty browns of various shapes and sizes that we hope will show little shoots and in time develop into brilliant bursts of colour.

I have often planted freesias which I personally think are the most rewarding. Their speciality also being that when they have flowered and finished, they disappear into Mother Earth and miraculously never fail to reappear the following year – their fragrance being often so strong that as you pass by in the garden, a whiff catches you almost by surprise. I've chosen to mostly plant freesias in window boxes. They do tend to droop over the edge of the box, but it is not worth attaching them to a stick support as it is part of their charm. It is best to hold back in planting out new bulbs until April or May (contrary to what we have been told). You cannot beat a cleverly 'colour' arranged container or chosen patch in your garden ... full of freesias – or other bulbs of your choice.

In the 18th Century a wide range of decorative containers came into fashion for the display of indoor spring plants. Even today, a beautiful bowl of whatever shape or form compliments a collection of bulbs. Josiah Wedgwood was among the first of the English manufacturers to produce innovative ceramics which would specifically appeal to the market for indoor flowers and plants. However, I hasten to say that when bulbs are strewn over an area beneath a tree – even if it has shed its leaves in the winter time, this is a sight to behold.

I always look back to my childhood memories, when we would go into the English 'woods' where the ground was magically covered in bluebells. In those days picnics were popular... choosing a suitable spot to one side of the drift of flowers, the picnics included the English love of 'tea-time' when it was a fun treat to hang a teapot from an old tripod and where a little fire was made from sticks around to boil the pot for a 'cuppa'... in amongst all the bluebells and whispering trees. What more can you ask for?

I would like to leave you all with the famous words of Wordsworth – which I think will be well known to everyone: "I gazed – and gazed – but little thought/What wealth the show to me had brought... I wandered lonely as a cloud/... When all at once I saw a crowd,/A host, of golden daffodils;/beneath the trees,/Fluttering and dancing in the breeze./...Tossing their heads in/sprightly dance./... A poet could not but be gay,/In such a jocund company"



gardening for birds

Nature is truly amazing in its variety and use of the full spectrum as to what is available for nesting sites. We are all familiar with birds which nest at the top of trees, in the middle, in forks, in tree trunks and on sand banks, but we are not so aware of those which use ground cover and grass clumps.

For instance, the beautiful little White-throated Robin-chat nests in an open cup at the base of shrubs or *Cryptopoda* aloes on the ground, and is wary of passing cats and other carnivora. Both scrub-robin species that occur here use deep cup nests placed in grass tufts at the base of a tree. The African Hoopoe uses a variety of sites, including holes in the ground and termite chambers. The Spotted Thick-knee uses a simple scrape in the ground, usually adjacent to debris and plants.

Those who have large gardens will know that game birds such as francolin, spur fowl and guineafowl all have simple scrapes on the ground, but well concealed under grass or in thickets.

There are many non-garden species which lay their eggs in scrapes on the ground or in leaf litter. Those that come to mind are nightjars, coursers, and plovers. So ideally set aside an area of thick shrubbery in your garden that won't be disturbed, and you may be visited by one of these delightful birds.

by Harold Hester & Photographs by Ian White
(For more information - www.birdlifebotswana.org.bw)



Nightjar

White-throated Robin-chat



Crowned Lapwing

our trees

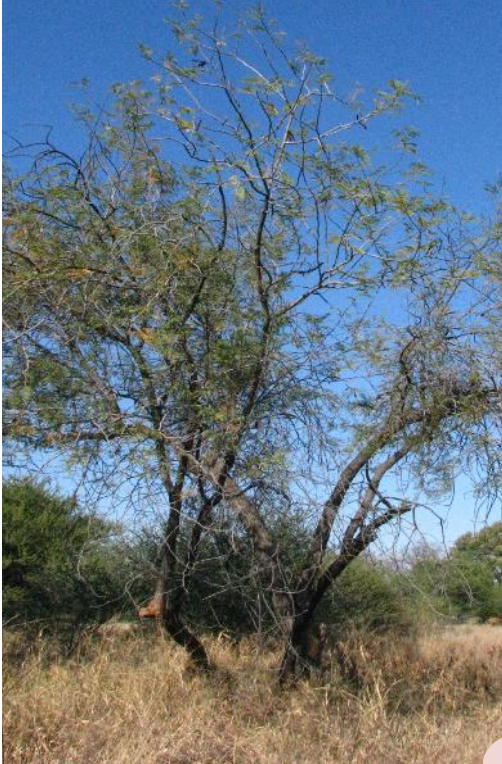
African weeping wattle, Mosetlha, *Peltophorum africanum*,

