



Chairman's Notes

Welcome to my first 'solo' notes – Having only been in the post of Chairman for three months, I am in awe of how our now Vice Chairman managed. On behalf the North Coast members, and I know I can safely say worldwide, I want to thank you John for your magnificent leadership, making the District so successful. In the short time I have been a member you have led us on trips to Lamu, and Nanyuki. Because of you, we consistently managed to have the most interesting guest speakers, some from as far away as the UK. Your leadership was second to none and I am very lucky that I still have you beavering away in the background.

On to the Notes. I thought I would begin by sharing my thoughts and plans for where we go from here. For a start, quite shortly John is going off to Council on my behalf to push some of the ideas we have here at North Coast. KHS Chairman, Vishy Talwar, has asked all Districts to try and double their membership over the coming year. That's quite a tall order for North Coast as we already have quite a large membership but one idea which might help is to do a mass mailing to every PO Box in the District. To that end, we are proposing a redesign of the present KHS leaflet and are putting forward some ideas to Council.

Another work in progress is the rationalisation of Flower Shows. Most Districts do not have the capacity or presence to put on what might be called 'proper' highly regulated flower shows. Nonetheless, shows of some sort can add significantly to the life of a Society so the problem is how to enable them without sacrificing standards. Pauline Balletto is co-ordinating

Flower of the Month - Siphonochilus aethiopicus

The name *Siphonochilus aethiopicus* is derived from the Greek *siphono* meaning tube, and *chilus* meaning lip in reference to the shape of the flower. The specific name *aethiopicus* means from southern Africa.

Commonly called Natal or Wild Ginger, it can be found flowering profusely in the wild, after the rains. In the dry season the leaves wilt and die, waiting for the next bout of rain. In the garden it does very well in dappled shade and, because of receiving water, the leaves don't die off as fast as they would in the wild.

It has a most attractive, purply-pink, nicely scented flower which opens before the leaves but the really unusual feature is its cone shaped rhizomes which grow near the surface, emitting a wonderful scent of violets.

Due to its medicinal value, the plant is grossly over collected in the wild and is currently listed in the Red Data book of South African plants.

Marion Langham

the project and will be writing up new rules for flower shows, large and small.

For our part we would again like to hold some sort of 'show' event this year. The Flower Festival last year worked quite well but did not attract as many flower show entries or visitors as we would have liked. The big success was the guest speaker. At the moment we have no Festival arranged but we are considering putting on some sort of two day event in late November, after the return of the 'swallows', when we would hope to have two really good speakers. Your feedback and ideas would be most welcome.

Another regular for the year will be our Gardener's courses which are scheduled to run in July. These will now be under the leadership of Jonathon Baya and Katana. With the wonderful rainfall we have been having, all our gardens should be bursting with growth and our gardeners need to have the knowledge to take advantage of that.

Lastly the Christmas day dhow trip, which has proven so popular in the past, will once again be on offer. Those who have experienced it before know what a wonderful relaxing way it is to spend Christmas day. Look out for details in the Shamba Times events section.

NOW, DID YOU KNOW - Donkeys kill more people than aircraft crashes. On that sobering thought I'll say goodbye.

Marion Langham



Siphonochilus aethiopicus

The Kilifi Road Show - Marion Langham

Gardeners love to talk. That was the thought behind this 'first of a kind' meeting which was held at the Castle, Kilifi on Thursday 25th May. Inspired by the 'Antique Road Show', the event managed to attract some thirty or so people. The idea was to get members to bring their treasures (or disasters) to the show and talk about them. We didn't have a panel of experts but we hoped we would generate informed discussion from the audience.

Rama and Boniface, who are experts in the growing of *Bromeliads*, started off the proceedings by giving an excellent demonstration on how to remove pups from a Bromeliad and then followed on by talking about the best medium in which to plant the pup. They finished off by explaining how to tell which *Bromeliad* grew in shade and or sun.

Our next demonstration was more a small talk on garden dudus. The message here was to keep an eagle eye out for pests and deal with them as soon as possible. Mealy bug, which is one of the biggest problems at the coast, prompted extensive discussion among those present.

Katana Baya brought a wonderful example of the fern *Platyserium bifurcate*, which is often quite difficult to get to do

well. He was able to share his ideas on how to grow this successfully and how to divide it.

The final spot was a light hearted 10 question Quiz which everyone was invited to enter. Joint winners were Katana Baya and Samini Ngumbao with



Seating was arranged in café style, which encouraged audience interaction and participation, and the event was rounded off with an excellent curry lunch.

I think the consensus after the event was that the idea had worked quite well and was worth repeating at some time in the future - maybe more localised as Sub-district forums.

Vanessa Anniere coming in third.

This is the first time we have used the Castle as a KHS venue. Normally it is the province of the Kilifi bridge players but it served our purpose admirably.

quite well and was worth repeating at some time in the future - maybe more localised as Sub-district forums.

Ask Maude

Q Why do I have a problem with my ferns dying when I re-pot them

Samini Ngumbao

A Many people have this problem as ferns generally hate to be moved. This is because the new soil goes sour before the roots can spread into it. Ferns like to create their own micro-climate and so like being close together. They prefer a shady place, out of the wind, and lots of water/humidity and fertiliser.

Q I use green neem leaves for my compost pit but someone said this is not advisable as they keep away the important dudus which help with the decomposition.

