



# Green Ink

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I am the one whose  
praise echoes on high.  
I adorn all the earth.  
I am the breeze that  
nurtures all things  
green.  
I encourage blossoms to  
flourish with ripening  
fruits.  
I am led by the spirit to  
feed the purest  
streams.  
I am the rain coming  
from the dew that  
causes the grasses to  
laugh with the joy of  
life.  
I am the yearning for  
good.

Hildegard of Bingen

Dear Botsoc members and all other plant lovers,

Taking a few drives out of Windhoek lately, I am, once again, struck by the way in which Mother Nature just simply continues “to be”, despite a pandemic, rain or the lack of it, heat, browsing etc. Most bushes and trees are heavily laden with fruit, many of them in lush green foliage, thanks to a little moisture some weeks ago. At the moment the weather is hot, but a “reasonable” rainy season is predicted by the experts. We remain forever hopeful!

The Botanical Society was active in the best way it could be this year. And, we are very happy to invite you, at last, to a face-to-face event on Thursday, 19 November, in the form of a quiz; and at the same time, an end of year event, a celebration and a social evening. The last scheduled Garden Walk of this disruptive year will be held on Saturday, 14 November.

This Green Ink includes a report on the Tree Awards of 2020, an interesting article on a treasure found in Namibia, the *Adenia pechuellii*, and it entices you to nominate your favourite “Living Legend”. My thanks go to all those who have helped compile, edit and send out the issues of Green Ink this year. I trust that the newsletter has offered enjoyment, whets your interest in our remarkable world of plants and entices you to be involved in its preservation.

Special offers at lodges and places of interest encourage Namibians to visit places in their own country. It is hoped that the tourism sector realises the potential of the local customer, also in the long run. Please make the most of this time where Namibians are able, financially and otherwise, to enjoy our own country.

Stay safe and enjoy this edition of Green Ink  
Kind regards

**Ellen Gudde**

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*Adenia pechuellii*

## *Adenia pechuelii*

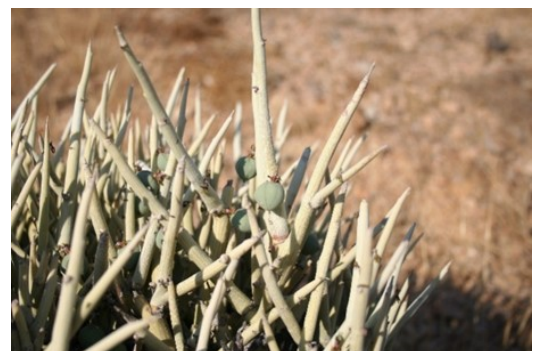
*Text and photos Sonja Loots*

The remarkable stem succulent *Adenia pechuelii* (desert Kohlrabi, elephant's foot) belongs to the granadilla family (Passifloraceae). Currently considered to be endemic to Namibia, they occur along the escarpment from south of the Namib Rand game reserve to close to the Kunene river, possibly crossing into Angola. The species is dioecious (the male and female flowers occur on separate plants) so that male and female plants can only be told apart when in flower or when the fruit develops. The flowers are rather nondescript but the fruit (a berry) is bright red when ripe. The plants occur in a variety of sizes and unusual shapes and can withstand severe damage to the main stem, usually inflicted by porcupines and other rodents. Although it is difficult to determine their age, it is safe to assume that they are slow growing and long-lived. Populations are therefore vulnerable to disturbance such as mining activities where individuals are removed from their habitat. Population sizes range from just a few plants to over 800 plants, according to a survey that was conducted between 2006 and 2008.

The current conservation status is Least Concern (LC) but there are serious conservation concerns because of habitat destruction, skewed sex ratios, poor recruitment and there may only be very few viable populations. In addition we have been unable to collect a single seed accession that is large enough for *ex situ* conservation due to many capsules being sterile. These concerns may be enough to revise the conservation status and the Threatened Plants Programme of the NBRI has tagged 100 plants in each of four of the largest populations for long term monitoring of population parameters.