The Weeping Wattle is a semi-deciduous to deciduous flowering tree that can grow up to about 15 metres tall. It is indigenous to Botswana, and southern Africa. Their yellow flowers bloom on the ends of branches in upright, showy sprays, occasionally year round, but most commonly in November. During spring if the spittlebug *Ptyelus grossus* is residing in the tree, then water secreted by these bugs drips from the tree's branches.

This tree has many uses. Young leaves and pods are eaten by livestock. Flowers provide a high yield of nectar and pollen for bee-keeping. The timber can be used for furniture. The wood is good for fuel. It makes a good shade tree and there are also various medicinal uses recorded: roots are used to heal wounds, toothache and throat sores; roots, leaves and bark used to clear intestinal parasites and relieve stomach problems; bark relieves colic; stem and roots are used for diarrhoea and dysentery. It is also used to treat eye-related problems.

To propagate *Peltophorum africanum* place fresh seed in hot water and leave overnight. The trees are fast growing and drought resistant, but they are frost tender for the first three years. They grow best in well drained soil. The tree has a non-aggressive root system, so is usually suitable for planting near walls and paving, it is also very low maintenance.

Text & Pics: by S C (Ref: <http://pza.sanbi.org/>)





Peltophorum africanum - African Weeping Wattle



Creatures in the garden

Dogs and gardens are not a match made in heaven, but sometimes they can be managed without large craters appearing around and about, lawn problems, or wrecked plants.

Firstly if you have dogs you should already be aware of the damage they can wreak on your garden, the digging, going to the toilet and plant damage, plus they will chase other lovely creatures like birds from your garden. So in order for you to keep any kind of garden you need to establish a few ground rules... starting with obedience. If your dog understands a few important rules they're less likely to run rampant, and be consistent.


Make sure you don't have any toxic plants in your garden, or place the dangerous ones out of reach. When adding plants to your garden, choose hardy shrubs, prickly ground cover, anything that can withstand a little bit of trampling, and the larger the better to give the plant a bit of a head start. I've found that shrubs like yucca and duranta work; ground cover like sansevierias and red bromeliads can withstand trampling; aloes are prickly enough and they don't cause any damage to your dog unlike a cactus; large succulents like cotyledons and portulacaria are beautiful, easy to grow and tolerant of dogs, and I'm sure you'll find plenty of other plants that succeed well around dogs.

You'll probably need a fence to keep your dogs out of certain areas, and for smaller areas, a potted or container garden is a good option.

Unfortunately lawns are always going to suffer a little, just make sure to irrigate well as this will dilute the manure, lessening the lawn spots. There are products that you can buy, or scents that can be used to keep dogs clear of certain areas. Try some out and see what works for you - coffee grounds apparently make dogs stay away. Alternatively you can install fake lawn - this keeps the dust down too and prevents them from digging. But it is important that your dog enjoys its space too, so leave an area where it can dig, preferably under a nice shady tree.

Expect a few disasters. As with everything creating a dog-friendly garden is a journey and finding what works for you and your dog will take some time. So be patient, kind and resilient.

Text and pic by S.C

A photograph of a stone wall with a planter box containing vibrant orange and yellow flowers. A dog's paw is visible in the bottom right corner.

*Containers are a
great way to keep
dogs from knocking
your plants over*



Dog in the Garden

Agrichemist's solutions

bulb problems

General rules of thumb on avoiding bulb problems are to check bulbs before buying or planting; make sure they're firm and free of lesions, mold, and soft spots; plant in well-drained soil where disease hasn't been a problem; keep an eye on the temperature as higher temperatures can damage bulbs (refrigerate those that need cooler temperatures) and once planted, bulbs should have at least half a day of sun. Water after planting to jump-start root growth, and fertilize at planting and during spring growth period.

