

Know, grow, protect and enjoy South Africa's indigenous plants



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BOTANICAL SOCIETY
OF SOUTH AFRICA

Annual Report 2026

1 April 2025 - 31 March 2026



Yelloweye woodsorrel (*Oxalis obtusa*). By Tristan Kruger.



Council Chairperson's Message – Frank Webb

For many years, I have had the privilege of serving the Botanical Society of South Africa in leadership roles at both branch and national level. For the past five years, I have also served on Council, giving me a front-row seat to many of the significant changes the Society has experienced over the last two decades.

During this time, we navigated important milestones: the introduction of our 2018 Constitution, the 2022 Pathfinder Convention and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI's) decision to withdraw free access to national botanical gardens for BOT SOC members. While the latter presented real challenges, these moments have also allowed us to redefine BOT SOC, setting our course to strengthen the Society.

One of the most important outcomes was the development of our six conservation focus areas, which now guide our work across South Africa. Council also chose to follow Clem Sunter's High Road philosophy: embracing engagement, positive change and long-term sustainability. At the same time, we made the deliberate decision to invest some of our financial reserves in conservation action while building our fundraising capacity.

Gaining momentum

In both my professional and personal life, I have experienced successes and setbacks. Over more than 40 years, however, I have learnt that a positive outlook is often what carries us through difficult times. I believe that has been true for BOT SOC too.

And we have every reason to feel optimistic today. Our fundraising efforts are gaining momentum, and our successful partnership with the National Lotteries Commission has enabled several significant conservation projects. We are now preparing a second National Lotteries Commission application that will expand this work beyond the Western Cape.

At the same time, we continue to strengthen the Society itself. Council has engaged actively with branches on the proposed transition of the Society from a voluntary association to a non-profit company, guided by legal professionals specialising in the non-profit sector. The process has progressed well and will help ensure that BOT SOC is fit for purpose, with stronger governance and statutory compliance supporting our fundraising efforts and long-term financial sustainability.

Learning from our branches

We are grateful to all branches that participated. Council has learned a great deal from these engagements this year and we look forward to establishing a Membership Advisory Committee following the 2026 SGM and AGM to continue engaging with branch representatives across the country.

None of this would have been possible without the commitment and loyalty of our members. Whether you volunteer, donate, participate in your branch or simply remain an advocate for South Africa's remarkable flora, you are helping smooth the future of this Society.

It is appropriate to offer a large THANK YOU to our CEO Antonia de Barros and her executive team for all the hard work and forward thinking they have put in over the last year. Often working long hours and managing regular criticism when developing new approaches to "old challenges".

Finally, another big thank you to my fellow Council members for your support and contributions over the last year. Hedwig and Rob are available for re-election while Grant Morrison has moved onto pastures new and is unable to commit the time needed as Treasurer. Thank you very much Grant, for your contribution over the last two years.

– Frank Webb



Message from our Treasurer – Grant Morrison

The Annual Financial Statements set out the consolidated results of the Botanical Society of SA (BOT SOC) and its branches for the year ended 31 March 2026. The Society was fortunate that its investments performed well during the past financial year. This provided welcome funding to support ongoing operating and conservation expenses as we continue the transition from a membership to a donor-funded model, following SANBI's withdrawal of the garden access benefit in March 2024.

The incoming Council will need to maintain its focus on building a credible pipeline of donor funding for both operating expenses and conservation projects. The staff have done an excellent job of keeping the operating costs as low as possible and for that they must be applauded. In addition, the BOT SOC team secured funding to pilot conservation across the Society's six focus areas that were chosen at the Pathfinder Convention in 2022.



Funded projects

Funding was granted by the National Lotteries Commission (NLC) for an initial project in the Western Cape with a view to expanding this project to other provinces. I am pleased to report that the initial project was a success, and we are engaging with the NLC to expand the project into other provinces. The financial position and operations of BOT SOC are discussed in more detail in the full Treasurer's Report for 2026.

A vital step to expanding BOT SOC's potential to secure external funding is the proposed transition from a voluntary association to a non-profit company legal structure. This shift will ensure improved governance and statutory compliance, both of which are important considerations to donors, both local and foreign. All branches will continue to have the option to exist as either an internal or external branch, as they have had this option since 2018. However, existing branches will need to finalise their position by 31 October 2026.

Changes at branch level

The BOT SOC Kirstenbosch Branch adopted its own

separate legal personality as a voluntary association in 2021. The branch's cash reserves have declined significantly over the last few years, mainly due to dwindling membership numbers, revenue loss, limited donations received and fundraising initiatives that have not generated significant income. Unfortunately, the Kirstenbosch bookshop has not returned to profitability in the years following the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, the branch committee has taken the difficult but prudent decision to close the bookshop and has also started implementing measures to scale down branch administrative costs.