Vanessa

A I wonder where your friend got their information. Fallen neem leaves are not a problem and are even used in commercial compost products.

However I can't find a reliable report on the use of **green** leaves. I can't see it producing a harmful product. The only effect might be to slow down the process. Maybe you should see if it make a difference to your composting.

Maude asks. Did you know about plant hormones?

There are several hormone groups that control plant development. Auxins and cytokinins are the most prominent. Auxins are mainly responsible for plant growth, stretching the existing cells in leaves and branches as well as in buds, blooms and seedpods so that they become bigger and can transport more nutrients. Cytokinins are heavily into building new cells. They are found primarily in roots and new shoots tips. They are responsible for cell division,

which creates roots and branching. If the auxin level is too high, a plant will grow well but not grow new roots. If the level of cytokinins is too high the plant may be busy developing roots but not much growth.

By pruning you reverse the hormone flow in your plant. The cytokinins travel between roots and shoot tips to develop the plant and make it bigger, which means both more branches and more roots. This exchange is now interrupted. There are no shoot tips so the cytokinins go back down and grow some more roots. Then, when the cells have healed, they again concentrate at the tip, breaking the temporary dormancy at the topmost leaf node, and induce cell division to make a new shoot.

Tom and Joan Grumbley's Garden – Malindi.

For as long as I can remember Tom and Joan always enjoyed putting in and improving their gardens. As a tea estate manager for Brooke Bond in Kericho in the late 1940's, they moved around the various tea estates a lot and eventually to Limuru. Tom's old greenhouse was always being taken down and reassembled again, except for their final move to Malindi.

Due to the water situation in Malindi, there was no mains supply for years, so they relied on rain water and a slightly brackish well. Also the plots foundation was coral so Tom opted for a garden of succulents and cacti that could withstand this fairly harsh environment. Joan wasn't so happy with all this "prickly stuff".



Pachypodium sp?



Allaudia ascendens, & Allaudia sp?



Pachypodium lamerei

As managing director of Brooke Bond, Tom and Joan travelled to many parts of the world observing tea production techniques and, of course, local flora. They bought back the lovely blue Petrea from Guatemala which Peter Greensmith developed as a local and popular garden plant, among others. They also travelled extensively in South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe on their plant "missions". But most of all, they held a fascination for Madagascar and its unique and isolated development of flora and fauna. I think they made two or possibly three trips there and bought back some of the exotic species pictured. Of eleven species of Pachypodium occurring there, Tom had seven examples in the garden.

Sadly Tom died of a heart attack in 1997 and never saw a lot of the garden and his rockeries reach their full maturity and beauty. If anyone would like to walk around the garden of an evening or morning, please feel welcome and give me a call on 0732674422.

Robert Grumbley



Pachypodium densiflora



Allaudia procera

Soil Health is the Key - Rolf Davey showed us the way.

In early May 2017, at the invitation of Lis Gregory, I visited the North Coast. Marion Langham kindly facilitated my visit, setting up and arranging the four sites targeted for the demonstrations:

Malindi – at the Gregory Plot, Silversands Road – hosted by Lis & Ian Gregory

Watamu – at the Medina Palms Nursery – hosted by Kahindi Samuel & Max Cheli

Kilifi – at the Langham Shamba, Bofa Beach – hosted by Juma James and Marion Langham

Vipingo – TEWA Technical Training Centre – hosted by Margie Lasalo and Carissa Nightingale/Colleen Street

The primary emphasis of these demonstrations was to highlight the need for improved SOIL HEALTH in traditional agriculture. The retention of organic matter (through minimum tillage) and the reintroduction of microbial activity (through application of high quality composted products like

MiziziPower™) in gardens, shambas and nurseries alike.

Our mantra at GRE Kenya Ltd – SOIL Health – ***IS*** the key ***AND*** the foundation to sustainable agriculture and gardening. Reduction in (or elimination of) the use of chemical additives to soils is paramount to sustainable agriculture in Kenya.

To this end, at each of the four demonstration sites, attendees were introduced to the principles of SOIL HEALTH, minimum tillage, retention of surface vegetation and management thereof, use of organic pesticides (neem leaf etc.) and other organic inputs (manure, composted vegetation, etc.). Companion planting was also introduced (maize & bean in the same hole) and the benefits of this discussed and trialed at each site. All seeds were planted with *MiziziPower™* at a rate of approx. 30gms per hole (a small hand-full). No other treatment was done, excepting the removal of close proximity weeds/grass and general slashing around the planting area.

The weather was extremely kind to us, with rain each night prior to each demonstration, whilst holding off during the presentation. A follow-up visit will be conducted during early July, to measure the efficacy and progress of the trials. Being that this visit was a “first” for *MiziziPower™* at the Coast and in coastal soils, the results will be examined and discussed with all attendees – a process that will continue into the future.

It would be a very good idea if the North Coast District could consider the establishment of an “Outreach Team” of trusted and competent gardeners to take the lessons learnt out into the wider agricultural community – especially the subsistence farmers in the coastal belt.

Sincere thanks the NC Committee for the support and organisation of this first visit, and I look forward to the future – lessons and learning what soil health improvement can do for coastal soils.

