

WATER-WISE ALTERNATIVES

Revelstone www.revelstone.co.za

Living in the Western Cape is an asset, for its access to nature and its landscapes of endless scenery. However, as the years pass us, the drought gets ahead of us, giving us specific restrictions on water usage. Water is the source to freedom: to growth in the environment, to life and for our survival. So, when it's scarce, we need alternative solutions. When it comes to the garden area, large areas of grass are no longer an option, as they need a continuous amount of water to sustain their greenery.



Replacing your lawn area with a waterwise option is the best option you can give yourself and the environment. Pavers, mulch, straw, cobbles, peach pits, bark chips, moss, artificial turf and water-wise plants make for a great setup when it comes to landscaping the outdoors.

Even though mulch is brown in colour, as opposed to the greenery we so desire in the garden, it adds an attractive quality to the overall look. It needs no water, is generally associated with local forests and riparian areas, where leaves, shed bark and twigs make up the grounding and comes at a low cost.



Artificial turf is becoming more and more popular as it gives our senses the impression that it's grass, but it doesn't need weekly maintenance and lawn mowing or any watering. It works in both indoor and outdoor areas.

Cobblestones and concrete paving is leading the way forward and allowing people to have options into the layout, design and aesthetic, while still leaving small spaces for succulents and grass to grow in between, which requires less water. You can create spaces that surround garden beds or stone paths that lead throughout the property, giving you a creative dynamic that preserves the environment and beautifies the

GREEN SOLUTIONS

Franko Maritz - Bera South Africa

Having started in South Africa in August 2016, BERA BV from the Netherlands felt the time was opportune to invest in southern Africa's future business growth.

Being a green solutions company for the landscape and construction industries, our products fit in well with the vast varieties of

climate and flora challenges.

Amongst our various solutions is Gravel Fix, a recyclable stabilization system for gravel. Designed to provide a solid and stable sub-base for the professional application of gravel on paths, driveways, car parks and roofs. Bera Gravel Fix is manufactured in Europe using renewable energy sources under stringent quality and environmental control. We also employ 60% handicapped staff involved in various parts of the manufacturing process, from sample boxes to packaging.

A new and exciting product for South Africa's challenging climate change, is BERA Green Roll, Green Cubes and Green Flocks aimed at high water saving qualities.

Made from natural rock minerals and being environmentally friendly, the applications can be used under lawns, general garden beds and



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See our website for further details www.bera-bv.com or contact me on franko@bera-bv.com

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CAPE GREEN TIMES

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This is the 90th publication of the Cape Green Times Newsletter, amazing! It started many moons ago, with a 1pager that was posted to members, over time the format changed and for a period we only published an online version. But more recently, as requested, we have reintroduced the printed newsletter which are distributed at the 2 Cape Green Trade Days. This newsletter includes the exhibitors, their contact details and products, something to keep on file.

It also has two lovely, somewhat different articles, both inspired by songs - thanks Elfriede, Marlaen and Anna.

Times are really tough out there, but often out of a crisis situation new innovative products and businesses evolve. Networking and spending time with others in similar situations is key to development. So please enjoy the Cape Green Trade Day and the appreciate the wonderful green industry that we are part of.

TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGING

Elfriede Coetzee and Marlaen Straathof - Ball Straathof

"Times they are a-changing" to quote the Nobel prize winning singer Bob Dylan in his famous 1964 song. - but does this also apply to the nursery industry?

Here is a quick look at then and now from the perspective of someone who has been in this industry for too long to mention.

Remember when:

Plants were sold in bags, or half paraffin tins. Everything had a price tag, or started life with a tag, that usually fell off just before a gardener bought it, causing frustrating delays at the till while the information was desperately looked for, generally by asking the nursery guru/owner who was expected to remember everything.

Gardeners had large gardens with broad sweeps of colour and staff to help, so quantity was more important than quality. What we did not use/need was discarded, compost heaps became a thing of the past and we joined the "disposable" world, carelessly dumping plastic and non-degradable wastes.

Every imaginable plant was sold in a nursery, exotics mixed with indigenous varieties, and invasive plants were an unknown. Keen gardeners loved the challenge of trying to grow an alpine plant on the Transvaal, but most gardeners were just disappointed that everything died, of course don't forget that all plants and bedding plants were sold green. Flowers were the responsibility of the gardener. Many bed-

ding plants were started from seed by home gardeners, the old reliable then have become the modern "heirlooms" of today, how the wheel turns!

So have things improved, you be the judge- Orders and deliveries happen much faster now that we all have tablets and computers. Relaxed chats with gardening neighbours or customers have given way to a constant deluge of knowledge via Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest, this does however also mean that something new and exciting is instantly shared and new communities of gardeners are created, all sharing info and pics and helping each other.

