

Returning to the SCHS as our guest speaker for July was Philip Rundel, Distinguished Professor of Biology in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at UCLA, and Director of the Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden. As a researcher and biology professor whose work has centered on the ecology, biodiversity, and conservation of plants and plant communities in the Mediterranean climate regions of the world, Rundel is considered a leading authority in his field. His comprehensive knowledge was evident from the lecture he presented, entitled "From Proteas to Aloes: Exploring the Remarkable Flora of South Africa," which featured beautiful slides and informative graphics compiled from decades of travel to the Cape Region and Namaqualand.



Photo provided by speaker.


Rundel began with an overview of the enormity of this area's botanical significance to the study of Mediterranean climate flora on a global scale. He explained that the over 9,000 plant species originating from this region have evolved in large part due to its geography, climate and geological age. He listed its five biomes – succulent Karoo, Nama Karoo, savanna, grassland, and fynbos – comparing them to their counterparts in other parts of the world. (Reference SCHS April 2016 newsletter for greater detail about global comparisons.) Rundel then went on to describe the some of the dominant types of vegetation found in the Cape Region, and their varied uses.

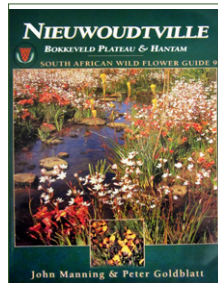
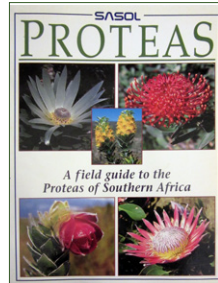
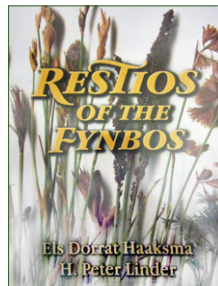
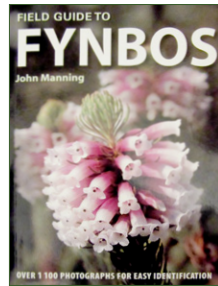
Table Mountain National Park, located in Cape Town, is composed of sandstone, limiting what can be grown (or built) on the soil, but it does support the rare endemic fynbos vegetation. The shrubby proteaceae and ericaceae, as well as the grass-like

restinoiacea are the dominant genera, and many of their species do well in Southern California's chaparral landscapes. Proteas in particular have become popular in the floral and nursery trades globally.

Further up the western coast is Namaqualand, an area populated by succulent Karoo and also recognized as a global diversity hot-spot. As well as attracting botanists to see the over 1,700 species of desert flora, it is a major tourist draw for its annual wildflower displays, including many species of colorful ice plants.

Other areas included the Richtersveld (a World Heritage Site), Hantam National Botanical Garden (a motherlode for geophytes), and the eastern Cape region (home to the common *Crassula ovata*, *Portulacaria afra* and *Strelitzia reginae*.)

After wrapping up his program by answering audience questions, Rundel also shared some book recommendations. (Pictured below.) These titles will be useful for those wanting to pursue further research on their own, or just "plan" a South African fantasy vacation.  Sabine Steinmetz



SHARING SECRETS RESPONSES

What is your favorite type of mulch and why? Do you use different mulches for ornamentals and edibles?



Living mulch! I use both *Sutera* (aka *Bacopa*) and *Cotula lineariloba* to help feed my soil...

- Kathy Musial

For edibles, I like to use straw mulch. It reflects heat and breaks down by the end of the season.

- Laura Bauer

I use free city mulch for my ornamentals from piles I have sampled previously that I have deemed to be "clean." I also take along a rake to quickly run over the top of the pile and remove any unwanted matter (ex: eucalyptus leaves that drop from overhead trees at one location). Plus, when the mulch is free I'm also inclined to apply it liberally, in deeper layers, and more frequently.

- Sabine Steinmetz

Homemade compost is my fave because I make it all the time, don't have to buy it, and it is cooler on the plants' roots than inert types.

- Anonymous




Thank you for the great tips and giving us all more options to think about using in our own gardens!

CALL FOR SILENT AUCTION

SCHS's annual silent auction of garden-inspired paraphernalia is held annually during our Horticulturist of the Year award banquet, and is a major fund-raiser for the society. The auction is the perfect opportunity to both purge *and* enhance your personal collections, or maybe do some early holiday shopping! This is always a popular event and we are eagerly anticipating what kind of goodies will come up for auction this year...

Bring your donations of plants, books, botanical art, gently used pots and tools, as well as any unique or interesting garden-related items to the August meeting, or contact Steve Gerischer at sglarkspur@aol.com or (323) 257-3629, to coordinate a pick-up. If given advance notice, he can prepare a bid card for anything you wish to drop off the evening of the event.

Thank you for participating - we can't wait to see this year's selections! AND, we can now take credit cards in payment, so bid generously...

 Sabine Steinmetz

Silent Auction bidding closes at 7:00, BEFORE dinner, and pick up is after award presentation.

HOTY TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW!



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

at the L.A. Arboretum
honoring John Schoustra



ORDER ONLINE or by MAIL
Reservation Form enclosed