Rolf Davey

The sites chosen for the trials varied considerably. Pictured below are those selected for Malindi, Watamu, and Vipingo. That offered by Kilifi is shown on the Yamgambo page opposite. Hopefully results will be shown next issue.



Malindi



Watamu



Vipingo



Watamu

Yamgambo - MiziziPower

Mei ulikua mwezi mzuri kwa wanabustani. Kwanza, baada ya kufumba na kufumbua kukaanza msimu wa mvua nzuri nyingi. Tena bwana Rolf Davey wa GRE (Kenya) Ltd akaja Pwani na, kwa kipindi cha siku nne kwenye maeneo ya Malindi, Watamu, Kilifi na Vipingo alionyesha hadharani matokeo ya matumizi yabidhaa ya mchanga ulio boreka, mizizi power. Jumla ya washirika 148 waliokuwa karibu walifika mahala hapo na kumsikia Rolf akielezea faida ya kutumia bihaa yake.

Huku akiongea Kiswahili alionyesha wasikizaji wake jinsi matyarisho kidogo yalihatijika kupata mimea mizuri yenye afya. Kwa kila ya hayo maonyesho ya maeneo manne, washirika wetu walipewa kanuni za AFYA YA MCHANGA, kulima kwa wastani, kuhifadhi na kusimamia mahali pa kilimo cha maboga, matumizi ya viungo vya dawa za wadudu (majani ya mkilifi n.k.) na viungo vyengine kama mbolea samadi, au kilimo cha maboga ya mbolea taka, n. k. upanzi mseto (mahindi na maharagwe kwenye shina moja) pia ilizungumziwa na faida zake zikaelezewa.

Alipowaeleza ya kufanya, wanabustani walisisitizwa kuhudumia na kujaribu katika nyugu ndogo kisha wakapanda. Yote iliwapasa kufanya ilikuwa kilimo cha upana wa karai, mchanga laini, na kufanya simo katikati. Halafu kofi la mizizi power kutia ndani ya hilo shimo, kufuatia mbegu kadha ya mahindi, kisha kufunika taratibu. Hivyo ndivyo ilikuwa, ila kama watu walihani matumizi ya bidhaa yalikuwa ya wakulima tu, rolf alimalizia kwa kueleza kuwa ilikuwa pia inafaa kupandia kwenye nyungu, kuchanganya na mbolea ya taka au kuwekelea juu ya mchanga kama (top dressing).

Nyungu za majaribio ni za kutazamwa baada ya wiki kadha ili kuona jinsi inavyoendelea. Kwa matumaini matokeo yatakuwa ya kutia moyona itatusaidia kueleza wakulima wengine na pia wale wadogo wadogo mitaani.



Kupitisha ujumbe



Kutayarisha mchanga



Panda mbegu



Tayari!

A Botanical Gem - London's Chelsea Physic Garden by Isobel Nanton



Garden fans who want to recharge while visiting London can take the tube to Sloane Square, drift onto Lower Sloane Street, then Royal Hospital Road, cross Tite Street, and turn left into Swan Walk. The voyage will take you through the gates of a garden that, founded in 1673, is nearly 90 years older than Kew.

The Chelsea Physic Garden — originally established as the Apothecaries’ Garden — remains true to its healing roots, containing approximately 5,000 plants of every hue in its walled microclimate embrace. Some, like the *Rosa odorata* ‘Bengal Crimson’ — which blooms every day of the year (since the temperature rarely falls below -2°C) — are there for beauty. Others, like sunflowers, are botanical multi-taskers, gorgeous yet also prized for taking radioactive strontium out of the soil.

The garden is an oasis of the unexpected in the heart of a city whose traffic noise forms a subtle backdrop while planes gear down overhead on final approach to Heathrow. Plump grapefruits grow in a sheltered corner of the garden year-

round, while lean-to glass houses on the northern border of the garden offer shade during the summer months, paying tribute to Victorian pteridologists (those who study ferns), who were crazy for the textures and shades of green of these plants. Today, the English garden fan favours *Galanthus* (snowdrop). Avid galanthophiles tour the country in search of these delicate white icons of spring, visiting the garden in late January and early February to admire the patterns of over 120 snowdrop cultivars.

Sir Hans Sloane, who treated London citizens with quinine for ague (malaria), was responsible for setting up a covenant so that the garden’s rent is fixed in perpetuity at £5 (\$8 Canadian) a year. The Chelsea Physic Garden has been home to many other luminaries, including head gardener Philip Miller, who presided for almost 50 years, producing eight editions of his plant dictionary during his lifetime and growing cotton here, sending its seeds to the Americans, who started an industry with it.

Divided into six sections, the garden includes medicinal beds, edible beds, and a woodland garden. Enthusiastic volunteer guides will point out trees such as the gorgeous *Ginkgo biloba*, a fossil tree dating back to dinosaur days, whose properties have been linked to blood thinning and circulation improvement. The medicinal herb beds contain a whole section of plants used for pain relief, while in the neurological “room”, broad beans are grown for treating Parkinson’s disease.

Still, frivolity is not absent from the garden, mixed, as always, with vital science. This year, displays, exhibitions, and events will convey the 2017 theme of Weaves and Leaves: Fabrics and the Plants That Make Them. These will complement such constants as the heady blossom fragrances emanating from the Perfumery Amphitheatre, and the lighthearted buzz of the garden’s busy bees.

