



ORTHOLOPHA

The Newsletter of the Aloe, Cactus and
Succulent Society of Zimbabwe

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Issue 15-09 September 2015

Hi Everyone,

The year is drawing to a close and our R. are Plant Sale next week is the three-month harbinger of the end! Don't miss the sale and be sure to come with enough time to look at the NAGC Horticultural show's exhibits being held at the same venue but under the trees opposite.

We have started our Health Column as we are concerned that with an ageing population our members may well become daisy-promoters if we do not give some valuable pointers on how to stay sprightly. *Bulbine frutescens* is a common member of the Liliaceae family that occurs naturally in southern Africa and has been used by San people for thousands of years.

Cheers,
Mafungi.

Your Committee

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Aloe, Cactus & Succulent
Society of Zimbabwe

Plants for our Future



ALOES, SUCCULENTS, CACTI, SABI STARS, BAOBABS, PALMS & CYCADS

RARE PLANT SALE | SUNDAY 27th SEPTEMBER 2015: 9am - 1pm

Harare Botanic Gardens HERBARIUM entrance

Flowering Aloe: September

What is this aloe, on the right?

Send your knowledgeable and considered opinions to bo.hoom52@yahoo.com. The respected judge's decision is final and the winner will get a box of choice Belgian chocolates, provided they are shared.

Photo by Caryl Stutchbury

There was no lucky winner yet in August so you can still enter for that as well.

Prizes will be awarded at the October meeting to be announced soon.



You can win a box of chocolates!!!!

Send your entries to Mafungi at bo.hoom52@yahoo.com

The Aloe above is the September entry. What is it?

No clues but most of you saw this Aloe recently in a Northern suburbs garden.

Please remember to try and take part in the National Association of Garden Clubs Horticultural Show to be held concurrently with our Rare Plant Sale next week. You have all been sent details and the various categories so please make an effort and submit your best plants/planting arrangements as per the circular you were sent. Tomorrow is the deadline, but provided you alert the organisers I am sure even late entries will find a warm welcome. Share your secrets and design talents with the World!

Annual Subscriptions: If you haven't yet paid, please do, there are a small number of members not yet paid for 2015.

Subs are only \$20 per person/couple. If you don't see one of the committee members, you can pay the CABS account:

CABS Platinum: Aloe, Cactus and Succulent Society

Acc #: 901 649 1871 Reference: kindly include your full names as a reference in any deposit.

Alternatively send \$21-00 through EcoCash to 0783 911314

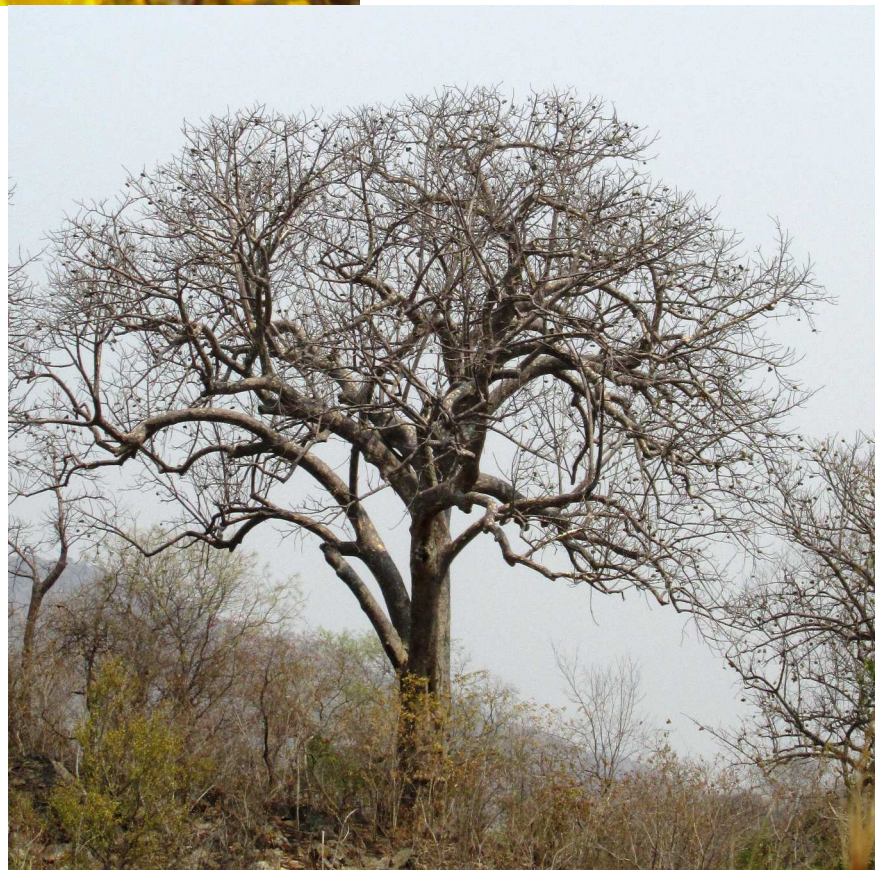


On a recent trip to the Matusadonna Mountains on the southern shore of the Eastern Basin of Lake Kariba we found this beautiful flowering plant along the road.