The BOT SOC Kogelberg Branch registered a separate non-profit company in November 2025 and the transfer of their operations to the Hangklip Botanical Society is planned for the 2026/27 financial year. The branch bookshop is thriving with a vibrant community of volunteers and members of the branch. It offers visitors to Harold Porter National Botanical Garden an additional attraction to add to their unique garden experience.

I will not be standing for re-election in order to pursue other interests. Thank you to my fellow Council members, the staff and you, the members, for your determination to build on the Botanical Society's rich conservation history in South Africa.

– Grant Morrison

BOT SOC's Council



Chair of Council:
Frank Webb



Vice Chair of Council:
Hedwig Slabig



Treasurer:
Grant Morrison



Council Member:
Rob Soutter



Co-opted Council Member:
Nicole Loebenber

Our Vision

To inspire a South Africa where people love, protect and are custodians of indigenous plants.

Our Mission

BOT SOC is a conservation civil society organisation that conserves South Africa's indigenous plants through programmes geared towards improving knowledge, cultivation and sustainable use, protection and enjoyment of our natural ecosystems.



Know, grow, protect and enjoy South Africa's indigenous plants

CEO's Message – Antonia de Barros



Reflection has been an important tool for the Botanical Society of South Africa over the past five years. As an organisation which celebrated its 113th anniversary, we have taken time to ask difficult questions, learn from our experiences and remain focused on our vision – even as the world around us continues to change.

A changing world holds opportunities. But it also comes with challenges. South Africa's economy remains under pressure, biodiversity loss continues to accelerate, unemployment remains high, and organisations across every sector are competing for increasingly limited resources. In this environment, the solutions we explore have to be iterative, adaptive and able to withstand uncertainty.

For BOT SOC, this has meant embracing change. While declining membership and reduced income have presented challenges, they have also encouraged us to think differently, strengthen our conservation focus, and explore new ways of working with partners and supporters.

A thriving future for BOT SOC will only be possible with the people who stand alongside us.

Whether you volunteer your time, renew your annual membership, make a monthly donation, introduce us to a potential funder, or choose to leave a lasting legacy through a bequest, your support enables BOT SOC to continue protecting South Africa's extraordinary botanical heritage.

Help us make the following possible with your support over the next phase of our journey:

- Securing sustainable funding for both operational and conservation project costs, while managing our resources responsibly;
- Transitioning to a non-profit company, subject to member approval, to strengthen governance and enhance credibility with funders and partners;
- Deepening collaboration with SANBI and other partners to advance in-situ and ex-situ plant conservation and nature-based capacity among our youth;
- Strengthening communication with members, supporters, donors and partners; and
- Growing our conservation impact through our branches and volunteers across South Africa through local action.

We look forward to responding to the findings of the National Biodiversity Assessment and ensuring that our conservation programme remains aligned with South Africa's efforts to meet the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's 30x30 target: protecting 30% of the planet's land and oceans by 2030. BOT SOC is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature as well as the Botanic Gardens Conservation International which enables us to stay abreast of developments, remain relevant and in touch with the broader global network of partners working towards shared goals. Read our VISION 2030 here: <https://bit.ly/460KR8U>.

Every organisation and every individual can make a difference. Shared heritage, shared responsibility, let's protect it together!



Critically Endangered, Bulbine bruynsii.



