

HANGKLIP BOTANICAL SOCIETY (NPC)

AUGUST 2026 NEWSLETTER NO. 5

Dear Members of the Hangklip Botanical Society:

1. INTRODUCTION

It is so good to be home in the beautiful Kogelberg Biosphere after a month-long visit to England and Ireland visiting family. I said to Paddy it was too long and we won't do a whole month in future, miss this place too much. England and Ireland were hot and exceptionally dry, 90% of England and 50% of Ireland have a hosepipe watering ban, whoever thought that Ireland would have a hosepipe watering restriction but for the whole month that we were in and out of Ireland they recorded 13mm of rain, Dublin average for July is between 50mm to 56mm.

The Hangklip region also experienced an extremely dry July, between 15mm to 22mm rain having been recorded in the whole of July, the length of Betty's Bay with a long-term average of 178mm for July. So, this is 1/8th of what we normally receive, and one can see it, things have dried out dramatically.

We have been stating for months that there is a super El Nino occurrence building up in the Atlantic Ocean and we are going to have a very dry and hot summer in almost the whole of South Africa and we must start preparing ourselves for this and water restrictions are definitely on the cards.

See notes later in this newsletter re our monthly talk, Roger Parsons will be talking to us about "Day Zero - Keeping critical infrastructure alive" on the 15th August 2026.

Membership of the Hangklip Botanical Society continues to grow and we are now over 220 members. Our aim to have more than 300 members by year end definitely seems feasible. Sue McConnell is doing a great job of membership co-ordinator and I thank everyone that has helped recruit new members, the stronger our membership base the stronger we are.

The National Botanical Society of South Africa will be holding a Special General Meeting virtually on Saturday 15th August 2026 at 08h30 for 09h00 followed by their Annual General Meeting at 10h15 for 10h30. Both meetings will be virtual, see notes later in this newsletter.

2. NATIONAL BOTANICAL SOCIETY - KOGELEBERG BRANCH APPRECIATION EVENT

The National Botanical Society held an appreciation event on Saturday 18 July 2026 at the Harold Porter National Botanical Gardens, where a bench was unveiled by Merrilee Berrisford as a token of appreciation to all the Kogelberg Branch Members for all they do to conserve the flora of the Kogelberg Biosphere.

By all accounts it was a successful event with approximately 30 members of the Hangklip Botanical Society and those that have dual membership with the National Botanical Society attending.

Sadly, I was unable to attend, thanks to Rob Boyd for representing the Hangklip Botanical Society as a Director. At this meeting, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the National Botanical Society and the Hangklip Botanical Society, the first official external branch of the National Botanical Society. The signing of this document is very noteworthy in the development of the restructuring of the National Botanical Society, and we look forward to being an active and contributing external branch of the National Botanical Society and helping where we can grow the National Botanical Society, as an external branch.

3. HAROLD PORTER NATIONAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

Viv von der Heyden and Jenny Pattinson continue to do, with the aid of a merry bunch of volunteers, sterling work in the gardens.

It is encouraging to see the number of volunteers growing slowly and the outstanding work these volunteers do. From all reports that I receive from the volunteers, not only do they get the feeling of doing good, but it is also enjoyable, social camaraderie, great, and it is exercise, outdoors, building up vital Vitamin D reserves.

No progress has been made re the replanting of the flower beds, see notes in Newsletter No. 4.

I was fortunate enough to visit the Dublin Botanical Gardens in Dublin, Ireland for a day and was impressed how they have incorporated formal flowerbeds in a park like environment, all the beds were well kept, an incredible display of flowers and it really was a pleasure to visit.

A few points of interest were:

- The Irish Office of Public Works maintains 32 National Botanical and historic gardens throughout Ireland.
- Entry to 80% of these gardens is free of charge.
- The Commercial side such as book shop, restaurants etc., at the Dublin Botanical Gardens is booming and while I had no insight to the finances of the Botanical Gardens, got the impression by having viable commercial activities, one can subsidize garden maintenance to a great extent.
- I realize that we have a lot to do to improve our relationship with Harold Porter National Botanical Gardens, to help where we can and to promote a public/private partnership, that works so well in so many other aspects in our community and can work perfectly well at Harold Porter Gardens. Any ideas or support will be gratefully received

4. NATIONAL BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA

- A special general meeting scheduled for Saturday 15th August 2026 will be a virtual meeting, approving the establishment of National Botanical Society of South Africa Non-Profit Company and the formal adoption of External Membership and Internal Membership for the National Botanical Society. At this stage, it is only the Hangklip Botanical Society that is formally an external member with Kirstenbosch still to decide if they are going to become an external member or not and all the other Botanical Societies will definitely be Internal Members. See notes in previous newsletters but external members will be totally autonomous and responsible for own membership base, own finances etc.