Republished by kind permission of Nuvo Magazine, Vancouver, Canada
<http://www.nuvomagazine.com>

South Coast Gardeners' Course

Early in March our two stalwart gardening instructors, Marion and Katana, made the trip down to the South Coast in response to a request from Annie Vaughan for us to run a couple of courses down there. At present the South Coast does not have a functioning KHS District, but their Residents Association seems to fill the void and acted as sponsors of the event. This is what Annie had to say in her report to the SCRA.

The gardening course was very well received in Diani. We were inundated with interest, and indeed had to split it into two days, with about 100 participants in all. Sadly we had to draw a line and turn people away, until next time. It really was a foundation course, with basic "grass roots" knowledge, particularly with regard to compost, watering, soils and diseases. Because of such interest, we will hold another later in the year for those who missed it, and will also include the next stage i.e. pruning, cuttings and other subjects that are requested, and for those that had to miss the first course!

The greater interest was in making your own soil, i.e. composting. There are many happy gardeners now, preparing their own compost, and much interest was shown in the questions and answers, along with the certificates and take home notes, while having a "soda" and discussions at the end.

Build your own crow trap

Most people regard the Indian House Crow (*Cornus Splendens*) as a pest, mainly because of its appetite for small bird eggs and nestlings. Actually, of course, it is an omnivorous scavenger, virtually dependant on human habitations for survival (no populations are known to exist independently of humans). However, it has become so successful that some form of population control is necessary and trapping is one answer.

The trap described here is of a well proven design which is being used with great success in many countries. If used correctly it will trap tens of birds each day. It consists of a wooden frame (50x50mm treated pine) covered with galvanized mesh such that the crows can easily see in and out, but will be unable to escape. The smaller gauge chicken wire is the most suitable but needs to be good grade to stand up to coastal conditions. It can be made as separate panels so that it is more readily transportable.

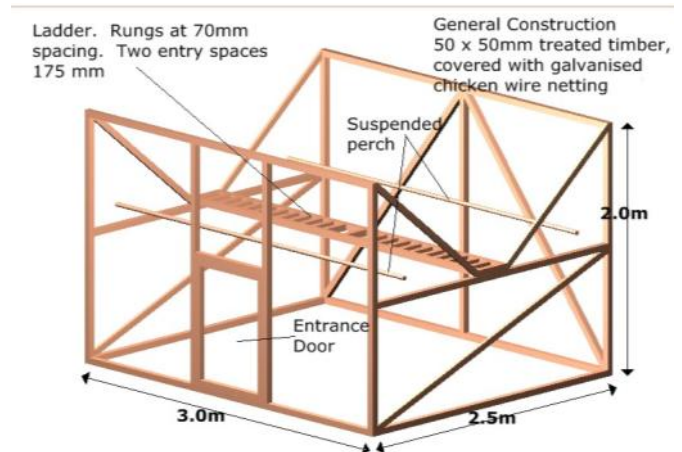
Crows gain entrance via two openings in a horizontal ladder. Rungs should be 70mm apart except for the two entrance holes at the centre which should be 150-200mm. Although the dimensions of the "entrance ladder" are critical, the actual size of the trap is not. However smaller ones often do not work as well as the larger ones.

The trap should be placed in light shade where it is easily visible to crows from surrounding vantage points. Put trays of bait down on the floor, away from the entrance holes and not directly under the perches. House Crows will eat almost anything but food that they are familiar with is more likely to prove successful. Kitchen scraps, cooked rice or potato, cake,



I would very much like to thank Marion, Lady Langham who came from Kenya Horticultural society, Kilifi, and Katana, John Golds top gardener from Watamu, who conducted the course in English and Swahili.

I am sure Diani gardens will benefit a lot. There was very much interest, and thanks to many for their messages of appreciation. It is good to know it was so worth-while and well received. We will circulate the next course through SCRA in due course.



fish, ugali, dagaa, old poultry food etc are all suitable. Avoid meat as this will also attract unwanted flies. A tray of water is essential for bathing and drinking. It is important that all trapped crows are kept contented as alarmed, agitated, hungry or thirsty crows will drive away others.

The trap should be left undisturbed throughout the day, but it is important to monitor it from a distance to check whether everything is alright. Trapped crows should be destroyed when numbers reach 20-30 and always after dark when local crows have left for their roosts. It is important to leave two or three crows alive as they will immediately attract more birds the following day.

Uruguay, land of the Gauchos - by Bill Hays

MOST OF OUR SWALLOWS GO NORTH FOR THE WINTER. GAIL OUTRAM FLEW WEST, FOLLOWING THE SUN, OVER THE ATLANTIC TO URUGUAY. HER HOST, BILL HAYS, KINDLY VOLUNTEERED TO TELL US A BIT ABOUT HIS HOMETLAND.

Uruguay, land of the Gauchos, is a small South American country with a great heart. Slightly larger than England and Wales, it has a population of just over 3.5 million, half of whom live in the capital city of Montevideo.

The climate is Mediterranean with an average rainfall throughout the year of about 1500 mm. It almost never snows. The country side is mainly rolling plains of grassland interspersed with riverine bush along the watercourses. There are some pleasant seaside resorts, but most of the interior is uninhabited apart from scattered market towns and villages. What folk there are, are employed as gauchos on the pastoral ranches or in the forestry or arable farming sectors.