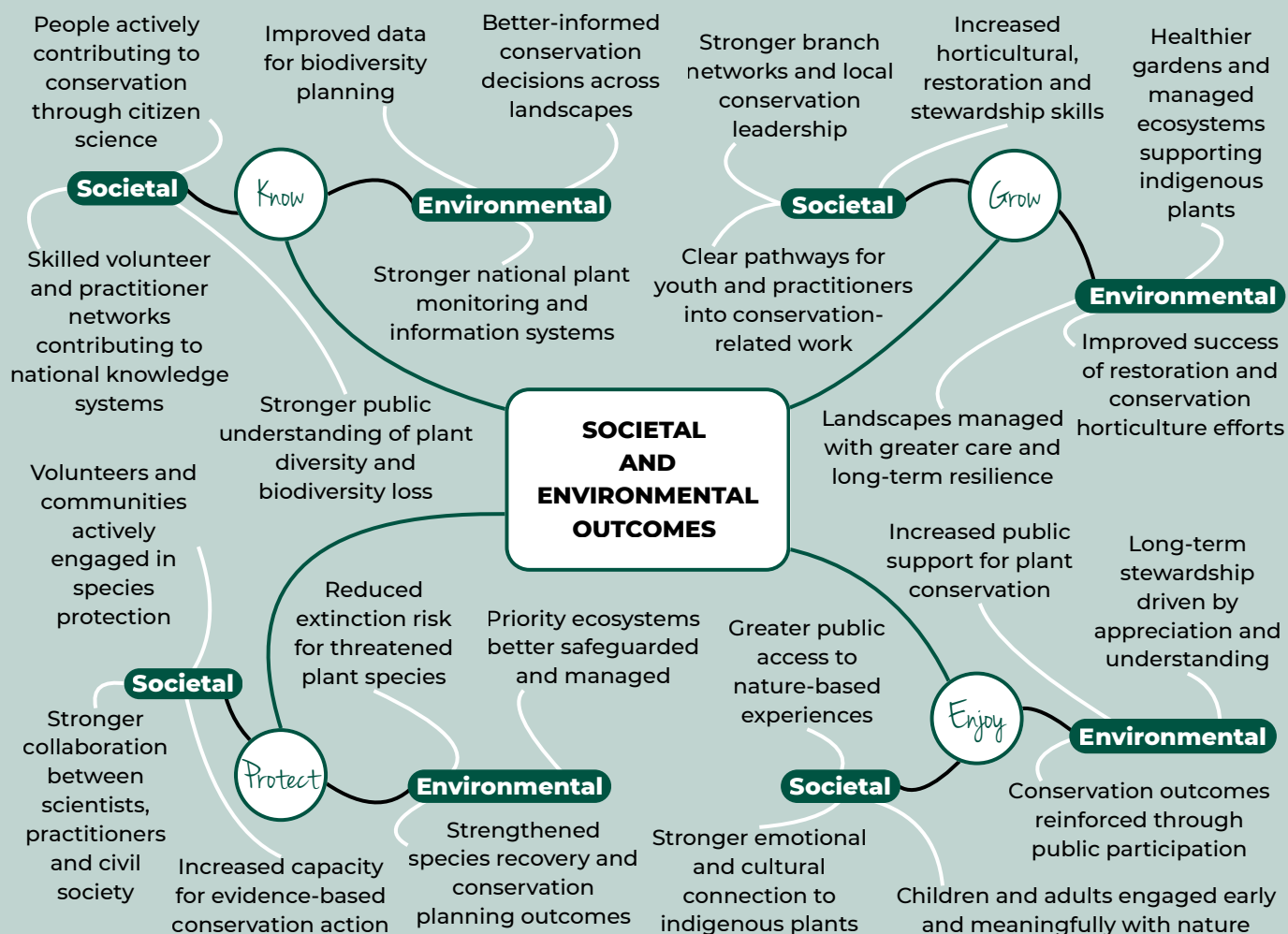
Near Threatened, Fourtone viooltjie (Lachenalia quadricolor).



Endangered, Cinnamon sambreeltjie (Hessea cinnamomea).

Our Theory of Change

Societal and Environmental Outcomes:



Six key conservation focus areas



Member Support

National Footprint



Know, grow, protect and enjoy
South Africa's indigenous plants!

Being a BOT SOC member means that you:

Receive quarterly digital Veld & Flora Hub publication and annual printed magazine

Access interesting volunteer opportunities

Participate in monthly plant-focused webinars

Participate in fun, educational events, talks and nature walks

Belong to an inclusive plant-loving community

Receive our monthly newsletter, BOT SOC Buzz

Receive support for your branch conservation projects

Access capacity-building and awareness opportunities

YOU & YOUR BRANCH

- BOT SOC branches are formed by members who support BOT SOC's mission and objectives.
- Members are automatically affiliated to their nearest branch. Most branches send out electronic newsletters to their members.
- Activities are coordinated by an elected branch committee of volunteer members. For event updates, please check on the branch website or Facebook page or email the branch.
- Participation in all BOT SOC activities is at the individual's personal risk. BotSoc may not be held accountable for any injury, loss or damage to individuals or their property.

Join

Thanks to our technological partnership with Webtickets, you can now renew your membership online easily and quickly using this QR code or via: <https://botanicalsociety.org.za/join-now>. You can also download a digital membership card to your cellphone.

To find out more about BOT SOC, contact your local branch, BOT SOC SA Office or visit our website: www.botanicalsociety.org.za

BOT SOC SA

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WINELANDS

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BOT SOC Membership: Broadening our reach

The membership numbers have reduced from 1 445 members in April 2025 to 1 394 members in March 2026, representing a decrease of 3.53% during the 2025/26 financial year. Of the 1 394 members, 505 are life members (please refer to graphics 1).

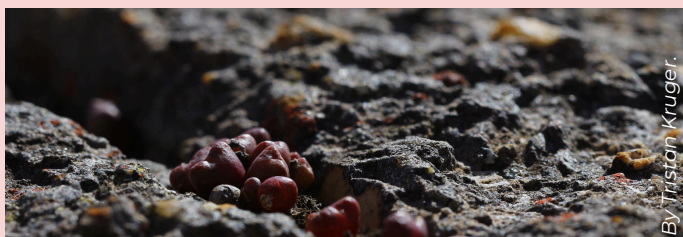
We are grateful to the members who have continued to support BOT SOC beyond the withdrawal of the SANBI garden access benefit in March 2024.

