



Vet Brief

February 2018

Next meeting Sunday 11 February 2018

Jako Voges' Building

Save The Date:

**Feb. Meeting. 11
Feb. 2018
Medicinal uses of
Plants from the
Veld**

**March Meeting
11 Mar. 2018
Calitzdorp
Garden Tour**

**April Meeting
8 April 2018
Veldwalk place
TBA.**

**May Meeting
13 May 2018
Vegetative
Propagation**

**June Meeting
10 June 2018
Photography**

**22-24 Sept. 2018
Vetplantfees
2018**

Message from the Chair

We held election of officers at the January meeting. Irma Welman and Allan Beech were re-elected to the seats that they had held.

The Spekboom continues to flower following the thunderstorms in January. It is featured as our plant of the month this month.

Our February meeting will feature Meisie Arnolds who will tell us about the medicinal qualities of many of the plants in our local veld. This should be very informative and entertaining. Be sure to attend.

Vetplantfees will change in its second edition. We have been informed by the owners of the Station that it is their intent to sell the property sooner rather than later. They are not willing to take reservations for events that might not fit the buyers program. Frankly, I cannot blame them. We have a new venue in mind and will share it as soon as we can make definitive arrangements.

Dues are due for the new year. Your Committee decided to leave the dues amount at R 50 per family. We hope that all of our members will continue to enjoy the comradery of the group and learn more about succulent plants.

Please note the planned meeting topics for the next few months. We are always willing to look at other activities which can make our monthly meetings more exiting and educational. We have selected the gardens for the Garden Tour in March. Details in next months newsletter.

We will do a raffle/ auction for plants brought to the meeting on Sunday. If you have a plant or several that would be worth selling, please bring them.

We will begin regular planning meetings for Vetplantfees in the near future. Please help and join in the effort to make our fees the best in South Africa.

See you at the meeting.

Buck

**February Meeting:
Medicinal uses of plants from the veld.
2:00 PM at Jako Voges building.**

Leadership Team

Chairman – Buck Hemenway 076-298-7337

Treasurer – Yvonne Hemenway

Vice Chairman – Allan Beech

Director – Irma Welman

Secretary – Jako Voges

Plant of the Month: *Portulacaria afra*

Portulacaria afra (Jacquin 1786) (Spekboom (Pork Bush), Elephant's food, isiCococo (Zulu); iGqwanitsha (Xhosa).) This plant is very popular among succulent collectors and growers, world-wide and is often used for bonsai. It has now been shown to be effective in carbon sequestration (binding atmospheric carbon which is responsible for climate change), in semi-arid landscapes and thicket vegetation it is also being used for restoration purposes.

It is found in warm situations on rocky slopes in succulent karoo scrub, thicket, bushveld and dry river valleys in the eastern parts of South Africa from the Eastern Cape northwards into KwaZulu-Natal, Swaziland, Mpumalanga and the Limpopo Province as well as Mozambique..



Spekboom belongs to a large and widespread family (Portulacaceae) which includes the popular *Portulaca* and is often sold in garden centres and grown in domestic gardens as an annual for summer colour, although this is not a South African species. Other members of this genus include [*Portulacaria armiana*](#) and *Portulacaria pygmaea* the former has larger grey green leaves and is native to Namibia although it is not often cultivated, whereas the latter is a dwarf succulent shrublet with small, thickly fleshy, grey green leaves and occurs on rocky hillsides

in Namaqualand, South Africa.



Spekboom is known to produce flowers in winter to late spring in the warmer more humid parts of southern Africa. We know that it normally blooms in summer in the Klein Karoo. The plants will flower when rain occurs after severe drought anytime in spring through summer.

Spekboom is extremely easy to grow and as a result is found in most gardens in Calitzdorp. Cuttings are easily rooted in spring though autumn.

The plant is very pest resistant. Hedges along property lines exist for years with no obvious signs of degradation due to disease or critters. Massive programs to re-install Spekboom are under way throughout southern Africa. Grazing animals have degraded the plant's ability to self propagate, so cuttings are being planted to replace those that have been eaten past their usefulness.



Botanical Term of the Month;

Annual, Perennial

Plants that are known as Annual plants are those that complete an entire life cycle in one year. In other words, they grow from seed, flower, set seed and die all in one year. The cycle is sometimes forced by outside factors, such as freezing weather, or very hot summer weather.

Perennial plants are those that continue to live for more than one growing season.

Opportunity at the Church. Please note the following email received this morning from Marina Murriss:

It looks like we have a volunteer to begin this project. More in the new year.

In the Garden at the Hemenway's Plants flowering right now



Euphorbia caput-medusa



Pleiospilos simulans



Pleiospilos compactus



Stapelia hirsuta



Euphorbia esculenta



Monsonia crassulicaule



Adenium swazicum



Rhombophyllum nelii



Portulaca