

# GARDENING in ROOIELS

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# GARDENING IN ROOIELS

## INTRODUCTION

In this book I share my own experiences in developing a garden of indigenous plants in Rooiels, on erf 94. It must be strongly emphasised up front, that Rooiels is not one “uniform place for gardening”. Some of the plants that grow happily on my erf will not be easy to grow in other parts of Rooiels and, conversely, some plants that, for example, thrive on our mountain slopes will simply not grow on my erf. The common *Protea repens* (Suikerbossie) is a good example!

Some of the plants in my garden grow naturally in the area, but others come from other parts of the country. They are all indigenous.

Rooiels has, in general, very challenging conditions for gardening- particularly the strong summer and winter winds and the varying soil types. (Often “alkaline dune sand” with negligible macro nutrients ).

According to the book “Your place in the Kogelberg” by Tim Attwell, the village comprises two different vegetation/soil types. Throughout most of the village the “Overberg Dune Strandveld” prevails. This soil type is of “relatively” recent formation and basically comprises “hardened sand dunes” having a significant calcium carbonate content. This makes it alkaline. The Kogelberg Sandstone Fynbos vegetation/soil type which is very much older and occurs on the slopes above Rooiels is more acidic.

This latter “growing medium” is more favourable for growing many species of fynbos, particularly members

of the proteacea family. The more extensive (Dune Strandveld) Rooiels terrain, in turn, favours quite a number of small tree species. My personal observations and experience on erf 94 bears this out.

This book will then mainly cover my own experiences in growing plants in my garden on the corner of Anemone and Priestleya roads and nearly all the pictures were taken showing plants growing in my garden.

The main “variables” that need to be considered are wind, soil, water requirements, sunlight availability and of course species compatibility with these variables for the given erf.

## **WIND.**

Because of the severe winds experienced in Rooiels, certain plants will simply not grow in certain areas in the village. I have found that by first creating wind breaks on my erf this problem can be mitigated to some extent. The coastal thicket concept, which is used in the fynbos garden at the Greenpoint Park in Cape Town, is a good example of this. The idea here is to plant “layers/rows” of wind resistant plants, one row behind the other. For example *Brachylaena discolor* (Coast Silver Oak) and *Tarchonanthus camphoratus* (Wild Camphor) in the back rows, with plants like *Searsia crenata* (A species of *Rhus*), *Polygala myrtifolia* (Septemberbos), *Halleria lucida* (Tree fuschia), *Salvia Africana-lutea* (Bruinsalie) etc in the next row(s) and then perhaps *Coleonema* (Confetti Bush) and some pelargonium species right in front. One can obviously experiment with other plants too. The idea is to finally create a dense (and attractive) windbreak which has the added benefit of being “bird friendly” as well.

In Rooiels there are some places where even plants like Camphor bushes and Milkwoods remain severely stunted because of the very strong winds. Sometimes such plants even appear to grow as “ground covers” rather than the trees they “should” grow into!

## **SOIL TYPES.**

The second main variable is soil type.

I acquired a LaMotte soil testing kit and found that, in virtually all the samples I've tested in Rooiels, the macro nutrients, Nitrogen (N) and Phosphorous (P) are either extremely low or non-existent. Potassium (K), on the other hand also seems to be very low in the Dune Strandveld area but a little higher (termed low to medium in the convention used by my soil test kit) in the Sandstone soil-type areas.

Soil pH level (Acidity/alkalinity) is probably the most important factor in growing many fynbos plants. I found that all the tests I did in the Overberg Dune Strandveld areas (most of Rooiels) showed a pH of 8 or more (Alkaline) Interestingly there seems to be a “strip” below the mountain, extending from Klein Rooielsie (erf 14) through Harveya (erf 208 and also near the top gate of the Nature Reserve) and on to erf 278 in the Ocean View cul de sac, where I took pH readings of between 5 and 6 (acidic). Higher up (Off Porter/ Roella) I measured pH levels of 6. I also took samples from above and below the gravel road running through the smallholdings between Rooiels and Pringle Bay. 50m above the road gave a pH reading of 5 and 50m below the road 4.5. Many fynbos plants grow

naturally in this area, confirming the importance of acid soil for those species.

From these results it is clear that Nitrogen and Phosphorous can/should be low or non-existent but some potassium seems desirable. The Arnelia potting soil which is probably based on good research, contains virtually no nitrogen and phosphorous (like all the Rooiels soil) but has high potassium content and a pH level of 4.5. (Arnelia is a wholesale fynbos nursery situated on the West Coast, which has produced many excellent plants for the retail nursery trade)

Acidic soil is definitely better for most species of fynbos but many plants seem to tolerate our alkaline soil quite well and some actually prefer it (see later).

When I started the garden 7 years ago, I initially brought in some additional soil (A load of what the Kirstenbosch nursery calls "protea mix" and also some soil mixed with compost from Agri-organics in Grabouw). However since 2012 I have used only the natural soil mixed with compost. Whether introducing soil from elsewhere-as I did in the first two or three years-has any real benefit in facilitating plant growth is questionable? For one thing the imported soil now gives pH readings of 8+ as in the rest of the garden! However the soil "texture" of the protea mix may benefit some fynbos species (and may also retain moisture better than in the rest of the garden) but I'm not convinced that there is any other significant benefit in bringing in soil unless it is to be used for "building up an area"-eg a raised rock garden- or filling in a depressed area.

On the slopes of Klein Hangklippie the soil between the numerous stones/rocks is more "gravelly" and this certainly seems to favour certain plant species. In gardens "higher

up” in Rooiels, fynbos plants seem to grow much faster and need less water. The stony/gravelly soil probably retains moisture better than the sand elsewhere in Rooiels and the roots of these plants can probably also penetrate to a much greater depth in the gravelly soil than in my compacted dune sand.

In the Cape Agulhas area there is a vegetation/soil type known as Limestone fynbos. This soil is alkaline. A number of the trees and shrubs growing naturally on my erf and the surrounding erven, also grow wild in that area, perhaps confirming the “alkaline connection”. A number of species of buchu grow there and also do well in my garden. *Leucospermum patersonii* and *Protea susannae* also grow naturally in that area and I’ve recently planted some of the former to see how they will do in my garden. *Protea susannae* is also the “one parent” of the hybrid protea known as “Pink Ice” which seems to grow well in a number of Rooiels gardens.

## **WATER.**

Water is another variable and I’m still experimenting with this. Plants’ needs clearly differ, depending on species, but I think all plants-other than very established large ones-need some water during our hot and windy summer months.