According to Antonia de Barros, CEO of BOT SOC, "These members will become even more important to BOT SOC's sustainability through their involvement in the conservation activities we facilitate at branch and national level. The networks our members build also help broaden BOT SOC's reach, raise awareness and encourage different forms of support for our cause. This involvement is vital to the future of BOT SOC as an organisation and to the conservation programmes we deliver."

LIFE MEMBERS | MEMBERS

ALGOA	2	8	KZN COASTAL	6	108
LIFE	MEMBERS		LIFE	MEMBERS	
CEDERBERG	1	2	KZN INLAND	0	24
LIFE	MEMBERS		LIFE	MEMBERS	
FREE STATE	4	26	LIMPOPO	0	22
LIFE	MEMBERS		LIFE	MEMBERS	
GARDEN ROUTE	3	26	LOWVELD	0	24
LIFE	MEMBERS		LIFE	MEMBERS	
GAUTENG	22	111	SOUTHERN OVERBERG	6	18
LIFE	MEMBERS		LIFE	MEMBERS	
KIRSTENBOSCH	426	413	WESKUS	4	21
LIFE	MEMBERS		LIFE	MEMBERS	
KOGELBERG	19	68	WINELANDS	7	18
LIFE	MEMBERS		LIFE	MEMBERS	

Graphic 1: Members across branches as at March 2026.



The Endangered *Conophytum albiflorum*.

Recovering operational costs

In the past, membership subscription income resourced operational costs. With the sudden drop in membership numbers, from 14 000 to 1 394, the recovery of operational costs is critical to our conservation work. Alternative sources need to be found and as such, we are approaching not only our current members, but also other nature lovers, to consider supporting us in other ways, such as monthly giving programmes, ad-hoc donations and signing up to our Heritage Circle (bequest programme).

Find more information on our Heritage Circle by scanning the below QR code or visiting www.botanicalsociety.org.za/leave-a-legacy/

Botanical Society of South Africa

Join our Heritage Circle

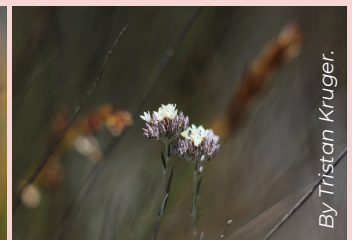


BOT SOC is also calling on professionals interested in volunteering their specialist skills and expertise to support projects aligned with our conservation agenda, including work in partnership with botanical gardens across the country. We encourage you to register with us and get involved.

Contact us via WhatsApp on [065 922 6163](tel:0659226163).



Near Threatened Early blue disa (*Disa purpurascens*).



Critically Endangered Flats blombush (*Metalasia distans*).



BOT SOC's Josh Nienaber at the BOT SOC stall at the Darling Wildflower Show.

Branch highlights: A year of grassroots action

BOT SOC branches continue to demonstrate the remarkable impact of local conservation action. Our dedicated members, volunteers and conservation partners are discovering threatened plant populations, restoring indigenous habitats, mentoring the next generation of botanists, conservationists and horticulturists, eradicating alien species, rescuing poached plants, promoting gardening with indigenous plants and connecting communities with nature.

The addition of the project coordinators, interns and youth workers funded by the National Lotteries Commission provided much-needed capacity to support branches and local conservation activities. This investment in people is already showing results, including an injection of energy, resources and collaboration at branch level in the Western Cape.

The following highlights celebrate the passion, commitment and collective impact of our BOT SOC branch network, illustrating how local action and initiatives are contributing to conserving South Africa's botanical heritage together.

ALGOA

Supporting young plant conservationists

The BOT SOC Algoa Branch continues to strengthen their conservation efforts through supporting youth involvement and local partnerships. During the year, the branch supported the Friends of Van Stadens Wildflower Reserve by sponsoring co-branded uniforms for a group of interns participating in the reserve's Conservation Internship Programme. These young conservationists are recruited from the surrounding communities and trained in nature conservation skills, such as maintaining the reserve's walking trails, clearing invasive alien species, propagating indigenous plants in the nursery and promoting environmental education with school groups and visitors to the reserve. By supporting youth development and working alongside the Friends of Van Stadens Wildflower Reserve, the BOT SOC Algoa Branch is helping to inspire the next generation of conservation custodians.



The sponsored co-branded uniforms for interns.



The beautifully restored Adelaide Tambo Library Garden.



Morné Maree receiving a certificate from Deon Potgieter, Branch Chairperson.

FREE STATE

Promoting indigenous plants in public spaces

The BOT SOC Free State Branch continues to work tirelessly to restore the public space at the Adelaide Tambo Library Garden in Bloemfontein to create a thriving indigenous garden that celebrates the region's botanical heritage. This project has flourished through the dedication of volunteers, support from SANBI, local businesses and community partners. More than 70 indigenous plant species have been established, showcasing resilient, water-wise gardening in the heart of the city. During the next phase, educational plant lists and interpretive signage will be developed to encourage visitors to discover and appreciate South Africa's indigenous flora.