The most common pests of flowering bulbs in general are aphids, the larvae cycle of some insects, slugs and snails.

Aphids are typically more of a problem during cool weather in the spring. In addition, as they feed they excrete a sugary material called honeydew, which covers the leaves making them sticky. Sooty mold fungi can grow on the honeydew, producing unsightly, dark splotches on the plant surfaces. Make sure to encourage your beneficial insects to the garden to prevent this. Insecticidal soap can be used, but thorough coverage is required.



Slugs, snails and insect larvae: if you find hollowed out bulbs that feel soft or spongy, then you need to lift your bulbs, clean them and replant in pots with uncontaminated soil, out of snail and slug reach. Certain insects lay eggs on the leaves near the soil surface or on the crowns. When the eggs hatch, the maggots tunnel into the bulbs where they feed on the soft tissue. Once infested, bulbs often rot. Some survive, but generally produce small, weak leaf blades the following year. Overall, the best control strategy is to keep your bulbs healthy by maintaining a shallow mulch layer and lifting in the summer after the leaves have died down. When you divide your bulbs, discard any that show signs of infestation.

Text & Photos by S.C





HUB - *Backyard Veg & herb gardens*

It gives me great joy to be sharing my home garden with all of you. As I was growing up I was not much of a 'green fingers' girl. However, over the last few years, I have been studying how our food intake is becoming a major cause of disease (especially cancer). This led me to figure out a way to garden veggies in my own backyard. Since I have dogs, I needed a way to accomplish my veggie garden without taking away too much space from my fur buddies. We had many tyres at our offices and some old punctured tanks so I got my team to deliver them home. Next the process of cultivating soil in them started and voila; I managed to create an ORGANIC veggie garden right in my humble abode.

We use NO, ABSOLUTELY NO pesticides, just clean water.

The veggies have a distinct fresh flavour and, mind you, they last way longer in the fridge. We have been tricked into thinking pesticides and chemicals will yield more crops and help keep veggies fresher- this is not so! Not using pesticides and other chemicals doesn't mean I don't get fungus or disease on my veggies, I DO, it's natural. But, we use a simple trick to get rid of this naturally occurring issue. We use **turmeric** to spray or dust on top of the disease. After a few days, you'll astonishingly find that the disease has disappeared!





We also make use of as much kitchen refuse (veggie skins, egg shells, etc.) as we can in order to maintain an eco-friendly environment and not waste this organic material. Finally, I can officially say I am a ‘green finger’ girl. My days start with communicating, connecting, and nurturing my crops, and end the same. We grow spinach, lettuce, tomato, carrots, radish, basil, aloe, holy basil, beetroots, eggplants, okra, lemongrass, cabbage, coriander, fenugreek greens, chilies, peppers, curry leaves and sweet gourd. These very crops are now growing and flourishing.

We are blessed to have good fertile soils, we just need to work passionately towards building and using these soils wisely. I hope you can be inspired to start your own organic gardens and teach our future generations to do the same. Rather than investing in a huge screen, iPad, or other materialistic matter for your children - invest in teaching them to farm, garden, and love Mama Earth. To grow into a healthier, happier and brighter future - let's go back to our roots :)