Nurseries have moved from places of specialised knowledge to Garden Centres incorporating a lifestyle which speaks to young and old, novice and expert, hip young things and traditional gardeners. Tills are automated, everything runs on a barcode and if only a few units of a particular item are sold, it will be dropped. Good for business, bad for diversity. Plants are sold in full colour (we need instant results in our instant world) and pots and containers rule. Gardening and plants have become more water-wise and are treated as décor items which can easily be replaced for different events and seasons or as contributors to saving the planet - think plants that attract bees and pollinators, and of course more than ever - local is lekker. As part of saving the

planet don't forget we now recycle (or should) as much as possible.

Technology surely changed the "face" of nurseries ---- but the INDUSTRY is still about promoting gardening, getting people to eat home-grown veggies while enjoying the colourful outdoors - or is it?

(As seen by Elfriede Coetzee and Marlaen Straathof -more than 30 years in the industry)

Kirchhoffs
Self watering pots

Minimise watering and care requirements by using a Waterwick™ stick.

Eye-catching coverpots act as a water reservoir. A small window at the bottom helps you see the water level and when topping up is required.

The clever Waterwick dips from the inner pot containing soil, into the water. As long as there is water in the reservoir, the soil will remain appropriately moist.

RED SESBANIA <http://invasives.org.za>



The City of Cape Town has a water crisis and invasive plants also play a huge role in water loss because they have a high demand for water.

The red sesbania used to be a popular ornamental tree, but its heavy seed load and floating pods enabled it to escape into wetlands and riverbanks across the country.

It also invades wastelands, roadsides and ditches in the moister parts of the country. Dense infestations in riverine situations exclude indigenous species, block access to water and hamper water flow, with

the result that rivers burst their banks and cause erosion of the waterways.

Red sesbania (*Sesbania punicea*) is a small, deciduous tree of South American origin.

It is characterized by pinnate compound leaves, bunches of attractive, bright red to orange flowers and pods with four longitudinal wings.

In terms of the Alien and Invasive Species Regulations (AIS), National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act No 10 of 2004), Red sesbania has been listed as a category 1b species, which necessitates its control or removal and destruction if possible. This species is found in all provinces of South Africa.