We still have to sort out some of the finer details, how the external membership is formally linked to National. I believe this has to be through becoming an affiliated member with a financial contribution from the external member linked to the size of the external branch membership numbers and linked to the voting rights of an external member and I believe this can be sorted out after the special general meeting.

- National Botanical Society AGM which will be held immediately after the Special General Meeting and the AGM Agenda will cover the normal points such as Chairman's report, Chief Executive Officer's report, Treasurer's report and presentation of annual financial statements for the 2025/26 financial year. There has been only one nomination for Chairperson and that is Hedwig Slabig, from Weskus, she will be our new Chairlady. Congratulations and best wishes, from Hangklip Botanical Society to Hedwig Slabig.

- Treasurer, there have been two nominations:
Bradley Bergh and Michael Brunke, so there will have to be a vote for treasurer.
- Ordinary Council Members:
Bradley Bergh
Michael Brunke
Beneke de Wet
Nicole Loebenberg
Hedwig Slabig
Rob Soutter
Frank Webb

Of these seven ordinary council member nominations, Hedwig is already Chairperson and one of them will become Treasurer. So, there will be a Treasurer, Chairperson and five Council Members, which is a great improvement on the past year when we only had four council members.

We wish the new council all the best as there are still huge challenges for National, especially being able to balance the books. It is not an easy environment for fundraising at present.

5. WEATHER

July, is the driest recorded July in the Kogelberg Biosphere as far as I can find out with 21mm being recorded at Betty's Bay against the average of 178mm in July (Harold Porter Gardens), one eighth of a normal rainfall. This is not a good omen as we move into Spring.

Betty's Bay Rainfall 2015 to 2026

Harold Porter National Garden

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Average
Jan	42	74	77	47	45	93	17	7	54	24	33	53	47
Feb	28	23	18	54	27	38	30	19	85	31	24	191	34
Mar	28	132	23	62	119	13	187	41	173	34	43	48	78
Apr	14	71	26	88	34	51	12	32	68	137	27	164	51
May	56	35	6	90	71	67	263	90	263	31	153	193	102
Jun	134	167	119	157	104	161	213	212	277	133	202	157	171
Jul	246	144	110	84	195	168	211	91	126	391	195	21	178
Aug	134	110	148	188	67	196	193	119	89	219	111		143
Sep	29	104	51	113	140	100	33	44	232	71	61		92
Oct	71	33	72	28	12	84	124	14	65	30	28		53
Nov	45	12	140	59	61	127	69	25	38	38	7		61
Dec	18	32	10	21	61	39	125	89	34	26	29		46
Annual Total	845	937	800	991	936	1137	1477	783	1504	1165	913	827	1058
	*To Date												

6. HAROLD PORTER BOOK AND CRAFT SHOP

We had a very good July with sales 85% higher than July 2025 and this was achieved even without a book launch.

Plant sales continue to do well for the shop and bring in extra feet into the shop with a positive result. A big thank you to Janet Nel, Paddy Dall and all the volunteers for managing a very successful venture and a venture which we can be very proud of.

➤ **Saturday 15th August 2026 at 12h00**

Note the later time, have shifted the book launch time to enable as many members as possible to attend National Botanical Society AGM and SGM virtually at 09h00 the same day.

Tony Park will talk to us about his novels, especially those with a conservation theme. His book "The Pride" is set against the backdrop of Abalone Poaching.

- The following three book launches are planned for September, October and November:
 - ✓ **Guide to Cederberg** - David Bristow, with information re the top trails, places to stay, things to do and eight touring maps and routes. This will be launched second or third Saturday in September, to be confirmed.
 - ✓ **Life at Grootbos Nature Reserve and the Walker Bay Region is a field guidebook** by Sean Privett, Paula Strauss, Rebecca Dames, Mike Fabricius. The launch will be the second or third Saturday in October and the date is to be confirmed.
 - ✓ **Kruger Speaks**: Helena Kriel and Don Pinnock. A unique portrait of Kruger conveyed through the voices of those who live and work there and through the environment itself. Supported by beautiful photography and lyrical vignettes that trace a south to north journey through the park. Interweaves human stories with features on the park diverse wildlife. Explores thorny issues such as poaching the growing elephant population and park community relations. This book will be launched second or third Saturday in November.