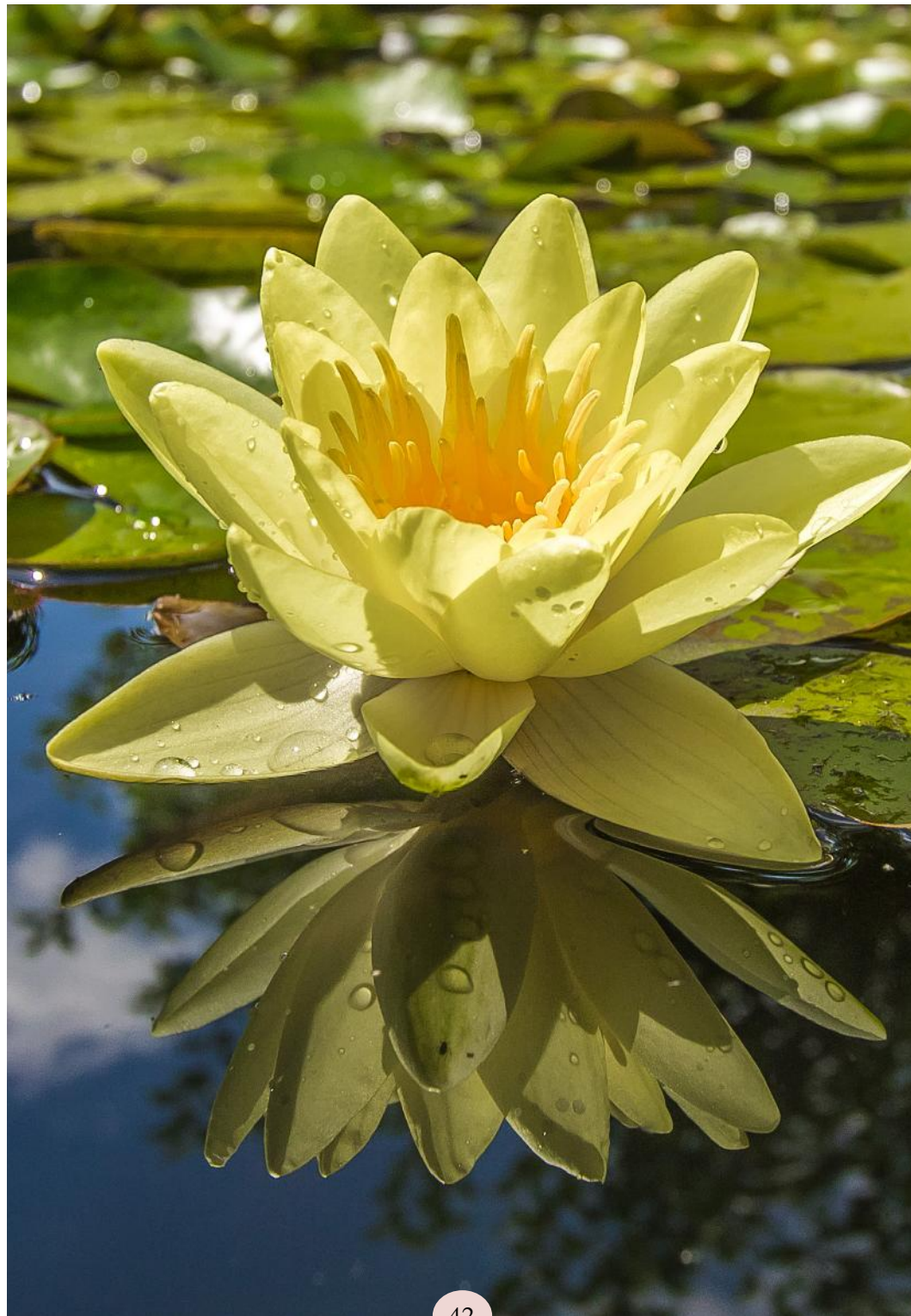
The Haddad Family



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Water lilies are a gorgeous addition to your ponds, and are incredibly easy to grow in Botswana, as we even have a few indigenous species of our own found in the Okavango region. Water lilies (*Nymphaea* species) are rhizomes that are really very easy to propagate.

Before the flowering season in spring or early summer, lift the water lilies out of the water, using a large knife carefully cut through the rhizomes. Plant each section into the centre of a basket or pot buried in some gravel and soil with the crown of the plant at soil level. Anchor the cutting with a rock or chicken wire to prevent the plant from floating out of the soil. Avoid using potting soils that contain light materials or soils rich in manure, which will pollute your pond and cause 'eutrophication' and algal blooms.

Water lilies don't do well in moving water, so avoid planting near a fountain or waterfall area of your pond. You will find they become a bit invasive in fish ponds due to the large amounts of nutrients available from fish waste, so lift, propagate and give to friends.

Text by S.C Pics by Pixabay



Palapye plant feature

~ by Lynn Freeman



Zantedeschia aethiopica is commonly called an Arum lily in our region, and elsewhere it is known as a Calla lily. It grows from a bulb and is native to Southern Africa.

The Arum lily is a stemless plant that tends to clump together forming clusters of tall white flowers surrounded by a base of lush speckled green leaves.