MARCH 2017 CAPE GREEN TRADE DAY EXHIBITORS

| COMPANY | CONTACT | PRODUCT | EMAIL / WEBSITE |
|------------------------------|---------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 4evr Plastic Products | 021 905 5590 | Grey water & pool backwash recycle systems -Ecogator Range | marketing@4evr.co.za |
| Advanced Hydroponic Systems | 021 838 1717 | Hydroponics system for urban vegetable and herb cultivation | hydroponics@zoho.com |
| Africa Biomass Company | 023 342 1212 | Coloured mulch / wood chips | info@chipper.co.za |
| Airely Farms | 083 229 7051 | Indoor Pot Plants | info@airely.co.za |
| Arboreta Nurseries cc | 021 864 3857 | Trees & shrubs | sales@arboreta.co.za |
| Amelia | 022 723 1022 | Proteaceae, Fynbos and Bougainvillea | sophia@arnelia.co.za |
| Atlantic Fertilisers | 0860 110 110 | Organic fertilisers | peter@atlanticfertilisers.co.za |
| Ball Straathof | 083 636 9840 | Seeds and various other gardening products | stell@ballstraathof.co.za |
| Banhoek Nursery | 021 880 1853 | Wholesale plants | langverwacht@mweb.co.za |
| Bera South Africa | 083 449 3954 | Green System solutions & water saving systems | frank@bera-bv.com |
| Cape Trees | 084 712 4752 | Trees | gerritschenke@gmail.com |
| CoCT | 021 400 9874 | Information sharing on water restrictions measures, saving tips, etc | Donavan.Williams@capetown.gov.za |
| CPUT | 021 959 6482 | Horticultural & landscaping students | matanzimay@cput.ac.za |
| De Fynne | 021 869 8467 | Indigenous container plants & fruits | sales@defynne.co.za |
| Dynatrade | 083 267 9634 | Osmocote - Controlled release fertilizer | sales@osmocote.co.za |
| Efekto | 011 287 5700 | Garden, household products & seed | www.efekto.co.za |
| Elands Nursery | 041 9555671 | Outdoor Plants | www.elands.co.za |
| Exclusive Cycads | 083 389 2260 | Plant fertiliser, stimulants & Cycads | info@exclusivecycads.com |
| Fisk Horticulture | 021 884 4313 | Plants | james@fiskhorticulture.co.za |
| Flora Imports | 011 918 4620 | Pots, Birdfeeders, Bonsai & bronze statues | www.florainports.co.za |
| Flora Jubilee | 028 514 2455 | Succulents, pot plants & cut flowers | ingrid@florajubilee.co.za |
| Granny's Green Nursery | 083 636 2901 | Fynbos & Vermitea | julian@afrilandscapes.co.za |
| Growrite | 082 468 7508 | Nursery Supplies | sales@growrite.co.za |
| Haifa Chemicals | 083 2314516 | Controlled release & water soluble fertilizers, multicote & Turbo-K and agronomical services | gerrit.burger@haifa-group.com |
| Haygrove Tunnels | 021 859 1026 | Growing tunnels | www.haygrove.co.za |
| Induli Nursery | 021 785 3581 | Specimen large shrubs & trees | office@indulinursery.co.za |
| Italcotto | 021 425 4192 | 2CM Porcelain Pavers | paolo@italcotto.co.za |
| Just Trees | 021 8711595 | Specimen Container Grown Trees | olivia@justtrees.co.za |
| Kubota WP | 021 854 5239 | Tractors | sales1@kubotawp.co.za |
| Label Max | 073 141 6240 | All your label and label printer needs | labelmaxsa@gmail.com |
| Lawn Coat | 082 8339 3853 | Eco Friendly Grass Paint | sales@lawncoat.co.za |
| Lourensford Nursery | 021 847 2227 | Nursery Plants | johanw@karsten.co.za |
| Mango Moon | 082 456 0708 | Supplier of quality tools and products for the nursery industry | karen@mangomooncc.co.za |
| Master Organics | 021 396 1066 | Compost, growing medium & lawn | hilda@master-organics.com |
| MayFord | 083 6380321 | Seed | www.mayford.co.za |
| Milkwoods Nursery | 021 572 5851 | Colour pots, indigenous bags, 6pk seedlings and 6pk groundcovers | anj@milkwoodsnursery.co.za |
| New Horizon Nursery | 082 221 9824 | Plants | sales@newhorizennursery.co.za |
| NewLife Plastics | 083 647 6767 | Outdoor Products made from recycled plastic | bronwyn@newlifeplastics.co.za |
| Nonke Plants | 021 887 6972 | Plants & Organics | karin@nonkeplants.com |
| Norsag | 086 111 1720 | Floragard potting soil, Leca & Princess Art pots | tanya@norsag.co.za |
| NUNO | 072 444 1176 | Plant décor for the city dweller | sue4nuno@mweb.co.za |
| Plantimex | 083 298 3849 | Indoor Plants | Leonie@plantimex.co.za |
| Potport | 082 935 1754 | Pots | adele@potport.com |
| Price & Sons | 021 591 1224 | Garden, ceramics & furniture | stock@priceandsons.co.za |
| Probio | 021 865 2832 | Natural biodegradable probiotic products for home, garden and grey water systems | www.probio.co.za |
| Protek | 072 521 2800 | Home & Garden Chemicals | www.proteksa.co.za |
| Reliance Compost & Nursery | 086 1888784 | Organic Compost | www.reliance.co.za |
| SALI | 021 558 4989 | Information on SALI membership | www.sali.co.za |
| Samgro | 021 873 4377 | Plugs and Grow-on plants | www.samgro.co.za |
| SANA | 072 9945368 | Nursery Association membership | www.sana.co.za |
| Shadowlands | 021 903 0050 | Perennial ground covers, lawn plugs & plants | sales@shadowlands.co.za |
| Somerset West Village Garden | | Community vegetable garden in Somerset West | info@swvg.co.za |
| Spectrum Marketing | 083 309 2921 | Organic fertilizers, products and soil conditioners | alex@spectrum-marketing.co.za |
| Starke Ayres | 021 534 3231 | Seed/pesticides/fertilizer | Tanyab@starkeayres.co.za |
| Themba Trees | 076 403 7456 | Trees | www.thembatrees.co.za |
| Top Crop | 033 569 1333 | Ornamental, grass and indigenous grass plugs | ornamentals@superlawn.co.za |
| Treeco | 082 829 5543 | Trees & shrubs | info@treeco.co.za |
| Turf-Ag Products | 021 551 0790 | Irrigation Products | renier@turf-ag.co.za |
| Valemount Trading | 083 627 6553 | Bird seed & feeders, seed bells & suet balls | amy@valemount.co.za |
| Vertical Veg (Pty) Ltd | 082 720 5437 | Vertical pocket panels for growing greenery on a wall | www.verticalveg.co.za |
| West Coast Flora | 083 326 0906 | Fynbos, Geraldton Wax, Indigenous shade plants | www.westcoastflora.com |

HOLDING OUT FOR A HERO

Anna Celliers, Tuinier

*"Where have all the good men gone
And where are all the gods?
Where's the streetwise Hercules to fight the rising odds?
Isn't there a white knight upon a fiery steed?
I need a hero
I'm holding out for a hero 'til the end of the night"
(with great appreciation and apologies to Bonnie Tyler)*

There was a time that few of us would have used the "f" word without good reason. And if we did, our Moms would have quickly washed out our mouths with soap.