In February 2026, BOT SOC SA's staff team joined the branch at the Free State National Botanical Garden for a special member engagement event to recognise long-standing members and dedicated volunteers, while sharing updates on BOT SOC's strategic direction and national conservation programme. Furthermore, the BOT SOC Free State Branch has invested in nurturing the next generation of plant scientists through its longstanding partnership with the University of the Free State. Through this initiative the branch recognises outstanding botany students by awarding BOT SOC memberships, introducing them to the Society.

GAUTENG

Mobilising members for urban conservation

The BOT SOC Gauteng Branch and the BOT SOC staff team embarked on a series of conservation and member mobilisation activities the past year. The BOT SOC staff team aided the Gauteng Branch Action Group in engaging members and volunteers in regular weeding and gardening activities at the Constitution Hill Natural Heritage Garden in Pretoria. As part of the success of this ongoing project, the BOT SOC Gauteng Branch plans to work with members and volunteers monthly to develop the garden further into an exemplary model of indigenous biodiversity.



The Constitution Hill Natural Heritage Garden maintenance revival day, where BOT SOC's Simone van Rooyen joined the Gauteng Branch Action Group.



The Constitution Hill Natural Heritage Garden and Gauteng Branch Action Group thriving together.



The BOT SOC Kirstenbosch Branch garden guides.

By BOT SOC Kirstenbosch Branch.

KIRSTENBOSCH

Celebrating our volunteers

The BOT SOC Kirstenbosch Branch continues to support and demonstrate the value of volunteerism in conservation. Based at the SANBI Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, their dedicated volunteers contribute their time and expertise in guiding visitors, supporting plant propagation and seed conservation and caring for living plant collections. Through botanical walks, educational talks, citizen science initiatives and environmental awareness activities, the branch continues to connect people with plants.

During the year, BOT SOC SA and the branch launched a series of member appreciation events aimed at connecting with members and recognising long-standing support of our volunteers. The event, held at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden on International Volunteer Day in 2025, celebrated the invaluable contribution of BOT SOC members whose dedication and volunteer spirit continue to support both the society and the garden. The event was attended by members of SANBI's senior management team and the Kirstenbosch NBG curator, reaffirming the longstanding partnership between BOT SOC and SANBI, and recognising the important role of volunteers in caring for our national botanical gardens.



The BOT SOC Kirstenbosch Branch member appreciation event.

KOGELBERG

Caring for the heart of the fynbos

The BOT SOC Kogelberg Branch continues to serve as a true conservation champion in one of South Africa's most botanically significant landscapes through active stewardship, volunteerism and community engagement. Various dedicated alien clearing teams work around Pringle Bay, Betty's Bay and Rooiels to remove alien invasive species from sensitive habitats to restore the natural fynbos and local ecosystems. The branch also supports the Friends of the Harold Porter National Botanical Garden, where volunteers meet weekly to help maintain the gardens while learning more about the region's exceptional plant diversity. Beyond the garden gates, the Kogelberg Garden Circle continues to inspire residents to become active custodians of their local environment by sharing practical indigenous gardening advice and resources. Through its Fight for Fynbos initiative, the BOT SOC Kogelberg Branch also rescues indigenous plants from residential and municipal properties before development takes place, giving threatened plants a second chance to thrive.



BOT SOC Kogelberg Branch Chair, Tim Atwell, and Barbara Jenman at the Kogelberg Branch member appreciation event.



BOT SOC Kogelberg Branch Garden Circle members weeding the Kleinmond Biodiversity Conservation Garden.



BOT SOC Kogelberg Branch members supported the establishment and maintenance of the Kleinmond Biodiversity Conservation Garden, which now serves as an outdoor classroom for the local Strandlopers group.



BOT SOC KZN Branches member appreciation event.



BOT SOC KZN Coastal Branch annual plant fair.

KZN COASTAL

The flagship plant fair – 25 years later

The BOT SOC KZN Coastal Branch proudly celebrated the 25th anniversary of its flagship Indigenous Plant Fair, marking a notable legacy of growing and promoting indigenous gardening, environmental awareness and community engagement. Inspired by the vision that indigenous plants are fundamental to healthy ecosystems and sustainable living, this annual plant fair has, over the past quarter century, introduced thousands of gardeners to KwaZulu-Natal's indigenous flora while encouraging local nurseries to expand the diversity of indigenous plants available to the public. The 2025 Spring Plant Fair, hosted at the Durban Botanic Gardens, continued this proud tradition through indigenous plant sales, expert advice from dedicated volunteers, educational talks and free gardening resources. The annual plant fair remains an important platform for connecting people with nature and South Africa's botanical heritage.