It does well in pots placed in either boggy regions of the garden, or in shallow ponds. That way if there is a frost warning, you can easily bring them indoors. If planted directly into the garden, make sure you water them well.

It's natural environment is alongside rivers, where the soil is rich in decaying organic matter, so try to mimic these conditions and you'll have spectacular clumps of flowering Arums in Spring.



Zantedeschia aethiopica by P. L. Freeman

around Africa ~ *Kirstenbosch*



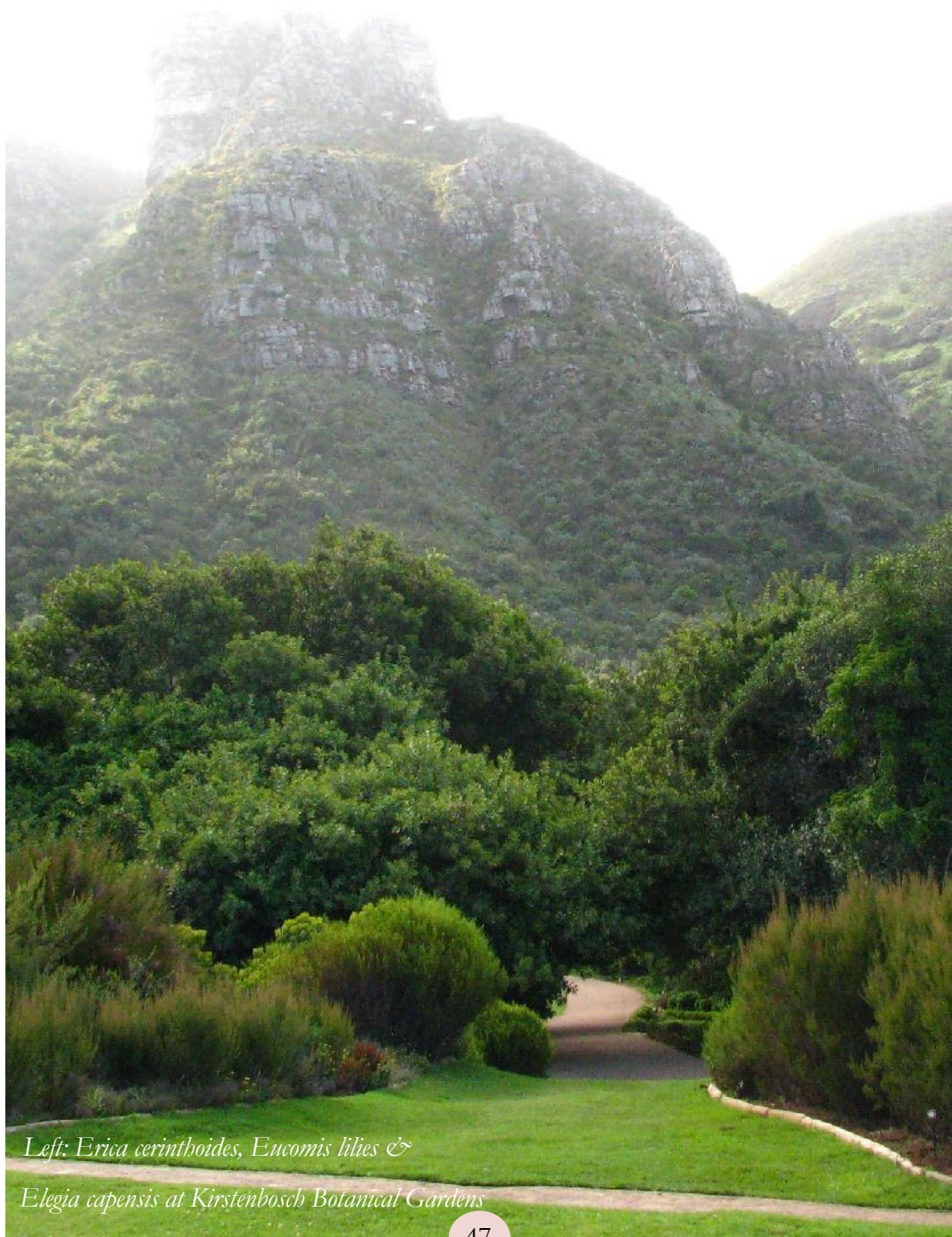
Cape Flora is legendary, and so is the backdrop to this Botanical garden - Table Mountain.

Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens is such an incredible sight, with its beautiful manicured lawns and gardens filled with fynbos gems and Mambo sculptures. Started with funds from Cecil John Rhodes' estate, back in 1913, it has grown to become one of the most impressive botanical gardens in the world, especially due to its lovely position at the base of Table Mountain.

It covers 528 hectares of gardens and walking trails, and has a large conservatory exhibiting plants from a number of different regions and an herbarium with over 250 000 dried specimens. Many plants now extinct in the wild in South Africa like *Erica verticillata*, can be found in the gardens. The Heather, Restio, Aloe and Protea collections are spectacular, and when you wander around so are the huge trees that frame the lawns.

Kirstenbosch has won 29 gold medals at the Chelsea Flower Show in 33 appearances. In 2015, the International Garden Tourism Awards Body declared Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens the International Garden of the Year. It really is something special, and given that we fly direct from Botswana to Cape Town, it's an easy worthwhile visit. *Text & Pics by S.C*



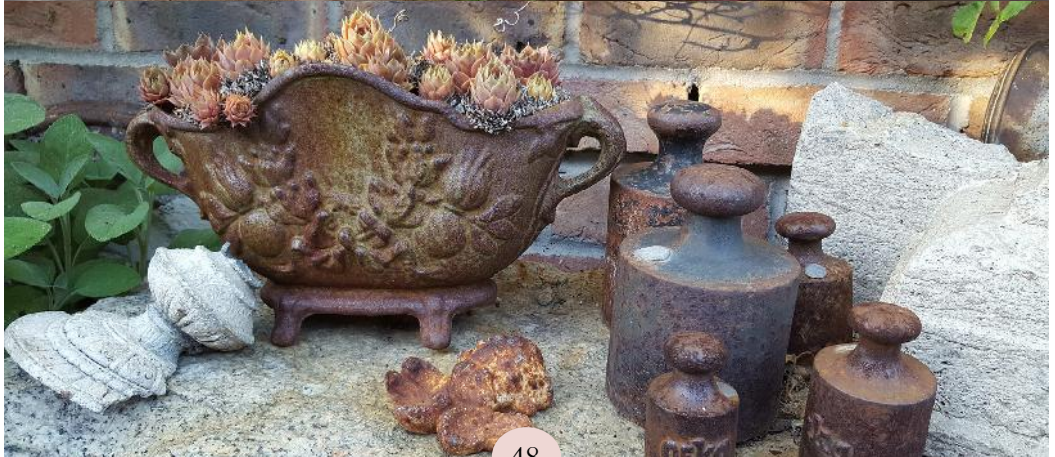


Left: *Erica cerinthoides*, *Eucomis lilies* &

Elegia capensis at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens

Art in the garden ~ *Unusual Planters*

We live in a consumerist world, and are throwing away ‘trash’ on a daily basis - washing machines, tyres, old cars - they all usually end up at your nearest dumpsite. An archaeologist’s find for the future, but for now - rather unsustainable. I have an old Toyota Stallion that I’ve repurposed into a planter - and this inspired me to look for other unusual planters. Not for the average garden, but definitely fun for an eclectic gardener...





Fun stuff~ *plant sculptures*

Like unusual planters, plant sculptures can be a fascinating feature in the garden. Old Wellington boots with ferns peeping out, vintage bathtubs filled with bulbs and succulents. You can make most things look good when they're covered in plants.

Have a try using a traditional Tswana basket (line with plastic), mokoro (if you have one), old boots, or rusty mugs, enamel bowls, and then fill with a mixture of bulbs and succulents.

text by S.C (pics by Pixabay)





Nancy's nook - turmeric



Turmeric, *Curcuma longa*, is an appealing bright golden colour, reminiscent of an after thunderstorm sunset where the glow transforms the trees into luminescent beauty. That powerful range of colour from bright yellow to deep orange is what gives turmeric its healing properties. This medicinal spice has been used for more than 6000 years in Ayurvedic medicine, and is timelessly interwoven with the origins of human culture.