We have now reached a time where we often say the "f" word, not in anger at Mother Nature, but in utter despair within ourselves. And, no one will even think of washing out the mouths it came from, as it will be a waste of water!

We are also scared to use the "d" word, as it represents what we have all started to fear more than anything else...Drought and how to survive it!

This has settled in the forefront of my mind so much, that it is starting to have an effect on my personality and daily behavioural patterns. I can prove this as while writing this piece, there is a geriatric, half-blind handyman fixing my shower door's wheels. "It has apparently become brittle and broke off due to a residue of old soap, erosion, and a lack of lubrication and motion" I am told. I can explain this small domestic problem which arose, as I have decided that in solidarity with the rest of my trade colleagues and friends whom are so water restricted at the moment, I will do my part by showering less. And if forced to do it, using such little moisture that the shower door does not need to be closed at all.

I have to tell you that I live more or less 40 minutes drive away from most of you, but luckily not in an area with stage red water restrictions and dangerously empty dams. I can actually open up the hosepipe right now and water my lawn if I want to...But, I won't,

because your plight and despair is also mine, as we are connected intimately to the "g" word - representing gardening off course! I have put my municipal watering account into 'arbitration' because it is a big lie printed on paper, and expect them any day now to cut off the service, or to decrease the pressure - it's no use fighting with some of these guys or girls, as they do not understand one in any case. (That is, by the way, what is also happening in a country where folks have to argue with each other about difficult numbers in their second languages and not in a mother's tongue). Apart from other water-saving measures like washing the dishes less due to cooking less, I have also decided to see just how far I can stretch the resistance of my beloved plants in my small garden.

I should however tell you, that I have stupidly donated my erstwhile, extremely tough salt-bush hedge (in perfect condition apart from a hole caused by a guest who fell into it), to a nursery school to use in a stage production - it was a bugger getting the sections of the whole hedge still intact, to the school! From there it went to a local nursery owner whom is now using it as a backdrop for an LED powered garden lights in a dark and dramatic display.

I have replaced the old hedge and my Syzgium topiaries, of which one grew into a cute ostrich, with a more "Chelsea-like" planting of flowering perennials. In a completely coo-coos moment, I have decided to plant flowers as a bucket list thing. What? Am I never going to see something in flower again?

As I overdid the vegetation, it naturally turned into an uncontrollable fruit salad looking like sh@#! But, I also bought some lollipop-cut Buddleja salviifolia originating from Nonke Plants, to use as focal plants in the same bed. Another wholesaler jokingly told me over a drink or two, that he thinks I've picked the worst plant for this purpose as it will attract every insect and fungus disease lurking in the vicinity. Well, it did not, and the four of them are standing proud, but dry in my yard - although they need shearing more regularly than any female's leg beards does! (Does anyone out there think one can rather wax a lollipop buddleja? It would surely save maintenance time?)

While pondering about our troubles over a glass of dry white wine (I drink it hot nowadays as ice requires water too!), I met up with an accountant whom has just bought a house which are being gutted and rejuvenated - a common occurrence in old and very expensive neighbourhoods! He had firm ideas



about the garden. All he could think of, was saving old alien invasive trees, (but only if they are slaughtered to enable a view on a burned down mountain!) adding security plants, a borehole for water, and installing huge water tanks to store it in. For the rest, he told me he was thinking of digging up and splitting plants from his own garden (mainly agapanthus!). Guys like these, hear it all at golf clubs, talking to other guys. Need I say more?

It took half a lukewarm "papsak" to explain to him that he really needs help. The gist of this story is, that he gave me the plans of the property and asked whether I would be able to design the garden. I refused at first as landscape design is now part of an old life. But, then I thought wait a minute, this could be another bucket list opportunity! I also told him that I do not want to be constrained by a budget per say, but will try my best not to think like a Zuma or a Donald Trump...

He decided to trust me to think and remember what a real garden in suburbia was like, but also agreed with me that times have changed. I sat down with wine on the side, and some very good rock music in my ears and next to me lay a lot of local grower's availability lists. The design was approved and the plant list is typed out. The only factor that is delaying the building of this garden and the ordering of the plants is...Rain!

Even in an old, axed garden in which there once grew plants that a gardener planted in hope, one should wait with respect. Nobody is going to turn a sun-baked sod unless she's been wetted down by rain and smells like virgin soil again!

It is the latter story which brings me back to the title of this one. No matter how difficult it is at the moment, the tide will change, and just after it has changed, the hero we are all holding out for, will come and save us.

Who is this 'hero'? He or she, would not be the Hercules god in Greek mythology... The real hero's will be clients ... The ordinary gardeners and plant lovers streaming in their droves through nursery's doors once again.

The "d" word is never going to stop them from gardening.

And, we know that's true don't we?



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