However in nature –and in my garden as well-seeds germinate naturally and the resulting plants seem to cope well without any additional water at all. I’ve been told that plants are often over-watered in gardens but am hesitant to “over-experiment”. Giving too much water is unlikely to kill plants-provided drainage is good-but too little can kill them!

A very important factor in growing most plants is drainage. Throughout Rooiels the sandy soil provides good drainage but in very extreme weather conditions this may not suffice. Some will remember the very heavy rainfall in November 2013 which resulted in some Rooiels gardeners losing long-established plants, including trees.

## **SUNLIGHT.**

As a generalisation, most fynbos plants prefer full sun. However I have found that many of my plants grow well when there is some shade as well (For part of the day- perhaps at the beginning or end of the day). This is also sometimes linked to more wind protection (The plants providing the shade often also provide wind protection) and shade also provides some protection from the soil drying out too much. However even though some plants may be quite happy with some shade, their blooming may be adversely effected.

A very interesting observation of mine was the reaction of certain plants that I planted in close proximity to the south side of my double story house. This meant that they received virtually no sun at all and yet a number bloomed well-even fygies!!

A hypothesis is that if there is sufficient "light"-not necessarily "sunlight"- plants will still grow and bloom. There are also obviously some plants that need shade, like clivias and most species of plectranthus.

## **RE-SEEDING and RE-SPROUTING.**

I might not be using these terms strictly correctly here but these are two interesting-and useful-characteristics of

many of the plants I grow in my garden.

A number of my plants can be severely cut back (pruned) and will grow out vigorously again (re-sprout). This feature is very useful in our windy climate where plants tend to lose their leaves lower down and become lanky. Being able to cut them back severely creates a bushier and more attractive plant which withstands the wind better.

Many other plants re-seed prolifically and provided they are “desirable plants”, this feature creates continual “renewal” of the species in the garden.

## **LIFE EXPECTANCY OF PLANTS.**

Many species of fynbos have very limited life spans. (Most Ericas, for example, do not live for much longer than 5 or 6 years ,from my experience, and need to be periodically replaced). Some trees like the Keurboom, Bietou and Cape Sumach also have fairly limited life spans.

## **OTHER VARIABLES.**

I continually try to “pick up patterns” regarding what “works best” in my garden but am often frustrated in this endeavour.

Prime examples are purchasing two identical plants from the same nursery , planting them in close proximity to each other, with the one then thriving and the other barely surviving-at best!

I've even experienced this with Coast Silver Oaks and Camphor Bushes (Two of the hardiest species one can plant in Rooiels). I suspect some plants from nurseries simply

are not as “strong/healthy” as others-and their subsequent growth-under identical circumstances- reflects this.

Of course another explanation is that “nature is just too clever for us” and there are other variables that I have not even begun to think of?? (For example plants that arise from seeds falling onto the ground and being left unattended, often seem to do better than the same plants acquired from nurseries, carefully planted and nurtured!!)

## PLANTING PREPARATION.

I've recently been experimenting by preparing growing areas as follows: I first clear a “planting area” of all the plants growing wild there-Rhus, Bietou etc.- including all their many roots! I then mix in lots of organic compost. The soil itself is basically “white sand” but with the compost added becomes a better growing medium-as well as retaining moisture better. After planting I surround the plants (on the surface) with a thick layer of “mulch” that I get from the Kirstenbosch nursery, called Kirstenbosch “compost”. So far this method seems to be working quite well and after a year most plants are growing very well. Interestingly I tested the macronutrients in this compost/ mulch. N, P and K are all **extremely high** which should be very bad for fynbos!!! I spoke to a senior person at the Kirstenbosch gardens, who told me that he had also previously been surprised about this and had therefore not initially used this mixture with plants like Ericas and Proteas. Later they did start using it with these genera-with no ill effects. His explanation is that used as a compost, ie mixed into the soil this would probably be very bad for such plants, but merely used on the surface-perhaps slowly releasing some nutrients into the soil- seems to

be beneficial. So far it seems to be working well in my garden!!-although with the strong South Easterly a lot of the mulch has blown away!! I've experimented with pine bark as a mulch as well but that also blows around!! Peach pips are a no no because they attract baboons. I've also tried small stones but so far the "Kirstenbosch compost" mulch seems to be giving the best results. Since writing this section, most of my "Kirstenbosch compost mulch" has been blown away by the exceptionally strong winds Rooiels has experienced recently!

I'm now experimenting with a low ground cover planted between the bigger plants. *Gazania rigens* which produces pretty yellow flowers seems to be a viable option which serves the same purpose as mulch but which does not blow away! Time will tell if this is a good solution.

For trees I dig a large hole (up to 1m x 1m x 1m) mix in lots of compost, some Bone meal and some "Bounceback".

Most of these plants dislike any other fertilizers and as an added precaution I use organic compost in preference to other types of compost.

For members of the Proteaceae family, I also mix in some of Arnelia's "Premium Potting and Planting mix" when preparing the planting site. I have measured a pH level of 4.5 and a high potassium content of this "compost". It is available from most nurseries.

I have also brought in a number of loads of rocks which have been useful in creating "rockeries" as well as adding other interesting features to the garden.

# GARDEN SPECIES INCLUDED IN THIS BOOK

Only plants which grow well in my garden, and which are generally available from the nursery trade, and which I consider “desirable plants” for a garden, have been included in the following sections where more details and pictures are included.

There are, for example, some plants growing wild in my garden which I would not choose to plant, eg Blombos, various local *Searsia* (*Rhus*) species or the rather invasive *Felicia echinata*. However in a later section of this book I have listed all these plants-ie those growing wild on erf 94 but for which further details are not provided-for information. At least they have chosen to grow in our Dune Strandveld soil!!!

Then there are others which may be difficult to acquire from nurseries or which survive but don't grow very well in my garden. These plants have also been omitted from this book.

The 123 plants that I have included, are grouped as follows:

## **(I) Trees and Large Shrubs (19)**

This section is in turn divided into:

### **(a) Species indigenous to Rooiels.**

The Overberg Dune Strandveld's alkaline “tree friendly” soil type, is evidenced by the relatively large number of species occurring naturally in Rooiels (All of which can of course also withstand our very strong winds!).