This perennial, rhizomatous, plant is native to the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. Turmeric is one of the most thoroughly researched plants in existence today. Research has revealed over 800 potential preventive and therapeutic applications, as well as 250 distinct beneficial physiological effects. Growing this plant is relatively easy as long as you give it enough water and keep it away from the sharp Botswana sun. A happy turmeric plant will bless you with a cluster of flowers arranged on a stem that lasts quite a few weeks.

Partake of the power of turmeric by savouring a hot drink made with the golden powder and enjoy the taste and health together in one mug. You can also get the external benefits of turmeric by gifting your face with a golden mask that promotes glowing skin by, among other benefits, providing skin-boosting antioxidants. Use it once or twice a week, but remember that it stains the skin, so make sure you cleanse enough afterwards, or just let it naturally dissipate after a few hours. Also some people can be sensitive, so test your skin before applying the full mask.

Golden 'Milk' Turmeric drink

Ingredients:

2 cups unsweetened almond milk, other nut milk or canned coconut milk; ½ tablespoon turmeric powder
1 tablespoon coconut oil; ½ teaspoon powdered ashwagandha (optional); ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
⅛ teaspoon black pepper; ⅛ teaspoon ginger root powder; ½ teaspoon vanilla;
1 teaspoon or more sweetener of your choice (optional)

In a medium pot over medium heat, add nut milk, turmeric and coconut oil. Stir until mixture is hot and ingredients are well combined. Add mixture to a high-powered blender and the remaining ingredients (except for the vanilla). Blend on high until mixed well. Stir in the vanilla. Serve topped with cinnamon.

Turmeric Face Mask

Combine turmeric powder with a thickening agent and a liquid to make a paste. For acne and antibacterial concerns, combine turmeric with warm water and honey. For hyperpigmentation and wrinkles, combine turmeric with yoghurt and lemon juice for extra nourishment and brightening effects. For irritation, mix turmeric extract with aloe vera gel for natural soothing effects. For antioxidant power, simply combine turmeric with water (you may add a small amount of almond or rice flour to make this mask thicker and easier to apply). Leave the mask on for about 15 to 20 minutes at a time. Rinse thoroughly with warm water and follow up with desired toner, serum, and moisturizer.

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SPINACH DUMPLINGS RECIPE

Ingredients:

8 oz leafy greens (spinach, 2 oz stale bread, cut into 1/4-inch cubes)

About 1/4 cup milk, to soak bread

1 egg

2 tablespoons cottage cheese

1/4 cup grated hard cheese

Salt to taste

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

1/2 cup flour

TO SERVE

1/4 cup butter

4 or 5 large cloves garlic, sliced thin

A squeeze of lemon juice

METHOD

- Boil the greens in salty water until they're tender. Between 2 and 5 minutes. Don't boil anything for more than about 7 minutes, or the greens will lose their pretty green colour.
- Plunge the greens into a large bowl of ice water to shock them. Remove and squeeze the greens until they're just damp. Chop very fine and set into a bowl. In the meantime soak the bread cubes in the milk until they soften. When the bread is soft, mash it into a paste with your (very clean) hands so no large bits remain. Add this to the bowl with the greens.
- Add all the remaining dumpling ingredients except the flour. Add half of the flour now, and mix everything well. Try to form the mixture into balls about the size of a walnut. If they hold together well, you're good to go. If you are unsure, add the rest of the flour.
- Form the dough into balls, and roll each ball in a little flour. Drop the dumplings into the water you boiled the greens in and simmer them until they float. Do this in two batches so you don't crowd the pot.
- To finish, heat the butter in a large sauté pan and cook the garlic slices gently until they just barely brown on the edges, about 1 minute. Add the dumplings and shake the pan to roll them around in the hot butter and garlic. When they're nicely coated, serve with a squeeze of lemon. You can eat this as a side dish or with a nice big salad.