Wildlife, in spite of the extinction of most of the larger mammals, is varied and plentiful, although most of the mammals are nocturnal. More than 490 different species of birds have been registered in Uruguay. Some are migrants coming up to us from the south in winter while summer migrants come down from the tropics and further north. One such is the Golden Plover which breeds in the high Canadian Arctic, visits our pastures in spring,

returning via the Pacific coast to Alaska, - a yearly journey of about 18,000 miles. There is a wide variety of amphibians and reptiles but only two fairly common venomous snakes. Freshwater fishes are also well represented, from myriads of diminishing unitive cyprinids to the fighting dorado and a massive catfish, the surubi, which may turn the scales at 200kgs or more

Insects are varied but Uruguay is malaria (and hopefully dengue) free. However, some species have suffered from crop spraying, with a consequent diminution of predators such as frogs. Uruguay is also an important honey exporter and in some areas the bee population has suffered for the same reason. The spider family is also numerous, some of which are venomous, but not the spectacular tarantula.

Uruguay's principle export today is timber products, but these are entirely produced from afforestation of native grasslands by introduced eucalyptus and pine species. Indigenous woodlands exist as riverine bush, now almost all secondary growth as, at one time, they were extensively harvested for charcoal. The majority were also used medicinally by the indigenous Indian tribes. Two, whose effects I have seen personally, are

Lithraea molleodes, locally known as Aruera. This is a lovely shady tree buzzing with bees in season but if you sit under it or cut it you are in for a nasty surprise. The tree emits a poison '*ushiol*' which causes violent skin rashes, fever, vomiting and temporary dislocation of vision but is not fatal. Supposedly it only affects men but now cases have been registered in both sexes. The legend is that the tree is the reincarnation of an



Ocelot

Indian princess who believed all the sweet nothings her suitors whispered to her and died of a broken heart, embittered against men. The poison the tree exudes is her revenge. For some reason the protection is to greet the tree as you pass by, reversing the time of day as you do so. Thus, in the morning it is "Good afternoon Lady Aruera" and after midday "Good morning Lady Aruera" Why is a mystery. The wood is long lasting and occasionally used for fence posts and so it's mainly woodcutters who get infected.

Casearia silvestris, locally **Guazatumba**. This among other things is a very effective antidote for snake bites of the *bothrop* species. Indeed, in the absence of anti snake venom serum our local docs recommend it as a part of the first aid kit for campers and agricultural workers. I have used it successfully on horses and cattle bitten on the muzzle with a solution of the leaves in alcohol applied direct to the wound combined with an infusion in water given as an oral drench. Success rate is 100% if given early. It is also very good against mosquito bites and bee stings. It would also appear to have anti-cancer possibilities and is at present under scientific investigation. As it is a tropical and subtropical shrub it should be easy to grow in Kenya but the venom of your snakes may be of a different toxin to our *bothrops* and rattlesnake species.

This is a superficial overview of Uruguay. Our slogan is "Uruguay Natural" or to paraphrase in Spanish, "Como Uruguay no hay", (there's no country like Uruguay)



Ring Tailed Coati

Drip Irrigation - By Darcy Larum, Landscape Designer

WATER MANAGEMENT IS ALWAYS A PROBLEM AT THE COAST. THOSE WHO HAVE VISITED THE MNARANI CLUB VEGETABLE GARDEN IN KILIFI WILL KNOW HOW HENK AND HIS TEAM DEAL WITH THE MATTER

Having worked in landscape design, installation and plant sales for many years, I have watered many, many plants. When asked what I do for a living, I sometimes joke and say, "I'm Mother Nature at a garden center". While I do many things at work, like designing landscapes and displays and working with customers, perhaps the most important thing I do is making sure every plant we have in stock has everything it needs to grow to its full potential. A plant's main need is water, especially container stock, which can dry out quickly.

For many years, along with co-workers, I would water each individual plant with a hose and rain wand. Yes, it really is as time consuming as it sounds. Then four years ago, I started working for a landscape company/garden center with a drip irrigation system that waters all the tree and shrubs. While this may sound like a huge part of my work load was eliminated, drip irrigation has its own set of challenges and drawbacks.

Problems with Drip Irrigation

Whether in a garden center or a home landscape, hand watering each individual plant based on its needs that day is probably the best way to water. By hand watering, you are forced to get up close to each plant; therefore, you're able to adjust each plant's watering to its specific need. You can give a dry, wilting plant extra water or skip a plant that prefers to stay on the dryer side. Most of us just don't have the time for this slow, thorough, watering process.

Sprinkler or drip irrigation systems allow you to save time by watering large areas of plants all at once. However, sprinklers don't consider individual plant watering needs; for example, the sprinkler that keeps your lawn lush and green is probably not providing trees and



shrubs in the area with the deep watering they need to develop strong, deep roots. Turf grasses have different root structures and watering needs to larger plants. Also, sprinklers often get more water on the foliage than in the root zone. Wet foliage can cause pest and fungal problems, like black spot and powdery mildew.

Drip Irrigation systems water individual plants directly at their root zone, eliminating a lot of fungal issues and wasted water. However, these drip irrigation systems still water every plant the same, regardless of individual needs.