KZN INLAND

Championing grassland conservation

The BOT SOC KZN Inland Branch continues to inspire a growing community of plant enthusiasts throughout the year. Members explored a variety of unique landscapes, including indigenous gardens, grasslands and high-altitude conservation areas. Key highlights were the branch's participation in the Great Southern Bioblitz 2025, where members joined partners from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and Eskom's Ingula Nature Reserve to document biodiversity in protected high-altitude grasslands. The biodiversity records collected through iNaturalist contribute valuable information for monitoring threatened species, detecting invasive plants and improving our understanding of ecosystem health. Branch members also regularly collected seeds of threatened plant species, under permit, for long-term conservation through the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership, helping to safeguard South Africa's plants for future generations.



BOT SOC KZN Branches member appreciation event.



The BOT SOC Limpopo Branch has hosted various plant monitoring and knowledge sharing events.



BOT SOC Limpopo Branch tree-tagging on the Makgeng Hiking Trail.

LIMPOPO

Protecting Limpopo's plants through young enthusiasts

The BOT SOC Limpopo Branch continues to inspire and mobilise a vibrant community of young plant enthusiasts. Key highlights include the branch and University of Limpopo students conducting a monitoring expedition to the quartz koppies of Mothibaskraal in the Mamabolo Mountain Bushveld. The survey focused on the Critically Endangered *Euphorbia groenewaldii*, where a previously unknown population was discovered, increasing the known population to more than 250 individuals.

The branch's dedication was equally evident during an outing at the Makgeng Hiking Trail where a determined group of volunteers completed an indigenous tree-tagging project. The team transformed the hiking trail into an increasingly valuable outdoor learning space for hikers, students and citizen scientists. Looking ahead, the branch will continue to grow the next generation of conservationists to protect Limpopo's botanical heritage.

LOWVELD

Exploring and conserving Mpumalanga's botanical treasures

The BOT SOC Lowveld Branch actively connects members with Mpumalanga's unique flora through field excursions, botanical walks and citizen science initiatives. Throughout the year, Lowveld members explored a variety of unique habitats, from the mistbelt forests of the Makhonjwa Mountains to the species-rich grasslands near Badplaas and the plantations of Kalmoesfontein, discovering some of the province's most remarkable and threatened plant species. Regular branch outings focused on several plants of conservation significance, including the threatened Hilton daisy (*Gerbera aurantiaca*, Endangered), dwarf cycad (*Encephalartos humilis*, Vulnerable) and mothfruit (*Acridocarpus natalitius*). Members also participated in the annual Great Southern Bioblitz 2025 and visited the Bearded Man Mountain to document the unique flora.



BOT SOC Lowveld Branch excursions.

SOUTHERN OVERBERG

Building momentum through local initiatives

The BOT SOC Southern Overberg Branch is making a difference through various practical conservation efforts and involving the local community. Volunteer groups regularly clear invasive alien plants, such as hakea, black wattle, pine, port jackson, Australian myrtle and eucalyptus to restore natural fynbos in the Heuningberg Nature Reserve and other sites in the Bredasdorp municipal area. The branch also hosted workshops on iNaturalist, allowing youth and community members to learn how to contribute to this biodiversity data collection platform and increase their knowledge about the region's local flora.

March 2026 also saw the formation of a new BOT SOC Southern Overberg Branch committee after several years of not having an elected committee. This shows the dedication and interest of members and volunteers, allowing the branch to continue growing its conservation footprint.

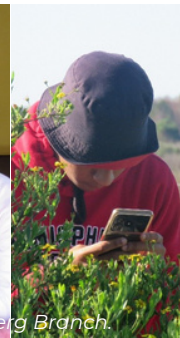


The BOT SOC Southern Overberg Branch assisted with the establishment and maintenance of the Elim Biodiversity Conservation Garden.



By BOT SOC Southern Overberg Branch.

iNaturalist course for youth.



By BOT SOC Southern Overberg Branch.

A Branch hack.



Branch excursion to see the pride of Table Mountain (Disa uniflora).

The botanical exhibition at !Khwa ttu San Heritage Centre.



The BOT SOC Weskus Branch assisted in the establishment and maintenance of the Darling Biodiversity Conservation Garden.

WESKUS

Connecting people with the West Coast

The BOT SOC Weskus Branch continues to inspire by hosting activities throughout the year. Members enjoyed a diverse programme of guided walks, talks and field outings that celebrated the region's exceptional biodiversity. The year started with the annual BOT SOC Weskus Disa Walk in Porterville, where members and friends explored the scenic hiking trail to Disa Pool and the Kliphuis River in search of the spectacular summer-flowering *Disa uniflora* (pride of Table Mountain). Beyond branch activities, chairperson Nicole Loebenberg played a leading role in developing the botanical exhibition at !Khwa ttu San Heritage Centre, helping to interpret the remarkable diversity and cultural significance of the West Coast's indigenous flora. The BOT SOC Weskus Branch aims to foster a strong community of plant enthusiasts and citizen conservationists, inspiring more people to know, grow, protect and enjoy South Africa's remarkable plants.

Achieving conservation success through funding support

A glimpse of what is possible!

