Hamerkop Newsletter May 2025

Our visit to Hamerkop, as usual, was lovely, especially after all the rain.

1. General maintenance and garden.

Roof has been painted, chimney fixed, everything works, with exception of mildly leaking kitchen tap. Jad has replaced the washer but the tap still leaks a bit. Another small problem is that the geyser thermostat is set very high, the water is scolding hot. Can anyone set it a bit lower, please?

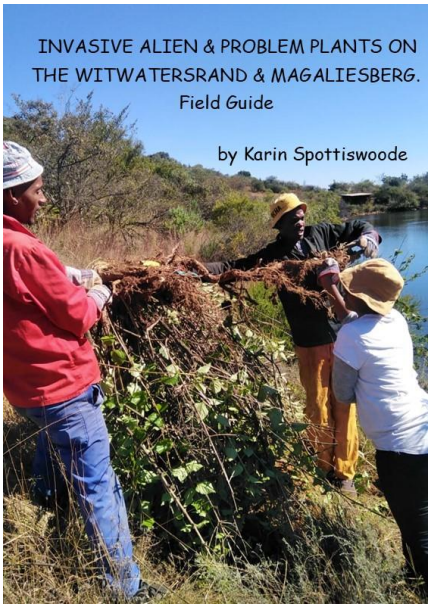
2. Around the house and annex:

The front stoop lawn is now a lawn, great!

	Lovely succulent garden created in the dead tree stumps between main house and annex

3. Outside “gardening/ weeding” work to be done – anyone can do it, your help will be much appreciated!

The page numbers below refer to my book “Invasive alien and problem plants on the Witwatersrand and Magaliesberg – Field Guide”, a copy of which we have donated to Hamerkop.



This newly published book is available from me, cell 072-595-6991 and on www.invasives.org.za.

The firebreak clearing to the west and north side of the main house and annex (mostly near the annex) is becoming invaded by a South American non-declared invasive garden herb, called *Galinsoga parviflora* (Gallant soldier, Knopkruid) (pg 101). Recommended, if there are few, is to pull them out.

Where there are many in one area, cut (slash or brushcut) below the flowering part of the plants and remove (put in closed up bag) the cut stems with the flowers and seeds on them. If one pulls out the Gallant soldier when there are many flowering and fruiting stalks, good chances are that the loosened soil from removing the plants, creates ideal growing conditions for new seeds to grow.

Less, but still many Lang klits/ Chaff flowers (pg. 86), which have unpleasant seeds with sharp tips, are also undeclared problematically invasive plants.

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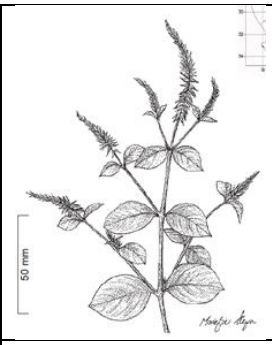
<tr><td> </td><td>  </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td>Gallant soldier</td><td colspan="2">Lang klits/ Achyranthus aspera</td></tr>
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Numerous declared young Potato Creepers / *Solanum seaforthianum* (pg 141 & flower picture from Marietjie Louw). Bigger creepers need the tree popper to take them out.

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2"> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr>
<tr><td> </td><td> </td><td>Many young ones are easy to pull out.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Potato Creeper / Solanum seafortianum</td></tr>
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Wild pointsettia (pg. 100) & Forest Burr (pg. 97).

Wild Pointsettia/ *Euphorbia geniculata*	Forest Burr/ *Pupalia lappacea*, non-declared, but seriously troublesome as it has burrs that stick onto any animal brushing past, so distributing their seeds.	

Wild pointsettia comes out easily by hand.

Forest Burr (pg. 97 – previously identified in my book as “Cyathula – species” unknown” needs to have the branches with burrs cut off and bagged, so that the seeds can rot. The plants need to be tree-popped out. Popped out plants and pulled out plants can be left to decompose.

Blackjacks/ Bidens pilosa(pg. 89) & Tall khakiweed/ *Tagetes minuta* (pg. 116)

Bidens Pilosa, young plant, flower and seed.			Tall khakiweed

Sparse Black Jacks and Tall khakiweed can be pulled out, but dense stands should just be slashed or brushcut below the flowers and seeds, above the level of the grasses.

The aim is to remove the invasive and alien plants, to allow the local grasses and the indigenous *Isoglossa grantii* to re-establish itself in the firebreak area next to the main house and annex.

Isoglossa grantii & grass	*Isoglossa grantii*

4. By the stream

Triumfetta Pilosa (pg. 117)

Please remove burrs, bag them, knott bag closed, put in drum next to the house, and pull or tree-pop the plant out? Leave plant to decompose.

Triumfetta pilosa plant & flowers		Troublesome burrs that stick to everything	

Crofton Weed (pg. 87) & *Lantana camara* (pg. 70)

<table>
<tr>
<td colspan="2">
 </td>
<td>Lantana camara
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<td>Lippia javanica
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<td>Lantana rugosa
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<tr>
<td colspan="2">Crofton Weed
Ageratina adenophora
In and along the stream.</td>
<td colspan="3">Lantana camara
Along the road and paths, around the house, along the stream, easily recognized when it flowers.
Not to be confused with the indigenous Lantana rugosa and Lippia javanica</td>
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</table>

Aleck has been shown what to do when he has time, if not working on the road, sweeping around the house, cleaning the braai and maintenance work.

He would appreciate interest shown in the invasive plant removal work he does, better still, some work done together with him.

He works every weekday morning for five hours, usually starting at 8am.

For Alien Invasive Plants removal methodology, please consult with my book. I hope that people find it useful!

5. Update on Pretty & Aleck cell phone contacts:

Aleck Call & What's App cell 062-582-2947

Aleck Call only, cell 063-056-4257

Pretty WhatsApp & Call cell 064-343-3281

Pretty calls only, cell 071-761-1552

Aleck gave me these most recent numbers when we were at Hamerkop two weeks ago.

Kind regards,
Karin Spottiswoode
Cell 072-595-6991