Drip irrigation can also be an unsightly mess of hoses and tubes running throughout the garden. These hoses can get clogged by debris, salt build up, and algae so, if they are covered and hidden by mulch, it's hard to check if they are running properly and fix any clogs.

Hoses that are exposed can be damaged by rabbits, pets, children, or gardening tools. I have replaced many hoses that were chewed on by rabbits.

When the black hoses of drip irrigation systems are left exposed to the sun, they can heat up the water and basically cook the plants roots.

Drip Irrigation Tips

Rainbird and other companies that specialize in drip irrigation systems have all sorts of special solutions for drip irrigation problems.

- They have timers that can be set so, even if you're away, you can trust that your plants have been watered.
- They have different nozzles that can control water flow so that plants like succulents can get less water, while plants with higher water needs can get more.
- They have sensors that tell the system if it's raining out so it will not run.
- They also have sensors that tell the system if water is pooling up around the nozzles.

However, most people will start out with a less expensive, basic drip irrigation system. Drip irrigation systems can help you water tough areas, like slopes where run off and erosion can happen from other watering methods. Drip irrigation can be set to give these areas a slow penetrating soak, or can be set to deliver water in bursts that can be soaked in before the next burst.

Most problems with drip irrigation come from improper installation or not using the right kind of drip irrigation for the site. Do your homework when choosing a drip irrigation system beforehand and future issues can be avoided.

Reprinted by kind permission of Gardening Know How <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/>

The nine most endangered plants in the world - Jolanda Nel

I know that some of our members share my passion for rare plants, so I will share the info I recently read in an article on the world's nine most endangered plants with you.

Mammillaria herrerae, the golf ball plant, is endemic to Queretaro, Mexico. I know someone who has managed to grow this plant from seeds. However, they need very specialized growing conditions.



Mammillaria herrerae

Nepenthes attenboroughii, named after the British naturalist, Sir David Attenborough, is endemic to Mount Victoria, Palawan in the Philippines. The pitcher can grow as big as 1,5 m.

Tabina spectabilis, is endemic to the Analalava District of northwestern Madagascar. This palm can become 18m tall, with leaves of 5m long. It grows for 50 years, before making a huge inflorescence and then dies, hence the name 'suicide palm'.

Rhizanthella gardneri, is endemic to the wheat belt of western Australia. It is a leafless orchid, which spends its whole life underground. It cannot produce its own food and feeds on the broom-honeymyrtle shrub, by means of a mycorrhizal fungus. The fleshy flowers appear in May and June.



Rhizanthella gardneri

Medusagyne oppositifolia is endemic to Mahe Island, in the Seychelles. John Gilbert Baker (1834 - 1920), named this tree. The gynoecium of the flowers reminded him of the mythological Medusa. However, the dehiscent fruit, which he did not see, reminds one of jellyfish, hence the colloquial name of 'Jellyfish tree'. Although scientists have managed to successfully germinate seeds, there are no young trees found in nature.

Acacia anegadensis is endemic to Anegada, one of the British Virgin Islands, in the Caribbean. It grows in the sub-tropical dry forest. This tree is extremely thorny, hence the name 'Poke-me-boy tree'.

Encephalartos hirsutus is endemic to the Soutpansberg, Limpopo, South Africa. There are only 3 populations. Due to its native habitat, it is colloquially known as the "Venda cycad". Fronds are bluish-green and very hairy, hence the species name. Both male and female cones are also bluish-green. The biggest threat is caused by collectors. A sprouted seedling costs R 12 500-00.



Encephalartos hirsutus

Erythrina schliebenii, a coral tree, is endemic to south-eastern Tanzania. The first herbarium material was collected by Hans-Joachim Schlieben, a German, during 1935 and placed in the Berlin Herbarium. Unfortunately most of this material was destroyed in a fire, during heavy bombing in WW II. In nature it was declared extinct for the first time in 1998. However, another small colony was found again. But the last plant in this colony fell victim to commercial logging in 2008. Once again it was declared extinct. Luckily in 2012, Frank Mbago, from the University of Dar es Salaam, discovered another small colony during a plant survey. The material that he collected was compared with the surviving herbarium material of Schlieben, and confirmed at Kew that it was indeed *Erythrina schliebenii*, found.



Erythrina schliebenii

Anogramma ascensionis is native and endemic to the harsh dry conditions on the cliffs of the Green Mountains on Ascension Island. During 1842 the first sample was collected by Dr A B Curror and in 1876 Sir Joseph Hooker described the species. Another record of this species dates 1887. During 1958 Eric Duffey was the last person to record seeing this species. Although there are several plant species endemic to Ascension Island, the indigenous plant life is threatened due to the introduction of goats by Portuguese explorers, during the 16th century. During 1976, 1986 and 1995 expeditions went searching for *Anogramma ascensionis*, without success. This led to the declaration that it was extinct, in 2003. However, in 2009 another expedition went searching for this fern and four isolated plants were found in the rock crevices. Spores were collected and sown within 24 hours, in Kew. These spores germinated well. Unfortunately re-introducing the Kew grown plants, causes its own problems.



Anogramma ascensionis

Creating Bug Gardens - By Teo Spengler

Gardeners have lots of good reasons to try to lure beneficial insects for a garden. But how to do it? Calling them or whistling softly rarely works. You'll want to use insect friendly garden plants to start creating bug gardens. Read on for insect friendly garden ideas, including information about how to make an insect garden.

