

View From The Top

If you are reading this newsletter, you undoubtedly love garden birds. We bet you also love **all** birds.

With spring coming, why not consider a trip to Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. We have never seen so many assembled secretary birds, not to mention kori bustards, and various owls, falcons and eagles – generally raptors to every point in the compass.

It is a mecca for photographers. But you do not need a camera, just sit back and enjoy!

PS1: Birdlife SA has just announced the Owl Award winners 2017. Our congratulations to these deserving winners!

PS2: Birdlife SA and partners have (at least temporarily) halted the mining of the Wakkerstroom wetlands (see our June newsletter). Great news, and a wake-up call to us all.

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Birding Shrub of the Month

Cancer Bush (*Lessertia frutescens*, previously *Sutherlandia*)

In keeping with our Kalahari theme, a shrub that survives pretty well in the Green Kalahari. So if you have a dry and sandy garden... A disclaimer: we have one in our garden, and it is not dry or sandy, so it will do well just about anywhere!

The shrub is quite small (1,2m). It will enhance your garden with red flowers and large pods.

There are claims of "miracle" cancer cures that we cannot comment upon. But the plant will attract insects, and birds will follow...



Cancer Bush

Nature's Heart "As we prepare for Spring"

Specials of the Month

Valid from 1 August 2017 until 25 August 2017 or while stocks last. (All prices include VAT).

1): Decorative Nectar Feeders (Butterfly and Chameleon).

R100,00

2): Large Nectar Feeder

R110,00

3): Nectar Mix Sachet.

R6,50

4): Nectar Mix Bulk Bags

R60,00

5): Sparrow Hotel

R190,00

6): Robin Nesting Box

R170,00

7): Sparrow Nesting House

R120,00

8): Wooden Bird Perch

R90,00

Bon Mots

Agriculture is the foundation of civilization and of any stable economy.

Allan Savory

[So let us look after the land, and who knows, perhaps it will look after us! (Editors note)]

Environmental Chirps

This month a quotation from the RSPB:

"Providing birds with supplementary food will bring them closer for you to marvel at their fascinating behaviour and wonderful colours. It will also reward them for sharing their lives with you. Feeding birds is also an ideal way to enthuse children about wildlife.

Supplementary feeding can't provide all the natural proteins and vitamins that adult and young birds need, so it's important to create and manage your garden to provide a source of natural foods as well, through well-managed lawns, shrubs and flowerbeds."

Bird of the Month

Malachite Kingfisher (*Alcedo cristata*)

This little fellow was photographed recently near our home. Sadly, you are less likely to have a resident if you are not near water. Conversely, an ample supply of fingerlings in your garden fish pond may guarantee some attention (as a friend of ours can attest).

The bird is smaller than you realise, and somehow devours larger prey than you would imagine.

It achieves the position of "Bird of the Month" because it is so colourful and pretty. They do not visit (most) gardens regularly, but when they do, they dominate your viewing.