<b>Cassine peragua (Cape Saffron).....</b>	<b>p25</b>
<b>Euclea racemosa (Dune Guarri).....</b>	<b>p26</b>
<b>Olea capensis (Ironwood).....</b>	<b>p27</b>
<b>Osteospermum moniliferum (Bietou).....</b>	<b>p28</b>
<b>Osyris compressa (Cape Sumach).....</b>	<b>p29</b>
<b>Phyllica buxifolia (Bukshardeblaar).....</b>	<b>p30</b>
<b>Polygala myrtifolia (Septemberbos).....</b>	<b>p31</b>
<b>Pterocelastrus tricuspidatus (Cherrywood).....</b>	<b>p32</b>
<b>Sideroxylon inerme (Milkwood).....</b>	<b>p33</b>
<b>Tarchonanthus littoralis (Wild Camphor).....</b>	<b>p34</b>
<b>Virgilia oroboides (Keurboom).....</b>	<b>p35</b>

## **(b) Other species growing successfully in my garden.**

The following species which are indigenous to other parts of the country also grow well in my garden:

<b>Brachylaena discolor (Coast Silver Oak).....</b>	<b>p36</b>
<b>Chionanthus foveolatus (Pock Ironwood).....</b>	<b>p37</b>
<b>Diospyros whyteana (Bladder-nut).....</b>	<b>p38</b>
<b>Halleria lucida (Tree fuchsia).....</b>	<b>p39</b>
<b>Olea europaea subsp. africana (Wild Olive).....</b>	<b>p40</b>
<b>Olea exasperata (Dune Olive).....</b>	<b>p41</b>
<b>Pittosporum viridiflorum (Cheesewood).....</b>	<b>p42</b>
<b>Searsia (Rhus) crenata (Dune Crow-berry).....</b>	<b>p43</b>

## **(II) Proteaceae Family (20)**

I have had success with 6 genera from the Proteacea family.

### **(a) Leucospermums. (Pincushions).**

<b>conocarpodendron (Kreupelhout).....</b>	<b>p44</b>
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This is the common yellow pincushion growing naturally in

Rooiels and on many other slopes in the Western Cape. It grows to the height of a small tree (3-4 meters).

**cordifolium (Common Pincushion).....p45**

Many of these grow around Kleinmond. They seem to do well in gardens in Rooiels as well. Colour varies from yellow to red.

**cuneiforme .....p46**

This species grows very well in my garden.

**oleifolium (Overberg Pincushion).....p47**

is growing- but not thriving- in my garden. They grow much better on the sandstone slopes nearer the mountains.

**Hybrids.**

Many pincushions have been hybridised. I have mainly used plants grown by the West Coast wholesale nursery, Arnelia. Their plants grow well in my garden. Species that I've been successful with include:

**Anouk.....p48**

(This is a four way hybrid between cordifolium/patersonii/tottum/glabrum)

**Jelena.....p49**

(A hybrid between cuneiforme and cordifolium).

**Jyoti.....p49**

(A hybrid between cuneiforme and conocarpodendron).

**Veldfire.....p50**

(A hybrid between conocarpodendron and glabrum).

## (b) Leucadendrons (Cone bushes)

Two species that grow well in the wild in the Rooiels area and also well in my garden are:

**laureolum (Golden Cone Bush).....p51**

This is the species that gives the surrounding mountainsides so much yellow colour in winter/spring.

**salignum (Geelbos).....p52**

In the wild this species comes in yellows and reds. This lends itself to hybridisation.

These two species have been hybridised by Arnelia to provide a variety of hybrids having interesting colourings- from yellow to deep burgundy. Some hybrids doing well in my garden are:

**Burgundy Sunset.....p53**

**Jester.....p53**

**Safari Sunset.....p54**

## (c) Proteas

These haven't done well in my garden.

Whereas the mountainside is covered in **Protea repens (Sugarbush)**, they just don't want to grow in my garden!

**Pink Ice (A hybrid between P compacta and P susannae). (p55)** is the only protea which is growing reasonably well in my garden. A reason may be that P susannae grows naturally in alkaline soil.

**P cynaroides (King Protea)** grows fairly well but never blooms. (Some creature nips off the buds before they can develop!)

## Other Proteas.

I've only recently become aware that two species of Protea come from the Limestone fynbos area (viz *susannae* and *obtusifolia*) and should therefore grow well in my alkaline soil. I plan to plant some soon!

## (d) Aulax

**Aulax cancellata (Channel-leaf Featherbush)**.....p56  
grows well in my garden.

## (e) Mimetes.

I have not been able to successfully grow the most common species in the area, viz **Mimetes cucullatus (Rooistompie)**.

A number of other species, however, are doing reasonably well in my garden. One reason may be that some (or all) are grafted onto a *Leucospermum* rootstock (Veldfire) which itself grows well in our alkaline soil.

**Mimetes argenteus (Silver Pagoda)**.....p57  
**Mimetes hottentoticus (Matchstick Pagoda)**.....p58  
**Mimetes splendidus (Splendid Pagoda)**.....p59

## (f) Serrurias

The *Serruria* common in the area, viz **Serruria adscendens (Kleinmond Spiderhead)**.....p60  
grows but does not flourish in my garden.

**Serruria aemula (Strawberry Spiderhead)**.....p61  
grew very well for 4 years but died recently (This is perhaps it's lifespan).

## (III) ERICAS (17)

Many species of Erica grow wild in and around Rooiels. The following species grow well in my garden:

**E baccans (Berry Heath).....p62**

Has pink flowers and grows prolifically on the mountain slopes in and around Cape Town. Does well in my Rooiels garden.

**E baueri (Bridal Heath).....p63**

This species comes from the Langeberg area and blooms throughout the year! It comes in white, light pink and dark pink colours. It grows very well in Rooiels gardens.

**E brachialis (Hairy-tube Heath).....p64**

Grows well in the Rooiels area and well in my garden.

**Erica cerinthoides (Fire Heath).....p65**

This species is widely spread over the coastal regions of the country and grows well in my garden.

**E coccinea (Tassel Heath).....p66**

The Rooiels form of this plant is yellow. It also grows well in my garden.

**E curviflora (Water Heath).....p67**

This attractive species needs lots of water but grows fairly well in my garden.

**E discolor (Bi-coloured Heath).....p68**

This "robust" species grows extremely well in my garden.

**E glandulosa.....p69**

This is another robust species that comes from the Southern and Eastern Cape and grows extremely well in my garden.

- E imbricata (Salt and Pepper Heath).....p70**  
 Indigenous to the area and grows reasonably well in my garden.
- E labialis.....p71**  
 Grows extensively around Rooiels and grows well in my garden.
- E mammosa. (Ninepin Heath).....p72**  
 Grows well in the area and well in my garden.
- E perspicua (Prince-of-Wales Heath).....p73**  
 This species need a lot of moisture and doesn't do well in my garden without a lot of extra watering. It grows well on some of the small holdings between Rooiels and Pringle Bay (where there is plenty of moisture).
- E plukenetii (Hangertjie).....p74**  
 These red plants grow extensively in and around Rooiels. They also grow well in my garden.
- E sessiliflora (Green Heath).....p75**  
 Grows well in the area and very well in my garden.
- E sitiens (Rice Heath).....p76**  
 Grows well in my garden.
- E speciosa.....p77**  
 This species which also grows well in my garden is similar to discolor but the flowers are a uniform colour.
- E verticillata.....p78**  
 This species is extinct in the wild and grows well in my garden.

