



Vet Brief

October 2017

Next meeting Sunday 8 October 2017 at The Retreat, 12:00 noon

Save The Date:

**October Meeting
8 October 12:00
noon at The
Retreat**

**Nov. Meeting
12 November
Seed Workshop
at Voges
building**

**Dec. Meeting
10 December
Holiday Party**

**Jan. Meeting
21 Jan 2018
AGM**

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

Meeting Dates

8 October
12 November
10 December
21 January 2018

Message from the Chair

Well, **How Was That!**

Everyone is offering praise to Yvonne and me, but all of us deserve thanks for a job well done. Vetplantfees was a team effort. The Calitzdorp Succulent Society is firmly on the map and we all deserve pats on the back. Every part of the fees worked without flaw. OK, we need more plants, sorry. From the sound system for the talks to the art displays to the plant exhibition to the authors table (they both sold all of their inventory, by the way) to the Museum's book sales (R10,000 worth of technical succulent books) to the food vendors to the veld walks to the plant sales to the pay point table and the auction with donated port from Axe Hill we looked and performed like pros.

A big thanks to Cheryl and Mike. The Station is just a perfect venue for festivals of all sorts. They worked harder than anyone else for the entire weekend and we really appreciate the way they help make things happen.

Your Committee has met this week and the planning is already under way for 2018. Note the dates in the Save The Date column of this letter.

Change in the Committee. We have regretfully accepted the resignation of Mike Horan and per our Constitution appointed Allan Beech to replace him.

Weather - I must comment on the veld. The small amount of rain that we've had over the last 3 weeks has turned the veld into a flower land.

Our October Meeting will be held at The Retreat in Groenfontein. Marie Holstensson, one of our founding members has invited us to visit her lovely farm for lunch and enjoy the spring growth and flowers in the valley there.. There are wonderful hiking trails, or one can sit on her beautiful stoep and watch nature at its best. Following lunch, we will try and rehash Vetplantfees for a brief time. Everyone's opinion is important so that we can grow our event and make it more meaningful for future attendees. Also a Pat-On-The-Back session. We will bring wine. We'll have a nice social hour (or 2) to celebrate a job well done.

See you at the meeting.

Buck

October Meeting :

**Enjoy the veld and Wrap Up
At The Retreat in Groenfontein 12:00
noon Sunday October 8 RSVP Pls.**

Leadership Team

**Chairman – Buck Hemenway 076-298-7337
Vice Chairman – Allan Beech
Secretary – Jako Voges**

**Treasurer – Yvonne Hemenway
Director – Irma Welman**

Plant of the Month: *Glottiphyllum regium*

Glottiphyllum regium N.E. Brown 1928 (AKA: **Koeispene**) is a clump-forming succulent and can attain a height of 13 cm and a width of 15 cm. It has a semi-fibrous, shallow root system typical of some succulents. The roots are not destructive and plants can be planted right next to structures. Branches are short and the leaves are oblong and tongue-shaped. Inflorescences are stalked and flowers can measure up to 35 mm in diameter. The flowers are an iridescent yellow. It flowers from June to late December, its peak flowering time being September

Glottiphyllum regium is assessed as Endangered (EN) on the [Red List of South African Plants](#). It occurs over a relatively small area and at five locations, the populations are decreasing due to the habitat being degraded by grazing, trampling and soil erosion due to ostrich farming.

This species is restricted to Sandstone slopes or sandy loam in the central Little Karoo region of the Western Cape.

The genus name *Glottiphyllum* is derived from the Greek *glotta* = tongue and *phylon* = leaf, thus *Glottiphyllum* means a tongue-like leaf. The specific epithet *regium* means 'of kings' It is the largest and possibly the most attractive of the whole *Glottiphyllum* group. There are 16 species of *Glottiphyllum* found in South Africa.



The family *Aizoaceae* (vygies) is the largest of the succulent plant families in southern Africa. *Aizoaceae* are almost endemic to the southern Africa region where it is estimated that there are over 1800 species. They occur from elevations of 3500 m to sea-level. Vygies occur in a variety of landscapes ranging from afro-montane, karroid and arid to subtropical coastal belts and grasslands. Vygies are even found growing on the most southern tip of Africa at Cape Agulhas.

The flowers tend to open fully from 11:00 am as do many other *Aizoaceae* species. The reason for this is the need for sufficient sunlight and warmth. Mainly bees pollinate the flowers during the day. In the evening the pollinators are most likely to be moth species.

Glottiphyllum regium should be cultivated more widely in public and private gardens. It is cultivated at the Karoo Desert National Botanical Garden in Worcester and at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden in Cape Town. Another species, *Glottiphyllum linguiforme*, contains a small amount of oxalic acid. The African tribes are known to have made a beer from this plant and early Europeans have used *Glottiphyllum linguiforme* as a yeast, for bread-making.

Thanks to SANBI www.plantzafrica.com



Botanical Term of the Month:

Vygies, Aizoaceae, Mesembreanthemaceae

What's in a name? This group of plants, the largest and most wide-spread family of succulent plants on earth suffers from name problems. Botanists are always trying to rearrange this huge group of plants to make more sense, both to the professionals and to we lay people.

We heard Priscilla Burgoyne moan over the current work of some botanists where they have reversed 200 years of botanic progress by putting several dozen plants from their own genera back to Mesembreanthemum. Now the issue is, what do we call it? Mesembreanthemum tortuosum or Sceletium tortuosum? I think they just like making the words so hard to pronounce that we are helpless.

I think that this is one time that the common name means as much or more than the scientific one. Vygies are Vygies, we all know that.

From the scientific point of view they are connected by their seed dispersal methods. The seed capsules are the common feature of all vygies.

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

I just wish to confirm our telephone discussion of earlier this morning and wish to thank you for your warm reception in this matter.

As discussed with you, the Board of the Dutch Reformed Congregation of Calitzdorp, has approved that the Calitzdorp Succulent Society and its members, may use the gardens of the church grounds for the establishment of a succulent garden.

It is our sincerest wish that this should be a community initiative for a public garden, so that: the members of the society along with the members of the congregation (many being landowners with access to natural veld teaming with succulents) can contribute to the garden;- the garden should be open for tourists to admire the rich succulent heritage of our environs.

We are looking forward to working with you and thank you for your initiative in this regard. All future correspondence in this matter can be directed for my attention.

We also take this opportunity to wish you well with the upcoming Succulent Festival later this month. We are looking forward to participating in the many activities that will be offered during the weekend of the festival.

Kind regards

Marina Murriss

On behalf of the Church Board

Dutch Reformed Church Calitzdorp