



**AFRICAN BOTANIC GARDEN NETWORK
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REPORT ON THE ENTEBBE BOTANIC GARDEN

John Mulumba Wasswa, Entebbe Botanic Garden

The EBG was established in 1898 as a reception centre for plants of potential economic value to Uganda. The garden has a collection of over 300 species, and occupies 40 ha on the shores of Lake Victoria, close to the town of Entebbe. After a period of deterioration due to political turmoil, the EBG is now attempting to upgrade its infrastructure and collections. To date, the following programmes have been initiated.

- Conservation & research – identification of species, population censusing, introduction of threatened indigenous species e.g. Yams (*Dioscorea spp.*) and wild rice.
- Education – Programmes highlighting the importance of Botanic Gardens and raising awareness of plant genetic resource conservation have been initiated.
- Recreation – Lawns are being maintained, and seats, toilets and dustbins etc. provided.

In addition, the gardens have joined the Plant Genetic Resources Programme (PGRP) run by the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), and have finalised a strategic plan for 2001-2005. A SWOT analysis has also been carried out. The EBG hopes to capitalise on its size, and the diversity of its plant collection. The gardens are well located, topographically diverse, and contain a number of different habitats. They are fenced, fairly secure, and easily accessed from hotels in Entebbe. The gardens have adequate facilities for conventional nursery activities, adequate office space, and a 3.7 km road network. The EBG does not, however, have a visitor reception area, and has no interpretation of what the gardens have to offer visitors. Other obstacles include a lack of staff, lack of guided tours, weak collaborative linkages and lack of an efficient records and information management system. The EBG also needs to update its living indigenous collections and develop a collection policy. The biggest obstacle faced by EBG is a lack of capital, and staff for development projects.

Anyone wishing to know more about the EBG's plans can contact John Mulumba Wasswa – foridir@infocom.co.ug

BGCI 5th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens.

**'CONNECTING WITH PLANTS – LESSONS FOR LIFE'
29 September – 4 October, 2002**

BGCI and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, invite you to submit abstracts for presentations at this Congress. Workshop, paper, poster and educational fair presentations are being sought from botanic garden educators, and educators working in zoos, museums, plant science institutions, national parks etc. Abstracts will be evaluated by the Congress Planning Committee for their suitability. All abstracts must address one or more of the congress themes.

- Evaluation and research
- Multiculturalism and indigenous issues in interpretation
- Linking science and sustainability
- Novel methods in interpretation/communication
- Forming partnerships (with museums, national parks, forests etc.)

Please send abstracts using the following format:

Font: 12 point Times New Roman

Line spacing and margins: single line spacing; 3cm margins all round

Title: Bold, all upper case, centred

Author: Leave one line space below title; list first name first for each author; bold, upper and lower case, centred

Author address: Leave one space below author; list affiliation/institution address (3 lines maximum); upper and lower case, centred

Text: Leave three line spaces below address; left justified, right unjustified; One line space between paragraphs, no indentations

Please send abstract either on diskette, or via email, as an MS Word document or Rich Text Format file to Julia Willison or Lucy Sutherland at BGCI at the address below by 29 June 2001.

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Tel: +44 (0) 20 83325953 Fax: +44 (0) 20 83325956

Email: jw@bgci.rbgekew.org.uk and Lucy.Sutherland@bgci.rbgekew.org.uk

Visit the congress website: www.rbgkyd.nsw.gov.au

SABONET: Building Capacity in Southern African Botanical Gardens

Christopher Willis, Christopher Dalzell and Stefan Siebert

The Southern African Botanical Diversity Network (SABONET) Project, funded by the GEF/UNDP and managed by the National Botanical Institute, hosted the first Regional Workshop of southern African botanical gardens in Pretoria at Witwatersrand National Botanical Gardens, South Africa, from 12-16 March 2001. Representatives from 20 botanical gardens in eight southern African countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe) attended the meeting. Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) and Limbe Botanic Garden (Cameroon) were also represented at the meeting. The workshop produced an *Action Plan for Southern African Botanical Gardens*, a major contribution to the proposed Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. The Action Plan will be published as Number 12 in the occasional *SABONET Report Series* in June 2001, and will be available free of charge from the SABONET Regional Co-ordinator, Mr Stefan Siebert. The region's gardens have also committed themselves to implementing the International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation, launched at the World Botanic Gardens Congress held in Asheville, North Carolina, USA, in June 2000. Details regarding SABONET's support for further southern African botanical garden activities will be provided in the next edition of this bulletin.

