



# Vet Brief

November 2017

Next meeting Sunday 12 November 2017, Jako Voges building 2:00 PM

**Save The Date:**

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

**Dec. Meeting  
17 December  
Holiday Party**

**Jan. Meeting  
21 Jan 2018  
AGM**

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

**Meeting Dates**

12 November  
17 December  
21 January 2018

**Message from the Chair**

Thank you Marie and Grant. We all enjoyed lunch at the Retreat and hope for a better weather day in the future.

We have begun to put together an educational program suggested by our member from Ladismith, Jenni Sussens. At her suggestion, I contacted Priscilla Burgoyne in George and she has agreed to start a program of taking people to the veld to study Vygies (or Mesembs). We are working on the program now, but we intend to launch it on December 1 and 2 in Ladismith and Calitzdorp. We are intending to take as many as 10 people at a time on a morning's walk in several spots. We will discover the Vygies there and collect some seed capsules from several of them. In the afternoon, we will take the capsules and photos to a work space. Priscilla will demonstrate how the capsules distribute the seed. We will extract seed from the capsules and sew them in pots to take home.

I believe that this exercise is exactly what we had intended when we started thinking about forming the Calitzdorp Succulent Society. More to come on our web site.

We need a person to take charge of the project at the church. Please contact a member of the Committee if you are willing to get involved.

Jako, Yvonne and I attended the Rare Plant Fair in Stellenbosch in October and spoke with several growers of succulent plants and invited them to attend next year's Vetplantfees. All of them had heard about our Fees and all are intending to participate in 2018. We will have many more plants for sale next year.

Calitzdorp Tourism has invited us to have a seat on their Committee beginning in November. We will continue to take part in the events and activities that Tourism sponsors as well as our own. We will have a stall at the Apricot Festival in December.

Our November meeting will be the second annual Seed Workshop. It will be held at Jako Voges' building on Sunday, November 12 at 2:00 PM. We have a lot of new seed from this season and will share it with attending members so they can sew seed from different varieties of succulents. Please bring one or 2 of the plants that you sewed last year to loom at..

See you at the meeting.

Buck

**November Meeting :**

**Our annual seed workshop at Jako Voges building on November 12 at 2:00 PM. Bring some that you planted last year**

**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: *Stapelia hirsuta*

*Stapelia hirsuta* Linnaeus 1753 (AKA: **star flower, carrion flower, aasblom**) Known globally as African starfish flowers, and locally as carrion flowers, members of the genus *Stapelia* are usually characterised by their foul-smelling flowers reminiscent of the odour of rotting meat. The hairs, coloration and surface mimic decaying animal matter and attract mostly flies, which act as pollinators. The strong carrion scent is sometimes recognisable at a great distance, especially on hot afternoons. Stapelias are low, perennial succulents. The stems, their surface and branching make them immediately recognisable. *Stapelia hirsuta*'s stems are almost always erect and are usually uniformly green to reddish with small hair-like structures making them look pubescent



The flowers are star-shaped born usually at or near the base of the plant. The flower color is highly variable, but in the Klein Karoo tend to be solid color, deep red and about 140 mm across.

Members of this strictly entomophilous (strongly associated with insects) genus occupy a wide diversity of habitats, mostly in arid areas. The putrid smell of the flowers of many species attracts flies and other insects for pollination (myophily). It has been reported

that flies are sometimes so deceived by the odour that they lay their eggs around the fleshy corona, convinced that it will be a food source for their hatching larvae.

Stapelias are subjects of interest rather than beauty and are frequently grown by collectors of succulents. Some large-flowered species make a good show when grown in masses in the garden. In general they are drought-resistant succulents suited for rockeries, and the small-flowered species are suitable as container plants. They are excellent subjects for a water-wise garden. The sterile stems are very attractive when planted in full sunlight. When in full flower, pollinators are attracted by the odour. For the eco-friendly gardener this is a way of attracting food for birds and reptiles such as lizards to the garden.

Thanks to SANBI [www.plantzafrica.com](http://www.plantzafrica.com)



Flower in our garden



On the road near Redstone Hills

## Botanical Term of the Month:

### Hirsute, Pubescent

Hairy. The two words are used to describe the physical nature of a plant. Obviously the flowers of *Stapelia hirsuta* are quite “hairy”, thus the name **hirstua**. In addition the stems have very short hair-like structures on them making them look velvet-like or **pubescent**

**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*

## At The Rare Plant Fair