Beneficial Insects for a Garden

When people talk about insects, they often have mosquitoes or flies in mind, bugs that you wish were not in the yard. But many bugs help your plants thrive. In fact, beneficial insects for a garden are a gardener's best friends.

Some insects, like bees and butterflies, pollinate flowers. Other beneficial insects chow down on destructive bugs like aphids and scale insects. Another group of insect, termed parasitoids, live on or inside an insect pest, killing it as they feed.

As gardeners learn about and accept all the good things beneficial bugs accomplish, they start searching for insect friendly garden ideas. How to make insects feel welcome? You'll want to start creating bug gardens by selecting insect friendly garden plants.

Insect Friendly Garden Plants

Most plants attract insects. While many species have limited appeal, some plants are wildly popular with the most beneficial insects for a garden. This includes bees, ladybugs, ground beetles and hoverflies.

If you plant the flowers, herbs, and weeds these insects love the most, you increase dramatically your chance of having a population of beneficial insects in your garden. For instance, try the following and then stand back and watch the bugs arrive:

- Plant dill and gazania to attract ladybugs.
- Include nasturtium to attract ground beetles and spiders.
- Yarrow will summon more ladybugs and hoverflies.
- Clover is great for attracting helpful bees, so welcome these plants.

Another great tip for attracting beneficial insects for a garden is to plant native flowers. They attract a wider range of beneficial bugs than cultivars do. If you have a pond, you can offer many additional habitats, and a compost heap does the same. Above all, don't use pesticides or you'll kill the very bugs you are hoping to see.

Creating Bug Gardens and Bug Hotels

Could humankind survive in a world without pollinator insects? These useful insects provide incalculable services to the globe by crop pollination. Some three-quarters of the world's flowering plants and about over a third of food crops depend on insect and animal pollinators to reproduce.

Bees are the most important pollinator bug. They are so valuable that more and more gardeners are welcoming them into their backyards with bug hotels. Bug hotels vary greatly in form, depending on the imagination and creativity of the



gardener. But all share the same purpose: inviting these pollinator insects to come and to stay.

Start your bee hotel by drilling holes into wood for solitary bees to seek refuge. Place the hotel facing south to assure warmth. After a while, your backyard should be humming with activity.

Reprinted by kind permission of Gardening Know How
<https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/>

Maude says

Most of the recommended plants don't grow well at the coast but we have plenty of others to do the job - *Portulaca* and *Adonidia merrillii* (the Christmas or Manila palm) both attract bees in their hundreds. I am intrigued about the Ladybird beetles - I would expect them only to be attracted to plants infested with aphids.

Anne's gardener, Gona Kaingu, makes excellent little bee hotels from a short bit of pipe and bamboo twigs.



Notices

Herbs to sell

Any member who grows herbs and vegetables for home consumption, and has a surplus they would like to dispose of, is invited to publish their contact details in the Shamba Times.

Nairobi Flower Show

Nairobi District will be holding their annual Flower Show over the weekend of 16th and 17th September 2017 at the SSD Temple on Lower Kabete Road .For further details please contact Balinder Ahluwalia on 0721 374547.

Could make a nice trip on the train.

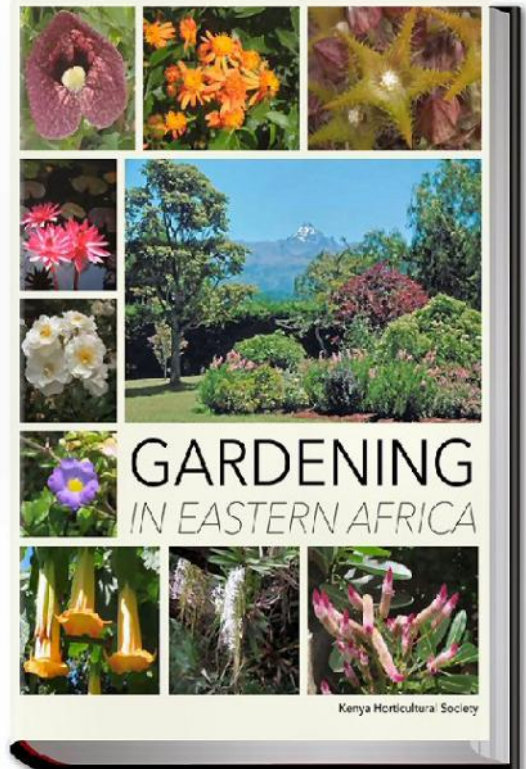
Gardening in Eastern Africa

We are pleased to be able to give you a preview of the cover of the new KHS publication, **Gardening in Eastern Africa**.

The book is in the final stages of proofing and is hoped to be available in time for Christmas. It is not yet priced so orders can't be taken



A sample Coast section page



Kenya Orchid Society

Just over a year ago we were all being entertained by Ingeborg Gonella's enthralling talk on orchids. Judging by their last bulletin (No 166 Jul - Dec 16), of which Ingeborg is the editor, The Kenya Orchid Society appears to be every bit as vigorous as ours. They recently published a useful article on the healing properties of cinnamon, which, under caution, can be used for the treatment of bacterial and fungal infections in orchids.