## **(IV) ALOES (7)**

Sunbird Aloes (with a branch in Swellendam) have

produced many interesting aloe hybrids. Some of the ones which are doing well in my garden are:

Aloe Bottle Brush.....	p79
Aloe Copper Shower.....	p80
Aloe Erik the Red.....	p80
Aloe First Gold.....	p81
Aloe Mango Mix.....	p81
Aloe Ruby Blaze.....	p82
Aloe Southern Cross.....	p82

## **(V) OTHER SUCCULENTS (7)**

<b>Cotyledon orbiculata (Pig's Ear).....</b>	<b>p83</b>
Grows well in my garden.	

<b>Crassula coccinea (Red Crassula).....</b>	<b>p84</b>
Grows well in my garden.	

<b>Crassula ovata.....</b>	<b>p84</b>
Grows well in my garden.	

<b>Crassula perfoliata.....</b>	<b>p85</b>
Grows well in my garden.	

<b>Crassula rubricaulis.....</b>	<b>p85</b>
Grows well in my garden.	

<b>Orbia variegata (Carrion Flower).....</b>	<b>p86</b>
This interesting little plant has been growing in my garden for 5 years.	

<b>Senecio barbertonicus.....</b>	<b>p83</b>
Grows well in my garden.	

## **(VI) BUCHUS (7)**

<b>Acmadenia heterophylla.....</b>	<b>p87</b>
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Grows well in my garden.

**Acmadenia mundiana**.....p88

Grows well in my garden.

**Agathosma ciliaris (Bergboegoe)**.....p89

Grows naturally on my plot.

**Agathosma ovata (False Buchu)**.....p90

Grows well in my garden.

**Coleonema album (Cape May)**.....p91

Grows well in the area and in my garden.

**Coleonema pulchellum (Confetti Bush)**.....p92

Grows well in my garden.

**Diosma hirsuta (Rooibogoe)**.....p89

Grows naturally on my plot.

## **(VII) PELARGONIUMS (6)**

**P betulinum (Kanferblaar)**.....p93

Grows wild in my garden.

**P citronellum (Lemon-scented Pelargonium)**.....p94

Grows very well in my garden, including shady spots.

**P cucullatum (Wildemalva)**.....p95

Grows wild in the area and well in my garden, but not in certain parts (shady spots?)

**P peltatum (Ivy-leaved Pelargonium)**.....p96

Grows well in my garden and "scrambles" up trees.

**P quercifolium**.....p97

Grows well in my garden.

**P sidoides (Kalwerbossie)**.....p98  
Grows well in my garden.

## **(VIII) BULBS (6)**

**Brunsvigia orientalis (Candelabra)**.....p99  
Grows wild on my plot.

**Chasmanthe aethiopica (Suurkanol)**.....p100  
Grows wild on my plot.

**Clivia miniata (Bush Lily)**.....p101  
Grows well in my garden.

**Dietes grandiflora (Wild Iris)**.....p102  
Grows well in my garden.

**Haemanthus coccineus (April Fool)**.....p103  
Grows wild in the area and well in my garden.

**Zantedeschia aethiopica (Arum Lily)**.....p104  
Grows wild on my plot.

## **(IX) SALVIAS (3)**

**Salvia africana-lutea (Bruinsalie)**.....p105  
Grows wild in Rooiels and well in my garden.

**Salvia chamelaeagnea (Afrikaanse Salie)**.....p106  
Grows wild in Rooiels and also well in my garden.

**Salvia dolomitica (Dolomite Sage)**.....p107  
Grows well in my garden.

## **(X) HELICHRYSUMS (3)**

**Helichrysum cymosum (Gold Carpet)**.....p108  
Grows well in my garden.

**Helichrysum dasyanthum**.....p108  
Grows wild on my plot.

**Helichrysum patulum (Kooigoed)**.....p109  
Grows wild on my plot

### **(XI) RESTIOS (3)**

**Elegia tectorum (Dakriet)**.....p110  
Grows well in my garden.

**Thamnochortus insignis (Dekriet)**.....p111  
Grows well in my garden.

**Thamnochortus spicigerus** .....p110  
Over 3 meters tall in my garden.

## **(XII) OTHER PLANTS (25)**

### **(a) Species Indigenous to Rooiels.**

<i>Athanasia trifurcata</i> (Klaaslouwbos).....	p112
<i>Berzelia lanuginosa</i> (Kolkol).....	p113
<i>Brunia albiflora</i> (Coffee Bush).....	p114
<i>Chironia baccifera</i> (Christmas Berry).....	p115
<i>Chrysocoma coma-aurea</i> (Beesbos).....	p112
<i>Cyclopia genistoides</i> (Honeybush Tea).....	p116
<i>Dimorphotheca fruticosa</i> (Rankbietou).....	p117
<i>Hymenolepis crithmoides</i> .....	p117
<i>Leonotis leonurus</i> (Wild Dagga).....	p118
<i>Lessertia frutescens</i> (Balloon Pea).....	p119
<i>Muraltia satureioides</i> .....	p120
<i>Orphium frutescens</i> (Sea Rose).....	p121
<i>Phaenocoma prolifera</i> (Rooisewejaartjie).....	p120
<i>Phylica ericoides</i> .....	p122
<i>Psoralea pinnata</i> (Fonteinbos).....	p122
<i>Solanum africanum</i> (Dronkbessie).....	p123

### **(b) Other species growing successfully in my garden.**

<i>Eriocephalus africanus</i> (Wild Rosemary).....	p124
<i>Euryops pectinatus</i> (Wolharpuisbos).....	p125
<i>Felicia filifolia</i> (Wild Aster).....	p125
<i>Hypoestes aristata</i> (Ribbon Bush).....	p126
<i>Kniphofia uvaria</i> (Red Hot Poker).....	p126
<i>Lobostemon fruticosus</i> (Pajama Bush).....	p127
<i>Plectranthus neochilus</i> (Spur Flower).....	p127
<i>Podalyria sericea</i> (Silky Podalyria).....	p128
<i>Polygala fruticosa</i> (Butterfly Bush).....	p128

## **OTHER ROOIELS GARDENS**

In general, gardeners in the Kogelberg sandstone acidic soil areas of Rooiels have an advantage in growing many fynbos species and three magnificent gardens that illustrate this are those of Jill and Dick, and Jenny and Koos, in Klein Rooiels and Dine and Graham in Harveya Road- but there are many other attractive gardens, and keen gardeners, in Rooiels as well.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Much credit must go to Aimée Hall of the Orms Design team who basically “put this book together” for me. Her enthusiasm, hard work and attention to detail was invaluable.