Exciting book launches to look forward to.

- Janet will be on leave from 7th to 18th August 2026 (inclusive) and thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who within hours of Paddy's request had filled in all the slots.

**WHAT A WONDERFUL BUNCH OF VOLUNTEERS YOU ALL ARE,
THANK YOU.**

- Paddy unfortunately has to have major kidney surgery on 21st August and will be out of action for six weeks. I know Janet and all the Volunteers will still keep the bookshop running smoothly and Paddy is determined to finalize the September Volunteer Roster before she goes into hospital. Wishing Paddy everything of the best with her health issues and a very speedy recovery.

7. FRIENDS OF THE HAROLD PORTER GARDENS

Nothing to add to the previous newsletter.

The next gardening session will be:

Tuesday 11th August 2026 at 08h30 ably led by Jenny Pattinson.

Please note the winter starting time.

The next Thursday gardening session will be:

Thursday 20th August 2026 at 08h30 ably led by Viv vd Heyden.

8. KOGELBERG GARDEN CIRCLE

Galia Manicom reported that the July visit to Barbara Jenman was a great success and Ebrahim Hull's contribution was greatly appreciated. Thank you, Barbara, for allowing us to invade your space and sharing your experiences with us.

The next garden circle meeting will be on Friday 14th August 2026 at 09h30 and will be visiting:

Lee Ann Becker's garden, 227 Ocean View Road, Rooiels.

After designing gardens in her "previous life", our hostess, *Lee Ann Becker* was delighted to embrace the wild, untamed abundance of the flora and fauna in Rooiels.

Her house, situated at the foot of Klein Hangklip, has mountain views on the one side and, at night, she can watch Cape Point's lighthouse winking.

"Hopefully, my garden reflects a symbiotic relationship between the earth, the sea, the mountain, the wild creatures that scurry through the fynbos and myself, as the custodian".

Please RSVP Galia Manicom

Convenor: Galia Manicom Cell: 082 963 3804

9. HACKS

9.1 Betty's Bay Hack No. 749

Betty's Bay Hack No. 749 took place on Saturday 1st August 2026.

Rob Boyd reports as follows:

"31 Volunteers gathered at Nautilus Street, Sunny Seas, to hack in the municipal land zoned for community facilities bordered by Pearl Drive and Albertyn Drive. The purpose was twofold, to remove numerous spider gums and the less prevalent rooikrans, NZ Christmas trees, bottle brush and banksias and to clear an extensive patch of Australian tea bushes spanning the border of the municipal land and private property along Albertyn Drive.

The group went their separate ways with loppers, poppers and chainsaws. It was quickly discovered that the most effective way to tackle the tea bushes in the mud and shallow water was with chainsaws, the poppers simply sank into the mire. After tea break the battle continued, mainly with the removal of the tea bush but also with cutting down the remaining alien trees. Credit must go to all the tireless draggers who ensured that everything was carried to the verges of Nautilus Street, Pearl Drive and Albertyn Drive and to the stackers for making all the piles, five in total. The tea bush pile seemed to stretch on forever. The hackers were exceptional, undeterred by mud, storm water channel crossings, flowing water and dense fynbos; it was simply unbelievable what was achieved. As ever, on behalf of Betty's Bay Fynbos, thank you for all your efforts.

Next Hack is Saturday 5 September 2026.

Convener: Rob Boyd's Cell Number is: 082 567 8858

9.2 Hangklip Hardcore Hackers (No. 78): July 2026

Chris Geldenhuys reported as follows re the Hardcore Hackers July activities:

"The month of July 2026 provided 7 hack opportunities, with no activities lost due to rain (exceptionally dry month). The group recorded a total of 200 man-days. On a sad note, Hangklip Hardcore Hackers said farewell to Chris Cadman, Uli Nieman and Willem Stiglingh. Thank you for the wonderful contribution you have made over a decade. We wish you good health, happy days and many fulfilling moments ahead. Please do not become bored, come and visit whenever you can whether on a Wednesday or even a Monday, you will always be welcome at HHH.

Hangklip Hardcore Hackers were fortunate to receive a number of donations in the month of July well in excess of R7 000.

