



Vet Brief

April 2017

Next meeting Sunday 9 April 2017 at Jako Voges' Building 2:00 PM

Save The Date

9 April General Meeting
Vegetative Propagation

Vetplantfees

25- 27 Sept.

Meeting Dates

14 May
11 June
9 July
13 August
10 September
23 – 25 September
"Vetplantfees"
8 October
12 November
10 December
21 January 2018

Message from the Chair

Thanks to Jako for hosting last month's meeting. I think that we all got a lot out of the pictures that people brought to share.

Planning for **Vetplantfees** is coming along. There will be a meeting of the planning committee on Monday, April 10 at Buck & Yvonne's at 5:00 PM. All members are invited to attend and pitch in.

The feature of our April meeting will be Vegetative Propagation of succulent plants. We will demonstrate how to make more of your favorite plant.

Please feel free to bring potted plants, or pictures of plants that you wish to have identified or to discuss as it might be blooming, etc. to any meeting.

Beginning with this Newsletter, we have begun a Plant of the Month feature and a Botanical Term of the Month article. More stuff to follow. If you have anything to contribute, please send it to Buck.

The Calitzdorp Tourism Bureau is helping out with additional publicity for us with their huge distribution list. We are working very hard at getting the word out.

We are working on a web site and should have something functioning by mid April.

It is no secret, we are Very Dry. While we all pray for rain, please note that your succulent plants still look the best in your garden. They are adapted for drought conditions, but a whole summer with little or no rain is hard on any plant. There is some water running into the Calitzdorp dam as this is being written, but it is a small trickle and certainly not enough to fill the dam to any great extent. I know that we are all doing our best to follow the guidelines of the Municipality regarding garden watering. Keep you game face on and hope for rain.

See you all at the meeting,

Buck

April Meeting :

We will have a demonstration on vegetative propagation . These are methods of making more plants from the ones that you are growing to expand the plant pallet in your garden. How to *Slice and Dice* for more Succulent Fun.

Leadership Team

Chairman – Buck Hemenway 076-298-7337

Vice Chairman – Mike Horan

Secretary – Jako Voges

Treasurer – Yvonne Hemenway

Director – Irma Welman

Plant of the Month: *Gibbeaum heathii*

Gibbeaum heathii (L. Bolus 1937) AKA: *Hondebal*, *Hondebalvygie*, *Bababoudjie*. Distributed in the western Klein Karoo. Blooms in late winter to early spring. Flowers are white to pink variably in single populations. A treasure of our local veld. It is a member of the Aizoaceae family that we generally call Vygies.



Many Vygies grow by going dormant for a period of time and using up the moisture stored in their leaves while growing a new set during that dormant period. They are identified as a group by the type of seed capsules which they share.

They can be propagated from mature clumps by removing stems with roots intact from the mother clump. Seeds can be germinated and grown with relative ease.

Beautiful pink flowers in September near Calitzdorp.

Most of the *Gibbeaum* genus grow in gravelly loose soil. It is very fast draining, always. In addition, the root system is a heavy tap root that wants to grow quite deep. One should take care to plant this species in fast draining soil and, if in a pot use a very deep one, thus avoiding the plant's reputation of easily succumbing to root rot.

The plants are available from several of our local specialized nurseries.



People looking at Gibbeaum heathii



With white flowers in Groenfontein Nature Reserve

One should water this plant only when the soil is dry. Since it is native to our local area, it can be left on its own except during extreme drought when watering once every 6 weeks or so is adequate.

The flower display in spring is just fantastic.

We chose this plant to be the symbol of the Calitzdorp Succulent Society because it is one of our most iconic local plants. Thanks again to Irma Welman for her beautiful drawing.

Botanical Term of the Month;

Genus & Species

How we name plants (and other living things on our planet). The way we organize the names of plants and animals so that we can all refer to them in an orderly manner was devised by Carl Linneaus (1707 – 1778) who was Swedish. There are 7 levels of classification, but we usually only refer to Genus and species

The 2 part term that names the plant is called the **Binomial epithet**. The Binomial is expressed in Latin or Latinized words which follow Latin grammatical rules. The entire Binomial should be written in italics, but this practice is not too well followed.

Genus: A group of plants exhibiting common ancestry and common characteristics with regards to the looks (morphology), reproductive characteristics and others. The Genus name is always capitalized when written (ie: *Gibbeaum*). **Genera** (plural of Genus)

Species: A word that depicts a single type of plant within the Genus. The species is never capitalized, unless a hybrid or cultivated name is adopted to the Binomial. (ie: *heathii*)

Vetplantfees 2017

We are moving along with planning for the first ever Vetplantfees.

Demonstration Garden The club has offered to install a demonstration garden at the Calitzdorp Station, in part to thank Cheryl and Mike for hosting the event. We are looking for donations now. We will need soil (approx. 20 cu meters. Rocks, many and fairly large to define the garden space. Irrigation equipment, 15mm pipe, sprinkling apparatus, valves, etc., and the finally, plants. You can help in several ways. After we have the donated material, we will have several work parties to get the garden put together. We can use cash donations that are earmarked specifically for this garden. We can use donated materials, call Buck to find out what is needed (076-298-7337).

Distribution of advertising material If you are planning a driving trip anywhere in the Western Cape, you can help by taking our brochures to Botanical Gardens, Nurseries and the like. Call Buck to find out more.