Not a succulent you might say and therefore why include it in this publication? Well I think anything that can sprout from hidden reserves held deep underground in the height of the dry season should be considered a Xerophyte and therefore one of ours!!! In this case the plant is a species of *Ochna*, a more common species is *Ochna pulchra* or the Mickey Mouse Tree.

Then on an arduous hike to a spring known as Shashame Springs, we encountered this magnificent specimen of *Sterculia*.

These trees I think we can safely claim them as one of ours, the trunks and bark are rich in pink, red and grey colours. They thrive in the driest of ecosystems, usually where there is little soil and much rock and they stand out, especially in the hot dry season as stark reminders that it is a well-balanced tree that is only fully clothed in the summer months when rain abounds. How I wish I had planted these trees in my garden twenty or thirty years ago!



For the adventurous the Matusadonna Mountains are well worth a visit, for the sheer beauty of the trees and other flora. However the road in is a challenge to say the least although now there is a back road recently opened up which is not quite as bone-jarring as the main road in through Chifiudzi and Vilanduli. If anyone would like details, let me know and I'll pass on what I can. Game is sparse but there are some excellent camping sites by springs and you are almost guaranteed not to see another human being. Four wheel drive and a minimum of two-vehicle convoys are a must.



The Health Corner

In our family we are great believers in the health benefits of the humble *Bulbine frutescens*. Almost everyone is aware of the much-hyped attributes of *Aloe vera* which has been used extensively in Europe and the Middle East for many hundreds of years to the extent that its centre of origin is no longer known. In fact the *Aloe vera* industry is now huge with vast estates in the United States growing the plant and a multitude of extracts harvested from the plant leaves and the gel is crushed, purified and then bottled, canned, made into gels, mixed with food and drinks, shampoos, conditioners and everything else in between. But everything that *Aloe vera* can do, *Bulbine frutescens* can also do and we believe it is even better! And the huge advantage is that almost every suburban garden has one of these plant colonies growing somewhere and with a bit of care and attention the Bulbine can be kept lush and full of vitality! To use it you pluck a leaf, choose a plump one, split it open to expose the gel inside and just rub it on the skin, rash, open wound or whatever part of your body you want to look better. I was introduced to it by a little old lady who lived on Acacia farm just outside Kadoma in the mid-1970's and she saw a huge weeping volcanic-like wound just next to my elbow on my right arm. In those days it was perfectly legal to drive with your arm outside the window. The sun had wreaked havoc and if not already cancerous, the wound was probably pretty close to being so. Miraculously the wound healed. The volcanic bump subsided and my arm was back to normal. And I was sold on this humble plant. Later we befriended some Canadian doctors who were stationed at Howard Institute near Glendale. The husband had a terrible rotting wound on his thumb which had been infected in the hospital he worked in and had turned an ugly black colour and was probably gangrenous. He had tried every anti-biotic in the medicine chest and nothing was working. His thumb was doomed! However we plucked some Bulbine leaves from the plants just outside our front door rubbed on the gel and two days later his affliction was just a memory. If you grow Bulbine, position it in the garden where it will be the most useful. Outside the front or kitchen doors are good options and every time you walk past, pluck a leaf, split it and rub it on to itchy rashes, open sores, burns etc etc.

I even shave with the gel and am convinced the razor blade lasts much longer. And of course there is no soapy pollution! When we go on holiday or hiking the first thing I pack are some fresh leaves of Bulbine, carried in a pet bottle with a little water at the bottom and this becomes the sunscreen lotion for the journey.

So there you are, now your Society has joined the world of elixirs, potions, snake oils and cure-alls! In fact we will be the last ones to let you down if you follow our advice, but now at four score and ten!

Anyone who has a health idea that works from our local flora, please feel free to submit your potion to me at bo.hoom52@yahoo.com and we will try and include this in future Newsletters. You may save a friend from certain death!

Cheers, Mafungi!

See you at the Plant sale next week.