Congratulations to Anne Woods for being awarded the John Whitehead Floating Trophy as the hacker for July 2026. Anne Woods is recognized for her exemplary service to the Hangklip Hardcore Hackers, characterized by the following contributions:

Operational Excellence

Community Support

Advocacy & Generosity

Her relentless work ethic and dedication to the Hangklip conservation landscape make her a truly deserving recipient of this JWFT.

Chris goes on to report as follows: Following the completion of Phase 2 Pine Hack, we have also finalized the Rural Verge Hack at Rene's plot. The remaining verge requiring attention is at plot 559/63, where the owner will not permit HHH access near his property. However, we have a plan: the issue is not limited to alien vegetation on the verge outside his property; his plot is also still infested with pines and Australian Myrtle. He will therefore be first in line for a directive once the new OM Conservation Regulations come into force.

Thanks to Chris driving membership of the Hangklip Botanical Society and thanks to his efforts and support from the HHH, we are now well over 220 members of the Hangklip Botanical Society, and our first aim of 300 members will be achieved before we reach year end.

Sugarbird Team update: After clearing the entire area from the R44 between the Buffels River and the old gravel Porter Drive, the Sugarbird Team has started a new project: clearing alien vegetation from the Hangklip Valley, working from the top down. Yes, you read that correctly: clearing Hangklip Valley of alien vegetation. The Sugarbird Project received a donation from an Australian donor specifically to clear Brodie Link. This will not be quick or easy, but the Sugarbird Team is working meticulously and thoroughly. It may take many months, or even years, but the valley will be cleared. We are truly blessed to have the support and dedication of this team.

Donors

For the fourth-year running, Johnson Workwear have donated R54 000 worth of protected clothing and protective equipment to the hackers. Thank you to Johnson Workwear and Megs Tweedy for her initiative in getting this donation. I know the hackers greatly appreciate this. Below is a wonderful group photo of the Hangklip Hardcore Hackers



HHH Fieldwork

This month, the endurance, patience, and ability of the HHH were tested to the extreme. For reasons beyond our control, we had to approach the last forest triangle of FCE from a different direction. This route took us through the river flow and into the thickest part of the Palmiet and Spider Gum forest. Despite losing about 30 minutes moving to the target area, the HHH prevailed. The hackers may have muttered about the convenor's lack of sympathy, but they completed the task with a smile. Unfortunately, we did not finish the work, so we will return. Hackers, you are simply the best!

Next Hacks

The planned schedule for August includes possible Ad Hoc Hacks on the 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th.

Wednesday hacks are scheduled for 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th.

We will make a gap to do the New Zealand Christmas tree removal from the United Church, once the church receives its approval from the congregation.

CORRECTION: In the Hangklip Botanical Society No. 4 Newsletter there was an error. It should have been said that Mike and James Burns are responsible for keeping the statistics of the hacking activities.

Convener: Chris Geldenhuys (082 900 8299).

9.3 **Pringle Bay Hack:**

Chris Geldenhuys reported on the Pringle Bay Hack No. 224: Saturday 25th July 2026.

42 hackers reported for duty, a truly remarkable turnout.

The hackers began by clearing the mountain slope at the top end of Clarence Road before moving to the greenbelt behind the United Church, picking up where they left off last month. Although the alien vegetation covered a wide area, the team met the day's target. For Clarence Road it was mainly Rooikrans and a bit of Port Jackson was removed. For the greenbelt it was mainly Australian Myrtle and New Zealand Christmas trees with a bit of Rooikrans and Port Jackson.

Chris once again expressed his heartfelt appreciation for all the local businesses in Pringle Bay who kindly provide ingredients for coffee and tea breaks.

A big thank you to all the hackers for contributing every month to the removal of alien vegetation from the foothills of the Hangklip Mountain and the road verges in town. Slowly but surely, we are making a difference. We are also achieving what we set out to do in line with our strategy: first, to prevent alien vegetation from spreading into the mountain, especially during winter; second to eliminate alien vegetation along the Buffels Riverbanks, mostly during summer; and third, to remove alien vegetation from the road verges in the village, which we do alongside the first two priorities. Thank you to Hannes for preparing Saturday's work by liaising with residents and keeping them informed and reassured. Chris went on to pay tribute to all the draggers and stackers who swept and cleared the hacked branches. It was a tremendous effort, and we are deeply grateful. It is this wonderful spirit and enthusiasm that makes these hacks so successful.