A big thank you also to Jill Lockley who went through the book before finalisation. She shared some useful information from her own experiences in gardening in Rooiels.

Jill is probably our most experienced Rooiels gardener and apart from creating her own beautiful garden, she has developed and continues to maintain the community garden near the main entrance to Rooiels.

# IN CONCLUSION

We can learn much from nature! I plan to continue to experiment in my garden and hopefully find more species that will grow “happily” in our harsh Rooiels conditions. Many plants have either become extinct or are on the verge of becoming extinct in the wild. Botanists and horticulturists have realised for some time that species can be “saved” by introducing them into gardens. *Erica verticillata*, *Mimetes stokoe* and *Serruria aemula* (foeniculacea) are but three examples of such plants-all growing happily in my garden!!

A further thought is that in our harsh and varying conditions, almost every gardener in the village must have some unique experiences. Let us start to pool this knowledge with a view to later extending this “first attempt” at a Rooiels Gardening book (limited to experiences on erf 94!!!) to a more inclusive manual covering the whole of Rooiels. Experiences, ideas, thoughts can be emailed to me at [davedek@iafrica.com](mailto:davedek@iafrica.com).

# PICTURES AND BRIEF DETAILS OF THE 123 “GARDENING SPECIES”

As mentioned earlier, only plants which grow well in my garden, and which are generally available from the nursery trade, and which I consider “desirable plants” for a garden, have been included on the following pages where more details and pictures are included.

There are, for example, some plants growing wild in my garden which I would not choose to plant, eg Blombos, various local *Searsia* (*Rhus*) species or the rather invasive *Felicia echinata* !

Then there are others which may be difficult to acquire from nurseries or which survive but don't grow very well in my garden. These plants have also been omitted here.

The 123 plants that I have included in this section, are listed in the following order:

- (I) Trees and large shrubs (25-43)
- (II) Proteaceae family (44-61)
- (III) Ericas (62-78)
- (IV) Aloes (79-82)
- (V) Other succulents (83-86)
- (VI) *Buchus* (87-92)
- (VII) *Pelargoniums* (93-98)
- (VIII) Bulbs (99-104)
- (IX) *Salvias* (105-107)
- (X) *Helichrysums* (108-109)
- (XI) *Restios* (110-111)
- (XII) Other plants (112-129)

## **Cassine peragua (Cape Saffron)**

In Rooiels this slow growing small tree normally grows to between 2 and 4 meters.

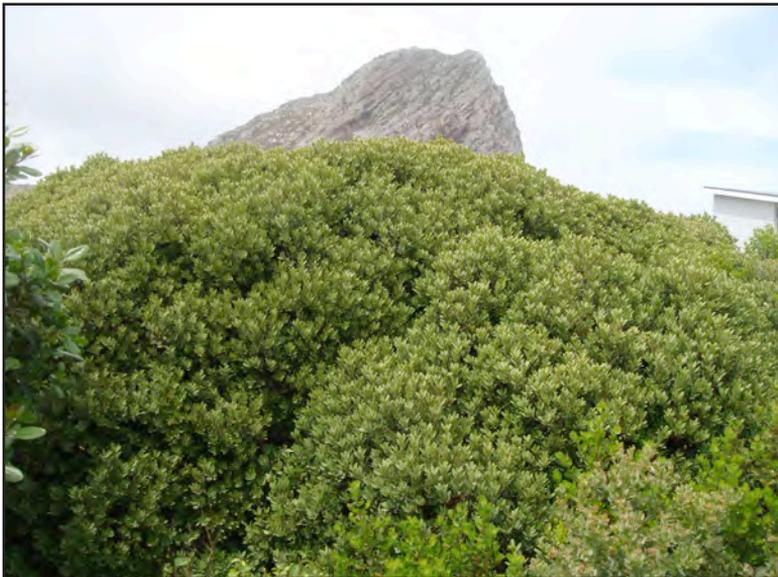
Leaves are tough, thick and leathery, shiny dark green above and paler below.

It produces small berries (first green then red/purple) after producing many small white flowers in late summer. It is bisexual.



## ***Euclea racemosa* (Dune Quarri)**

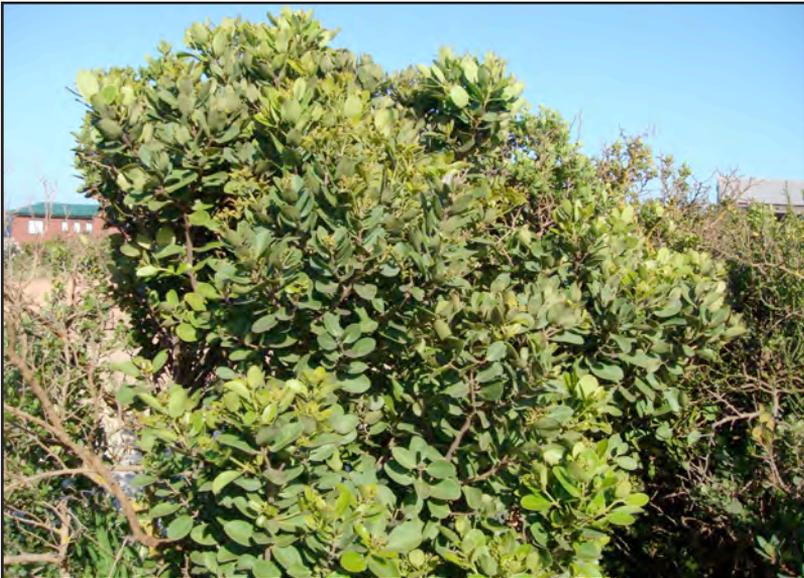
This is a slow growing shrub or small tree of up to 6 meters in height. In Rooiels it often occurs on the road reserves. Plants are either male or female. Its small, drooping, creamy-white flowers (Dec to March) are popular with honey bees and are followed by tiny, spherical purple fruits (Feb to May). A characteristic of this species is the distinct purplish colour of its stems. Although slow growing these plants make very good, dense hedges.



## ***Olea capensis capensis* (Small Ironwood)**

The subspecies *capensis* grows wild in Rooiels where it can grow up to 4-5 meters.

Terminal clusters of small white flowers are produced in December/January followed by small berries that turn purple when ripe.