This SABONET initiative builds upon many other regional botanical capacity-building activities undertaken by the project in the 10 countries of southern Africa (which includes Angola and Swaziland) over the past five years, including training courses, support for postgraduate studies, regional plant collecting expeditions, computerisation of herbaria, preparation of national plant checklists, regional botanical diversity inventories and needs assessments. The project has also supported the purchase of essential herbarium equipment and a field collecting vehicle in each of the 10 participating countries. With co-funding from USAID/IUCN ROSA, the SABONET project is also currently preparing a Plant Red Data List for the 10 countries of southern Africa. The *International Agenda for Botanic Gardens* is available free, by email attachment from BGCI: <bgci@rbgekew.org.uk>

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AT THE LIMBE BOTANIC GARDEN

Chris Fominyam

In April this year, the Limbe Botanic Gardens in Cameroon found a novel way to illustrate indigenous knowledge. This took the form of a rattan bridge over the River Limbe, which flows through the gardens. This technology comes from the Nyang Village, deep in the forests of southwest Cameroon. This region is characterised by deep gullies and wide rivers, and the cane bridge was developed to help the first visitors and foreigners in the region to negotiate these obstacles. It took ten youths from the Nyang Village three days to construct the twenty metre bridge. The bridge has a carrying capacity of five adults and a predicted life span of three years. However, the bridge is pulling crowds to the garden, and has become a test of bravery for most visitors, children and adults alike. Because of its popularity, it has been decided to shorten its life span to two years. The bridge was constructed through a joint project involving the African Rattan Research Programme and the Takamanda Forest Project, with funding from the Limbe Botanic Garden.

THE FOOD AND MUTHI GARDEN PROJECT AT THE NATAL NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Phakamani Xaba

This project aims to educate the general public about useful indigenous plants, stimulate interest in the development of indigenous crops, and help in the conservation of threatened medicinal plant species. In communities suffering from poverty, poor health, and a lack of information, this project could play a role in improving quality of life. Focussing on practical horticulture that addresses people's basic needs of food, medicine and shelter, the project has the following goals:

- Identifying and sourcing medicinal, food, roofing, basketry, matting and erosion control plants used by rural communities and encouraging the use of these plants.
- Providing instruction on how to propagate these plants.
- Selecting suitable food crops for specific geographic regions, and giving advice on how to grow these plants.
- Teaching practical garden planning and design.
- Promoting plants which can be used for fencing, livestock, and to prevent soil erosion.
- Encourage cultivation and development of indigenous fruit trees, cereal, vegetables, berries and nuts.

Thusfar, a list of plants has been compiled and the layout of the garden has been planned. Local traditional healers and professional ethnobotanists have been consulted, and seeds and plants have been sourced from the wild, from muthi markets, and community based development projects. Hard landscaping has commenced and most of the main feature plants have been planted, including *Encephalartos* species, *Warburgia salutaris*, *Ocotea bullata* and *Prunus africana*. The project has also established a relationship with the CINDI Network, a non-profit organisation working with AIDS orphans. The project intends to pass on medicinal plant propagation skills, as well as stock plants to the CINDI Network.

WITWATERSRAND NBG DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN BROCHURE

Christopher Willis

A development campaign brochure has been produced by the Witwatersrand National Botanical Garden in South Africa. The aim of the brochure is as follows:

To provide information about sponsorship opportunities, regarding

- completed projects
- on-going projects, and
- proposed projects planned for the Witwatersrand NBG.

The brochure is designed to assist sponsors to identify projects they would like to support, and to help gardens' staff focus fund-raising efforts towards specific projects. These projects include, amongst others, the following:

Restaurant/Conference facility (R 3 000 000)	Upgrading of bridges (R 200 000)
New Visitors Centre and entrance (R 2 000 000)	Parking area extension (R 5 00 000)
Garden Centre and Shop (R 2 000 000)	Concert Stage (R 80 000)
Nursery Development (R 2 000 000)	Fieldwork/estate management vehicle (R 170 000)
Conservatory/Display Glasshouse (R 6 000 000)	

Planned educational theme gardens include a Magico-medicinal Garden, Fragrance Garden, Succulent Rockery, Geological Garden, Bushveld Area, Water Garden and water feature and Turf Grass and Climate Garden. The estimated cost of these theme gardens will be in the region of R 820 000.

More information on the above projects may be requested from the Curator of the Witwatersrand NBG, Ms. Sharon Turner, at the following address:

Witwatersrand NBG, Wilropark 1731, South Africa Tel.: (27) 11 958 1750 Fax: (27) 11 958 1752

E-mail: witsnbg@mweb.co.za Web site: <http://www.nbi.ac.za/frames/witsfram.htm>

Please note: a volunteer is needed to edit the next edition of the bulletin. If anyone is interested, then please could they contact Mark Mattson - MarkM@prcsu.durban.gov.za