This peculiar member of our natural heritage is

protected by the Forest Act of 2001 and was added to the list of specially protected plant species that will be enforced as soon as the new Protected Area and Wildlife Bill passes into law.



## Tree Awards 2020

Covid-19 restrictions meant that attendance at the Tree Awards was limited to the recipients of the awards, staff from the City of Windhoek and several CAPP members. Ellen Gudde, Chairperson, welcomed all present and then Barbara Curtis, Vice-Chair, introduced Frances Chase, the coordinator of the Tree Awards. Frances began her presentation with a recap of why we have the Tree Awards, followed by information on the Tree of the Year, *Strychnos cocculoides*. She touched on the regulations regarding the cutting down of trees in municipal areas and then introduced the search for Living Legend Trees (see below).

A short resumé of the awardees and their projects followed, after which Ellen handed out the awards to the representatives present.

### Tree Awards

**Mr Nick du Preez** who had saved a 300-year-old Camel Thorn tree during the development of Total Riverside service station 14 years ago, that later became Die Boomhuis Coffee Shop.

**The High Commission of India** in Namibia for re-designing their boundary wall and cultural hall to accommodate several large trees on the property, accepted by HE Mr Prashant Agrawal.

**B2Gold** for a proactive approach to rehabilitation, ensuring propagating and planting of indigenous trees/shrubs whilst in operation, received by Miya Kabayani on their behalf.

### Certificates of Recognition

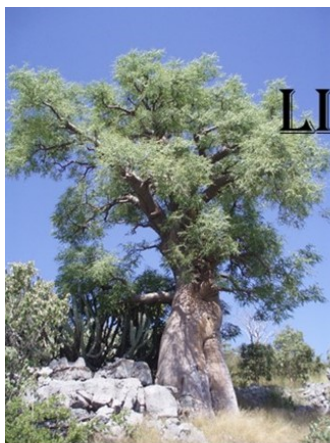
**Dr Sydney Memorial College**, represented by Dr Sydney Chikukwa and Mr Godwin Chirisa were handed the certificate for their initiative in saving several large indigenous trees during their building operations.

**Ms Agnes Shivutue**, in absentia, for starting a nursery and her vision to create environmental awareness in northern Namibia.



L-R Mr Nick du Preez, HE Mr Prashant Agrawal, Ms Miya Kabajani, Mr Godwin Chirisa, Dr Sydney Chikukwa,

Photos: Top: Barbara Curtis Bottom: Jaco Fourie



## In search of a LIVING LEGEND

- Looking for very special individual trees
- Trees that have survived or are unique in some way

Have you seen a tree that truly stands out – for its size, its shape, its unique quality?

We invite everyone to join in and help find them

Send photograph, locality (GPS position if you have) and why you think that particular tree is a Living Legend

to

[nambotsoc@gmail.com](mailto:nambotsoc@gmail.com)



## Coming up . . .

	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>November</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>08h00 Guided Walk in the Botanic Garden</b>
	<b>Thursday</b>		<b>19</b>	<b>Quiz Evening &amp; End of Year Social (RSVP)</b>
<b>2021</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>08h00 Guided Walk in the Botanic Garden</b>

## New Membership categories

<b>Welwitschia</b>	<b>Namib Trees</b>
<b>Moringa</b>	<b>Nina Maritz Architects</b>
<b>Lithops</b>	<b>Erika Benz</b>
	<b>Olga Jones</b>
	<b>Norman &amp; Avril Green</b>

Joy on the faces of these little ones after they were handed Botsoc T-shirts!

Thirty white t-shirts were divided between the Orange Babies at Five Rand Camp in Okahandja (photo) and children of the San community living on the farm Balalaika near Outjo.

The larger sizes of these T-shirts had sold out very quickly but we were left with the smaller sizes sitting in our boxes for a number of years. The sizing of the T-shirts was unusually small, more suitable for children than adults, for whom they had been ordered.

At a recent CAPP meeting it was decided to donate the T-shirts to worthy causes. Manda Steynberg gave 15 to the Orange Babies and Diana Thompson arranged transport for the other 15 to go to Dee Ipinge who promotes the impoverished community at Balalaika.



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