## **Osteospermum moniliferum (Bietou)**

This fast growing species can be used as a “pioneer plant”. This means it will grow “almost anywhere”, quickly cover a newly cleared area and soon provide a windbreak for other plants. After being introduced into Australia, it seems to have become to them what their Port Jackson-and others-have become to us!!!

It withstands wind very well but has a limited lifespan-about 10 years.

It produces attractive yellow flowers for most of the year and grows to about 2 meters or more. The flowers on a tree are bisexual or female only!



## ***Osyris compressa* (Cape Sumach)**

*Osyris compressa* can attain a size of 4-5 meters in height, but is relatively short lived.

The flowers are small and inconspicuous and are borne in small terminal heads or panicles. Flowers are either just male on one plant or hermaphroditic (can be male or female on the same plant). The flowers and fruits are produced erratically throughout the year, but mainly from April to December. The fruits are decorative becoming bright, shiny red and then purplish black. Fruits don't ripen all at once which is why these plants can be attractive for long periods throughout the year.

Its leaves are opposite, stiff, erect and crowded up the stem.

It is a hemiparasitic plant, in other words a plant that is capable of producing its own food (photosynthesis) as well as utilizing nourishment from a suitable host plant by means of parasitism, via root attachments.



## **Phylla buxifolia (Bukshardeblaar)**

This species is indigenous to Rooiels and forms a compact rounded shrub or small tree. It can grow to 3 to 4 meters in height. The upper surface of the leaves is dark green and rough and the lower surface is covered in light coloured fine hairs.

It flowers from April to August and the flowers are followed by fruits.



## **Polygala myrtifolia (Septemberbos)**

This is a fast growing, very adaptable shrub or small tree that grows to 2 meters or more-in sun or semi-shade. It also tolerates wind very well.

There are different forms, some smaller.

Flowers are born throughout the year with a peak in spring.

They are normally mauve in colour but there is a white form as well. They are bisexual.

This is a “re-sprouter” which responds well to being cut back. It is also a prolific re-seeder!



## ***Pterocelastrus tricuspidatus* (Cherrywood)**

This is a slow growing large shrub or small tree eventually reaching about 2-3 meters in Rooiels. The masses of sweetly scented, bisexual flowers are followed by large numbers of very distinctive and attractive bright-orange fruit in spring/summer, in the form of 3-lobed capsules with wing-like horns. The young leaves are red, but mature to a glossy green colour.



## **Sideroxylon inerme (White Milkwood)**

This is a slow growing tree which grows to a height of 10-15 meters, usually with a gnarled and twisted trunk. It can reach an age of hundreds of years.

It develops a much-branched, spreading habit with a dense, glossy canopy of leathery leaves, shiny dark green above and dull green below.

It is a protected species in South Africa meaning that it may not be damaged-or moved or substantially pruned-without permission from the relevant authorities.

The tree has small greenish white, bisexual flowers, with a strong, unpleasant smell. It flowers during summer and autumn (January to June). Fruits are purplish black, small, round and fleshy and are present from late summer to spring (May to December).

A special feature of this tree is that it makes an excellent firebreak.



## **Tarchonanthus littoralis (Coastal Camphor Bush)**

This fast growing species forms a bushy shrub or small tree growing up to 4-6 meters in Rooiels. It is very wind resistant. The leaves give off a strong smell of camphor when crushed.

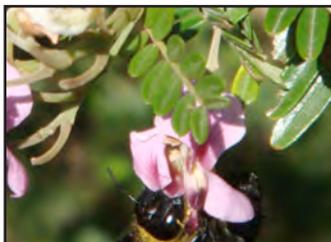
Male and female flowers are borne on separate trees and the female flowers turn into very attractive cotton-wool like balls of white hairs. The male trees are drab by comparison. A further useful feature of this plant is that it is a strong re-sprouter, ie will grow out strongly if cut back severely. (Useful in our windy climate!)



## **Virgilia oroboides (Keurboom)**

This is a very fast growing tree but in turn doesn't have a very long lifespan (about 15 years). It grows to a height of 6-10 meters.

The keurboom has beautiful, sweetly scented, pea-shaped flowers in dense terminal sprays about 100 mm long. The flowers are pale pink or pinky-white to white and are produced in profusion in summer. Flat brown pods contain the seeds. As the tree is low branching, fast growing and wind resistant it can be used as a useful pioneer plant. Sunbirds enjoy the nectar from the flowers.



## **Brachylaena discolor (Coast Silver Oak)**

Brachylaena discolor is a fast growing, very wind resistant, tree which in our area may grow to 4-6 meters. (It is indigenous to the Eastern parts of South Africa.) From the pale colour of the underside of the leaves, the tree often gives a silvery-blue appearance-particularly in strong winds. Masses of nectar rich creamy-white flowers appear between July and September. Male and female flowers appear on different trees. This species is one of the few tree species belonging to the well-known daisy family, the Asteraceae.



## **Chionanthus foveolatus (Pock ironwood)**

This tree is an attractive member of the Olive family and grows in sun or shade. One problem I have experienced in Rooiels, however, is that the baboons meticulously remove-and eat-almost all new leaf growth each year! -thereby stunting the tree's growth. Without this "hazard" the tree should grow to 3-5 meters or more! It withstands strong winds and is generally a very hardy plant. It produces creamy white bisexual flowers in early summer.



## **Diospyros whyteana (Bladder-nut)**

A relatively slow growing small tree (Up to 6 meters but probably much less in Rooiels) with striking glossy dark green leaves (New leaves copper coloured) which grows in sun or shade. Male and female flowers are borne on separate plants in spring, are creamy coloured and sweetly scented. These are followed by reddish brown, papery, balloon-like fruit pods (From which the name derives) which enclose fleshy berries which turn red when ripe. The tree responds well to clipping so can be used to form a hedge.



## Halleria lucida (Tree Fuchsia)

Halleria lucida is a small tree that will probably grow to between 2 and 5 meters in our environment. It is also one of the best bird attracting trees! Insect, nectar and fruit eating birds are all accommodated! It is an evergreen tree or large shrub, often multi-stemmed, with a spreading crown and attractive glossy bright green foliage on arching and drooping branches. The bisexual flowers are tubular, orange to red in colour and, unusually, “grow out of the stems” of the plant (Known in botany as “cauliflory”). They are very rich in nectar and appear in the latter half of the year. Green berries that turn black follow the flowers.



## ***Olea europaea subsp africana* (Wild Olive)**

This slow-growing medium sized tree may also grow naturally in the Rooiels area.

It is a subspecies of the European (commercial) olive. It is drought and wind resistant. Tiny, scented, white to greenish flowers between October and February are followed by small fruits which ripen purple black.