The Next Pringle Bay hack will be on:

Saturday 29th August 2026 - Meeting point will always be in front of the Hangklip Bottle Store, in Central Avenue, Pringle Bay, at 08h30.

Convener: Chris Geldenhuys (082 900 8299).

9.4 Rooiels Hack:

Mike Christelis reports on the Rooiels July Hack Report.

Mike Christelis reports as follows:

13 hackers arrived for the monthly Rooiels hack.

The plan for July was to walk through Rooiels and clear all the stand-alone aliens growing within the village, changing focus from the last few hacks, where we have concentrated more on the outskirts of the village, we split into three teams, each with a chainsaw, popper and a lopper and radio for co-ordination. Each team was given a map of Rooiels area to go to. Mike had initially thought that they would manage to do the walk through the entire village but as usual reality quickly set in. One team started at the end of Ocean View and one in Cruenta Circle and one at the end of Porter Drive and that is roughly where we ended. The amount of small, medium and even large trees that were identified by the teams was surprising. It is determined next month that we will have to spend more time on the big Rooikrans still standing in Container Bay down near the Ocean before working our way through the rest of the village. Nevertheless, a huge amount of mainly Rooikrans, but also Port Jackson and Myrtle were eradicated by the team. A great effort.

Mike put out a plea for everyone to do their bit in recruiting new volunteers to join the hack.

Next hack will be Saturday 8 August 2026

Convenor: Mike Christelis Cell: 082 467 2795

10. CREW

The Kogelberg Crew Team continues to do wonderful work in searching for endangered or near endangered species, recording the numbers and locations and it all helps with conservation of the fynbos in the Kogelberg Biosphere.

To Gerda Theron and her team, thank you very much. Keep up the good work, we are proud of what you do on behalf of the Hangklip Botanical Society (NPC).

Contact: Gerda Theron Email: kogelbergcrew@gmail.com

11. MONTHLY TALKS

By all accounts the July talk by Dolf Nel on "The size of the Universe and where we fit in" was a great success and everyone enjoyed Dolf's very enlightening talk.

We look forward with immense anticipation to **Roger Parson's talk** on the very topical title "**Day Zero – Keeping Critical Infrastructure alive.**" During the Day Zero crisis in 2017/2018, public discussion focused almost exclusively on water restrictions and the prospect of fetching water from central distribution points if the municipality supply failed. Yet little attention was given to how critical infrastructure would survive such a collapse. What would happen to Groote Schuur Hospital, the Provincial Legislature, or key government facilities? Would youth care detention centers simply be forced to release their residents?

Faced with the looming threat of municipal failure in 2017 and 2018, the Western Cape Government launched an emergency initiative to secure groundwater supplies for 90 facilities across the province, most of them within the Cape Town Metropole. Dr Roger Parsons will recount how hydrogeologists, drillers, and engineers were mobilized to keep water flowing, the obstacles they encountered, and the successes achieved

With forecasts of a potential Super El Nino forming, now is the time to reflect on these lessons and recognize the importance of preparing for the next drought before it arrives.

The next monthly talk will take place on:

Saturday 15th August 2026 at the Nivenia Hall, Harold Porter Gardens.

Be there at 17h30 for a glass of wine/fruit juice and the talk commences at 18h00.

A contribution to the evening expenses will be greatly appreciated.

Please RSVP via

What's App to 079 657 2385 or Email hpbookrsvp@gmail.com

12. KOGELBERG BRANCH MONTHLY WALK

There will be no walk this month because of the National Botanical Societies Special General Meeting and Annual General Meeting on Saturday 15 August 2026.

13. CONCLUSION

Wow, there is never a shortage of activities for the Hangklip Botanical Society (trading as the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa). I am amazed of what a large group of volunteers can achieve in the richest floral kingdom in the world. The community spirit, the preparedness to roll up one's sleeves and get involved is amazing and every day this group of volunteers is growing larger and larger. As stated before, this is a multi-faceted undertaking and I believe not only all the good we do, but we also create a wonderful social outlet for so many people in their leisure time and everyone says how much they enjoy the hacks, or volunteering in the shop or working in the gardens or being part of the garden circle or plant rescue and so many other aspects that the Hangklip Botanical Society gets involved in.

From all of us on the Committee of the Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of South Africa and the Hangklip Botanical Society Directors a big, big thank you, we greatly appreciate what you all do.

Best Wishes

Peter Dall

Director: Hangklip Botanical Society

082 784 4326

Email: peter@pdconsult.co.za

09 AUGUST 2026