While the branch conservation and member activities have continued across the country, we acknowledge the exponential difference that external funding has made to BOT SOC's conservation reach. Funding was provided by the National Lotteries Commission in the Western Cape over the past two financial years. The project was called 'Protecting and restoring South Africa's natural heritage'.



The support of the NLC enabled large leaps in BOT SOC's conservation and youth development efforts.

Protecting and restoring South Africa's natural heritage

The project was made up of four components:

- Biodiversity awareness (building an understanding and appreciation of indigenous plants and ecosystems);
- Citizen science involvement (engaging youth and communities in plant monitoring, data collection and research);
- Youth skills development (providing hands-on training, accredited skills and work experience);
- Biodiversity conservation gardens – 15 sites (creating indigenous plant spaces for learning and community stewardship).



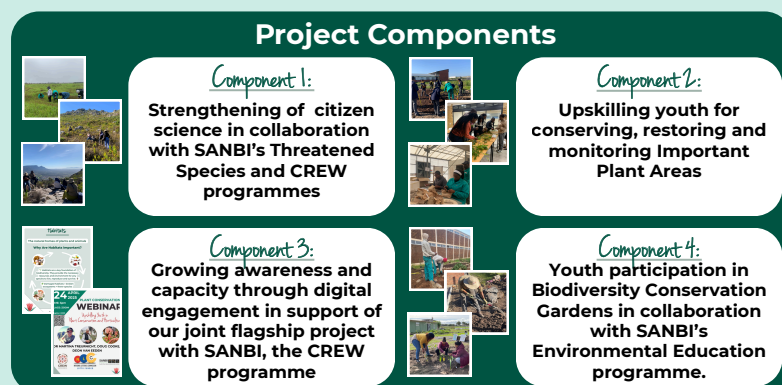
The programme aimed to strengthen citizen science, equipping unemployed youth with practical conservation and horticultural skills, expanding digital engagement and establishing biodiversity gardens in schools and communities. Through structured training, paid-work opportunities, field-based conservation activities and strong partnerships, the project connected people directly with South Africa's plant heritage while contributing to the protection of Important Plant Areas and threatened plant species.

This project sought to contribute to cultivating a new generation of skilled biodiversity custodians with a strong sense of belonging in the nature-based sector.



By strengthening partnerships, embedding conservation learning in communities and expanding citizen science participation, the programme is growing a network of young conservation leaders working to protect South Africa's plant diversity.

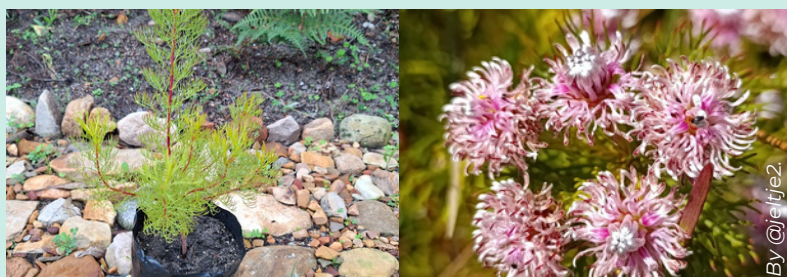
The vision of the project was simple: advancing both ecological sustainability and social opportunity, showing that investing in people is fundamental to protecting plants and viewing ourselves as part of nature.



"People will protect our plant heritage when they understand it, experience its beauty and develop a love for it. This project successfully created that sense of connection between people and plants." – Antonia de Barros, CEO: BOT SOC



Youths building their experience in conservation and horticultural skills through training activities.

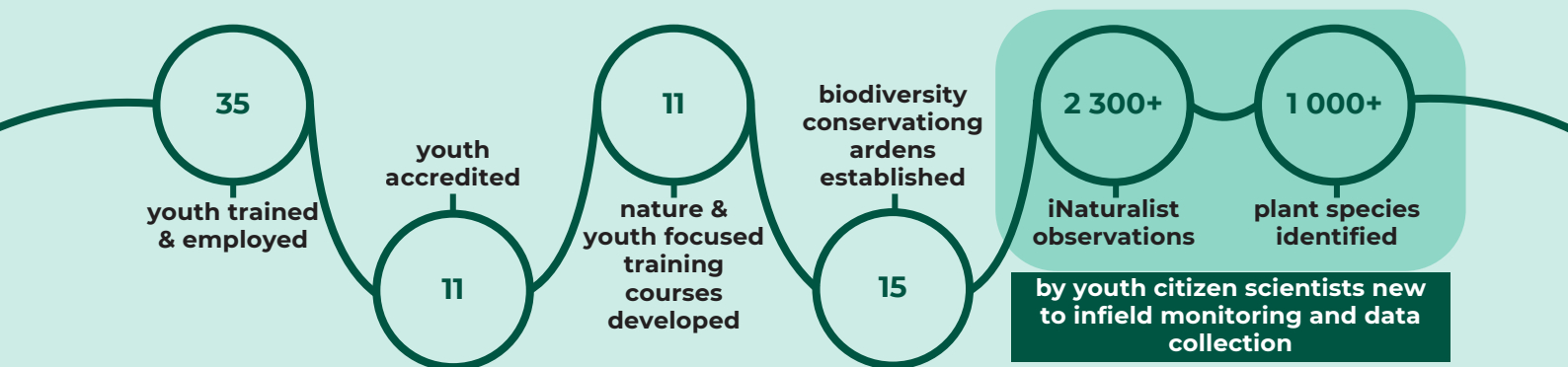


Endangered, Rondevlei spiderhead (*Serruria foeniculacea*) was planted in the Cape Metropole sites to help protect the species outside its natural habitat.