This sub-species is found in many parts of the world and, being hardier than its commercial cousin, is often used as rootstock for the latter.

This tree often grows on calciferous soil types-which is a property of our Overberg Dune Strandveld soil type.



## ***Olea exasperata* (Dune Olive)**

This is a multi-stemmed slow growing large shrub or small tree, that prefers full sun.

It grows naturally on sand dunes and is happy in alkaline soil.

It bears white flowers in late winter, followed by purplish-black fruit.



## **Pittosporum viridiflorum (Cheesewood)**

This is the only South African member of the Pittosporum genus which is indigenous to many other countries, including Australasia and the Far East. In South Africa it grows naturally in the Eastern parts of the country.

This evergreen tree grows to about 4-6 meters in gardens. It is a reasonably fast grower and tolerates sun or semi-shade. It grows well in my garden and resprouts vigorously when cut back.

Small, greenish-white, sweetly fragrant, bisexual flowers are produced in early summer (November to December). They are followed by small, yellow-brown seed capsules.



## **Searsia crenata (Dune Crow-berry)**

This plant is a species of the “old” Rhus genus and seems ideal for a number of purposes. It grows very well in my sandy alkaline soil and quickly forms a dense wind break which can be pruned and trimmed to shape. It can grow to several meters in height. It is also a member of the mango family!!!

It produces green berries which turn purple, in late summer. Male and female trees are separate.

There are three other species of the Searsia (Rhus) genus which grow wild in my garden: *glauca* (Blue Kuni-bush), *laevigata* (Duinetaaibos) and *lucida* (Blinktaaibos).

All members of the Searsia genus are easily distinguished by their trifoliolate leaves.

(Each leaf has three leaflets)



## **Ls conocarpodendron (Kreupelhout)**

This is the largest of the pincushions and can grow to the size of a small tree.

It grows wild in the Rooiels area.

It is relatively slow growing and extremely wind resistant having a dense crown and large thick leaves. It blooms from August to December.

It grows well in most gardens in Rooiels.



## ***Is cordifolium* (Common Pincushion)**

This species grows wild in our general area (Kleinmond in particular) and in a number of Rooiels gardens. It is unfortunately particularly susceptible to a certain fungal disease.

The flower colour varies from yellow to orange to red and the blooming time is from August to January.



## **Is cuneiforme**

This pin cushion has two important characteristics:

-It is the most widely distributed of all leucospermums, implying that it can tolerate a wide variety of micro-climates and soil types.

It is a “re-sprouter”. Unlike most other members of the Proteaceae family a stem can be cut off below leaf level and will resprout from that point. This is a very useful feature in climates with strong winds like Rooiels-if the plant gets too “lanky” with long bare stems and flowers only at the ends, it can be heavily pruned back to create new growth nearer to the ground.

The flowers are yellow and the main blooming period is early to mid summer. This species grows well in my garden.



## **Is oleifolium (Overberg Pincushion)**

This is a smaller pincushion that grows wild in the Rooiels area.

The flowers open yellow and then change to orange and finally red.

They open over a period so that one plant can be in bloom from August to December.

Several have died in my garden but the one below is still alive, although not flourishing, after 4 years.



## Ls “Anouk” (*cordifolium/patersonii/tottum/ glabrum*)

This 4-way hybrid grows well in my garden. The one species forming the hybrid, viz Ls *patersonii* comes from the “Limestone fynbos area” and is therefore adapted to growing in alkaline soils.



## **Ls Jelena (cordifolium/cuneiforme)**

This hybrid is doing reasonably well in my garden albeit after a relatively short time.



## **Ls Jyoti (conocarpodendron/cuneiforme)**

Also fairly new in my garden, but so far so good.



## Is “Veldfire” (Hybrid *conocarp.* and *glabrum*).

These grow well in Rooiels gardens and may be a better bet than the pure *conocarpodendron*, which is rather slow growing.



## **Ln. laureolum (Golden Conebush)**

This is the conebush that adds so much yellow colour to Rooiels's surrounding hillsides in mid winter. They are tolerant of a range of soil types (including alkaline soils) and grow very well in my garden. They grow to two meters and there are separate male and female plants.



## **Ln. salignum (Geelbos)**

This is the most widely spread species of the family Proteaceae in South Africa.

It's leaves and bracts also come in a variety of colours from yellows to reds which make it ideal for hybridising-often with laureolum.

It also tolerates a variety of soil types and is a re-sprouter which means that it can be pruned back vigorously. Male and female plants are separate.



## **Ln. Burgundy Sunset.**

A hybrid of laureolum and salignum.



## **Ln. Jester (laureolum/salignum)**

A further hybrid of laureolum and salignum.



## **Ln. Safari Sunset (laureolum/salignum)**

This is one of the best known leucadendrons and produces deep red bracts on long stems for many months of the year-particularly during late spring.

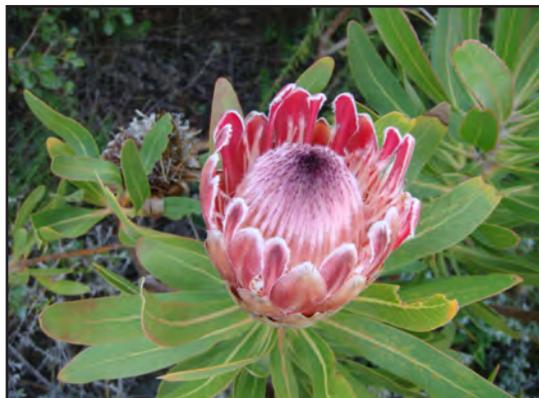
It can grow up to 2 meters in Rooiels.

It grows well in my garden.



## Protea pink ice (compacta/susannae)

The one “parent”, *Protea susannae*, grows inter alia in coastal limestone near Bredasdorp. This equips it well for our alkaline soil in the Overberg dune strandveld. It seems to thrive in many Rooiels gardens and blooms in early summer.



## **Aulux cancellata (Channel-leaf Featherbush)**

This species has beautiful bronze coloured, needle shaped leaves and bears yellow flowers in midsummer. Male and female plants are separate.



## **Mimetes argenteus (Silver Pagoda)**

This species can grow to several meters tall, putting out long unbranched shoots.

It has attractive silver-hairy leaves . Flowering time is from March to June.

In nature it receives plenty of moisture high up on South facing mountain slopes.

All Mimetes are endemic to the Cape Floristic Region (occurring nowhere else in the world) and from my experience need shade for at least part of the day.