They also feature an article on humidity, published by L.P. Smith, President of the Commission for Agricultural Meteorology of the World Meteorological Organisation, Geneva. Apparently misting is more likely an act of faith than an efficient remedy for low humidity.

Sadly, they were not willing to share their articles with us but, for those of you who have not come across the Kenya Orchid Society, check out their facebook page and enjoy some stunning images.

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/Kenya-Orchid-Society-182886121788763/>

Gallery



'BEAN COUNTER' by Wendy Taylor
(Lucky bean tree, *Erythrina*)

Poop recycling

Vishy Talwar has drawn our attention to an enlightening article published in Business Daily Magazine on turning human waste into fertiliser. This follows the talk by Nairobi District's guest speakers at their last AGM

Apparently four enterprising young American MIT graduates have started up a company, Sanergy, which franchises toilets in Nairobi slums and other areas, collects the waste, and processes it into pathogen free organic fertiliser. Under the brand name Evergrow, the product sells at Ksh 2000 per 50kg and is currently only available up country but it is planned that outlets will be established elsewhere soon.



Anyone wishing to read more is directed to <http://www.businessdailyafrica.com/US-quartet-turns-poop-to-fertiliser-in-Nairobi-slums/1248928-3387294-yyu9v9z/index.html>

For your Diary

JULY

11 - 13TH

ROLF DAVEY ~ MIZIZIPOWER REVIEW

Over three days Rolf will visit all the trial site to review progress. Further details to follow.

18-22ND

GARDENERS COURSES

This years courses will be run at four venues. Full details to follow.

THURSDAY 27TH

KILIFI GARDEN AND TREE NURSERY VISIT

A chance to see Heather Stewart's wonderful garden again, followed by a tour of Norbert Lattcher's indigenous tree nursery.

AUGUST

THURSDAY 24TH

DEMONSTRATION ON GRAFTING

To be held at the Tropical Nurseries, Malindi. Full details to follow.

SEPTEMBER

DATE TO BE ADVISED

ORCHID TALK BY INGBORG GONELLA

To be held in Kilifi. Full details to follow

OCTOBER

THURSDAY, 19TH

BEE KEEPING BY ABBAS AND PETER PATTERSON

At Abbas farm in Gedi. Full details to follow

NOVEMBER

DATE TO BE ADVISED

GARDEN FESTIVAL (PROVISIONAL)

Two day event at the Mnarani Club, Kilifi

DECEMBER

MONDAY 25TH

CHRISTMAS LUNCH ON THE TURTLE BAY DHOW

Our traditional feast on Mida Creek. Book now with John Golds on 0202 335929

Editorial

We all learned the folly of 'counting our chickens . . .' at an early age. Teresa May must be rueing her decision to hold an election whilst gloomily inspecting the depleted remains of her hen coop after the people defied the early polls. Here at North Coast, we know better and hope for rather than expect good rains. Luckily, this year our hopes were realised and the countryside is looking wonderful.

You will be pleased to see that we will be running our series of gardeners courses again. This year they are to be under the able tutelage of Jonathan Baya and Katana. Full details will be published shortly but I understand the syllabus is to be expanded to include things like pruning and grafting. We wish the new team every success in their endeavour.

I commented before on our District's good record in helping the local community. I heard recently of another example that needs recognition. Alison Talbert, a doctor on attachment to KEMRI, asked Rupert's gardeners, Boniface and Rama, if they would visit a local orphanage to chat to the kids, explaining that 'Gardening' could be a career and did not require higher education. Apparently, they made a good sales pitch, and when they left, the kids had already starting pruning! We will organise a few more plants and manure, as they have one small area that could be made into a flower bed. These things are worth doing.

You will see from our new Chairman's report that John Golds is taking up the challenge of meeting Vishy Talwar's target of doubling our membership by the end of the year. One idea being actively investigated is a mass mailing of everyone in the District (or even the country). Of course, the best recruitment process is word of mouth - so get to it. Talk to your friends and acquaintances and get them to join. Whilst on the subject of recruitment, did you know what an International District we are? We have members in Canada, the US, and the UK. No one from the Antipodes yet, but there is still time!

cb

KENYA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

FIND US ON THE WEB

WWW.KENYAHS.COM



Officers of The North Coast District

Chairman	Marion Lady Langham marionlangham@googlemail.com
Vice Chairman	Mr John Golds jmgolds@me.com
Hon Sec	Mrs Vanessa Aniere anierevanessa@yahoo.co.uk
Hon Treasurer	Mr Rupert Partridge rdbpartridge@gmail.com

Editorial

The Shamba Times
PO Box 143 - 80108
Kilifi
Kenya

Contact

Mob:- +254 (0)732 610047
marionlangham@googlemail.com

© Shamba Times 2017

The Shamba Times is published quarterly for the benefit of it's Members by the North Coast District of The Kenya Horticultural Society. Articles for publication are welcome and should be addressed to the Editorial Office, as should any comments, suggestions, or corrections.

The Kenya Horticultural Society was established in 1923 for the purpose of stimulating and increasing interest and knowledge of gardens and plants in Kenya. The North Coast District extends from Vipingo in the South to Malindi in the North. Annual membership is Ksh 1000 per person (Ksh 1300 per couple). Corporate Membership is offered at Ksh 2000. Members gardeners are accepted for limited membership at a fee of Ksh 500 per annum.

M-Pesa payments can be made on 0702 767177