Enjoy! Bettina & the Coffee Buzz Team



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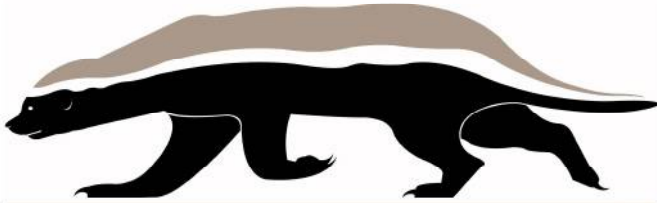
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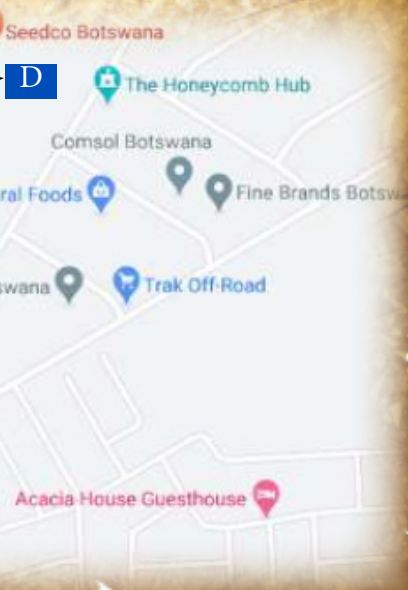
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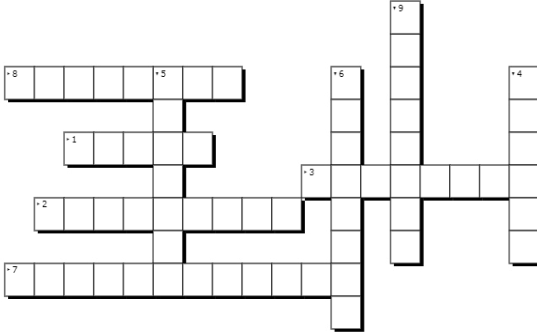
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Photos sent in by Lisa Rautenbach taken at Greenwich Park, London, UK





puzzles



Created with XWords – the free online crossword puzzle generator
<https://www.xwords-generator.de/en>

1. In the 1600s Holland had a mania for a certain exotic bulb. Which one was it?
2. Wordsworth likened these flowers to stars of the Milky Way in his poem 'I wandered lonely as a cloud'.
3. It sounds like a famous sports car but is instead the scientific name for a corn indigenous to Botswana that has extremely beautiful flowers
4. Ditapole is what tuberous vegetable in English?
5. What is a continuously growing horizontal underground stem otherwise known as?
6. African Weeping Wattle is known as what name in Setswana?
7. A famous botanical garden in Cape Town?
8. A yellow spice that is synonymous with curries?
9. The scientific name for strawberries?

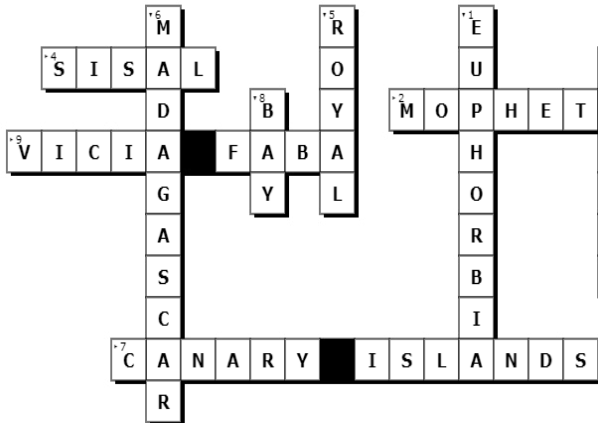
Puzzle 1 (Medium, difficulty rating 6.56)

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2		5	4						

Generated by <http://www.specky.com/words> on Thu Jul 17 16:33:48 2021 GMT. Enjoy!



answers to Issue 9.



Created with XWords – the free online crossword puzzle generator
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1. A plant with milky latex: _____ tirucalli
2. Erythrina lysistemon is known by what name in Setswana?
3. Tequila, which is made from Agave tequilana, comes from which country?
4. A commercial fibre is made from Agave sisalana known as _____?
5. Roystonea regia is a palm commonly known as the _____ palm.
6. The Bismarck palm, Bismarckia nobilis, is native to which country?
7. Like Madagascar, these islands have a large number of endemic plants.
8. Laurus nobilis is commonly used in cooking and know by what name?
9. Scientific name for a broad bean?

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