Youths received theoretical, practical and accredited training.

Our NLC project achievements



An extension allowed a smaller cohort of young people to remain employed and continue developing their skills. The project also funded a first-of-its-kind BOT SOC showcase video. We intend to use the video to tell the BOT SOC story at events and as a fundraising tool, using the project as a case study of our work and what we are capable of achieving.

Thank you to our project partners

We were pleased to conclude the project with a clean audit and positive feedback on our reporting. We are extremely grateful to the National Lotteries Commission for its support, confidence in BOT SOC and the opportunity to advance our plant conservation and human development work at a larger scale.

Our partners were instrumental to the success of this project and we are truly grateful for this support. We sincerely thank all our conservation partners, schools, community organisations, members and volunteers for their expertise and shared commitment, which have been instrumental to the success of this programme.

Another proposal is being drafted and submitted to further this work in other provinces beyond the Western Cape. Watch this space!



Future-forward fundraising

The 2025–2026 financial year has been one of learning, refining and planning for BOT SOC. While meeting fundraising targets has been challenging, it was a positive and transitional year in which valuable groundwork was laid, promising leads were developed and collaboration remained central to our approach. Fundraising has become increasingly competitive in the current political and economic climate, particularly as many funders prioritise pressing social and humanitarian needs.

Individual giving increased during the year, with many members making donations through Webtickets when renewing their memberships. This support has been especially meaningful as membership numbers continue to decline following the withdrawal of the SANBI garden access benefit for members. This has been indicative of the calibre of members that we now have, who are committed to conservation. We remain incredibly grateful to those members and individual donors who have continued supporting BOT SOC, whether through once-off contributions, annual donations or regular monthly giving.

Providing predictability

Regular monthly giving remains a small but reliable stream of support that we would very much like to grow. Predictable income allows BOT SOC to plan with greater confidence, develop projects and funding applications and maintain the capacity needed to make our conservation work possible. We are deeply grateful to all those who make donations to BOT SOC. As a registered public benefit organisation, BOT SOC can issue Section 18A tax certificates to donors who require them.

The Heritage Circle also remains a cornerstone of our long-term fundraising strategy, inviting supporters to leave a lasting legacy through a bequest ([BOT SOC Heritage Circle Brochure](#)). During the year, BOT SOC received several bequests and a new enquiry about legacy giving.

To find out more, please see our brochure on bequests, once-off and monthly donations and membership, together with suggested codicil wording [HERE \(A legacy that grows\)](#). If members wish to share this information within their networks, please contact us so that we can supply you with the relevant information.

Easy ways to support conservation

BOT SOC continues to receive a modest but dependable contribution through the Woolworths MyDifference programme. By selecting BOT SOC as a beneficiary, supporters help generate funding for

our work through their regular shopping at no additional cost to themselves. We appreciate every supporter who has chosen BOT SOC as their cause.

The Mapula Trust continued its valued support of the SANBI and BOT SOC Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers programme, known as CREW. This enabled another successful year of CREW bioblitzes and workshops supported by CREW groups and citizen scientists across the country. We are incredibly grateful to the Mapula Trust for its continued support of this important national initiative.

Going global

BOT SOC also continued nurturing the international relationships established during the peer-to-peer exchange and fundraising resource-mobilisation mission undertaken by our CEO, Antonia de Barros, in partnership with SANBI. Potential connections were reviewed and prospective organisations and individuals shortlisted for more focused approaches linked to specific projects. International fundraising remains an important part of our longer-term strategy.

Our deepest thanks go to our supporters, donors, members, funders, partners, Council members and volunteers. Your contributions, introductions, time and confidence in BOT SOC make it possible for us to continue planning, collaborating and working towards a future where South Africa's extraordinary botanical heritage is protected.

Donate now

If you would like to contribute to BOT SOC's enduring impact, please consider leaving a bequest, making a once-off contribution or becoming a monthly donor.

To find out more, visit

www.botanicalsociety.org.za/donate/, visit <https://www.backabuddy.co.za/campaign/bot-soc-turns-113-years-old>, scan the QR codes, or contact donate@botanicalsociety.org.za or heritage@botanicalsociety.org.za.

**Be part of our impact
Scan to support our work via:**

Our website



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BDT SDC thanks
all our partners and
donors!



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