## **Mimetes hottentoticus (Matchstick Pagoda)**

This species grows high up on the Kogelberg mountains and has an extremely limited distribution. It produces beautiful flowers from January to May at the ends of long branches covered with silvery leaves. The plant growing happily in my garden is grafted onto a “Veldfire” rootstock and this may be why it grows well so far from its natural habitat!



## Mimetes splendidus (Splendid Pagoda)



## **Serruria adscendens (Kleinmond Spiderhead)**

This species grows wild in Rooiels but prefers the slopes of the mountain.

I have two plants growing in my garden but not thriving. They bloom in late winter to spring.



## **Serruria aemula (Strawberry Spiderhead)**

This beautiful species used to occur in large stands on the Cape Flats and in the Milnerton and Rondebosch areas. It is relatively short lived and has almost become extinct in the wild. It grew very well in my garden-possibly because of its tolerance of alkaline soil? It blooms between July and October.



## **Erica baccans (Berry Heath)**

This species is endemic to the Cape Peninsula.

Bright, cherry-pink urn shaped flowers are produced from September to November in groups of 4 at the ends of the stems.

It grows happily enough in my garden.



## **Erica baueri (Bridal Heath)**

In nature this Erica grows on sandy flats in the Riversdale and Albertinia districts.

It is adaptable and grows well in Rooiels gardens.

The flowers are larger than those of most Ericas and are sometimes enjoyed by baboons!

These plants bloom throughout the year, are attractive and varied in colour and for these reasons are probably the most popularly cultivated species of Erica.

They grow to a meter or more in Rooiels.



## **Erica brachialis (Hairy-tube Heath)**

This Erica grows wild in Rooiels and well in my garden. It would not win a beauty contest but is very long-lived and can grow into a thick stemmed, large bush. It tolerates salty sea winds and flowers in late summer.



## ***Erica cerinthoides* (Fire Heath)**

This is the most widely distributed *Erica* in South Africa—from the Western Cape to the Eastern Cape and further north. It blooms throughout the year.

It is a re-sprouter and will re-sprout after a fire. It grows well in my garden.



## **Erica coccinea (Tassel Heath)**

This species forms a rigid, stoutly branched, bushy shrub. Hanging tubular flowers are produced in threes, on the ends of short side branches. The flowers vary in colour from red to orange to yellow or even brownish.

A yellow variety grows wild in the Rooiels area and normally blooms between April and August.



## ***Erica curviflora* (Water Heath)**

This species is very widely distributed. It also produces flowers in a wide range of colours. It needs regular watering and grows well in my garden.



## **Erica discolour (Bi-coloured Heath)**

This is a tall and hardy Erica that bears slightly curved tubular flowers with lighter coloured tips (Hence the Latin name discolour). The main flowering time is mid to late summer. It is also a resprouter. It grows very well in my garden.



## **Erica glandulosa**

This is a stout, hardy shrub which has grown to over a meter in my garden. It flowers throughout most of the year and seems “less fussy” and more water-wise than most ericas. One unusual feature is that the plant is covered in “sticky hairs” which attract dust and give the plant a dusty appearance.



## **Erica imbricata (Salt and Pepper Heath)**

This is a smaller Erica which grows wild in the Rooiels area. It blooms mainly from June to November. It grows reasonably well in my garden.



## **Erica labialis**

Very common in the wilds around Rooiels and grows well in my garden.

It is a small Erica that bears pink flowers with protruding brown anthers.

It can bloom at most times of the year.



## **Erica mammosa (Ninepin Heath)**

This Erica has a wide range of colours from white to pink, purple, orange and red.

The red variety grows wild in Rooiels. I've had success with the red and white ones in my garden. Flowers appear mainly from mid to late summer but can appear throughout the year.



## **Erica perspicua (Prince of Wales Heath)**

This Erica grows wild in Rooiels but only in moist areas. I have grown this species in my garden but it requires a lot of water and seems very temperamental!



## **Erica plukenetii (Hangertjie)**

This Erica is common in the Rooiels area.

It forms an erect sturdy shrub with distinctive thin, needle-like leaves and produces clusters of hanging tubular flowers.

It grows well in my garden.



## ***Erica sessiliflora* (Green Heath)**

This plant grows wild in the Rooiels area and very well in my garden.

A unique characteristic of this species is the retention of seed capsules in a thickened knobby protrusion on the stems below the current/future flowers. This makes it instantly recognizable.



## **Erica sitiens (Rice Heath)**

This pretty little Erica is new-ish in my garden but both plants are growing happily and it therefore qualifies for inclusion!!



## **Erica speciosa**

This species is very similar to *Erica discolor* but my plants' flowers don't have the "lighter-coloured tips" of *discolor*. In some books, *speciosa* is regarded as a mere variant of *discolor*.



## **Erica verticillata**

This Erica used to grow wild on the Cape Flats and in the southern suburbs of Cape Town. However due to urban development it became extinct in the wild during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. HOWEVER a few remaining specimens were later discovered-in Kew Gardens, in Protea Park, Pretoria, in Vienna and in California amongst others. (These must have come down from seed or plants taken to these countries centuries ago!!) Eight cultivars have now been produced and many plants propagated and sold at nurseries.

I have found that this species grows well in my garden in Rooiels. It bears flowers for most of the year, with peak flowering between January and March.



## Aloes

I have planted many aloes purchased from a nursery called "Sunbird Aloes".

Their main location is in Gauteng but they have a branch in Swellendam.

They have produced numerous amazing hybrids-see their website [www.sunbirdaloes.co.za](http://www.sunbirdaloes.co.za) for their "catalogue".

The following are growing successfully in my garden.

### Bottle Brush



## Copper Shower



## Erik the Red



**First Gold**



**Mango Mix**



**Ruby Blaze**



**Southern Cross**



## **Cotyledon orbiculata (Pig's Ear)**

This species grows wild in Rooiels and also grows well in my garden.

It blooms in late winter and spring.



## **Senecio barbertonicus.**

This species grows in sun or semi-shade and its yellow flowers appear in summer.



## **Crassula coccinea (Red Crassula)**

This attractive succulent grows naturally on Western Cape mountains at fairly high altitudes. It however grows reasonably well in my garden as well. The striking red flowers appear in mid-summer.



## **Crassula ovata**

This is probably the most commonly grown crassula in South Africa. The stem is stout and gnarled and gives the impression of great age. Pink flowers are borne in late winter, early spring.



## **Crassula perfoliata**

This crassula does well in my garden. It blooms in mid-summer.



## **Crassula rubricaulis**

The leaves are thick and fleshy and their edges normally tinged with red.

The pretty pink flowers are born from mid to late summer.



## ***Orbia variegata* (Carrion Flower)**

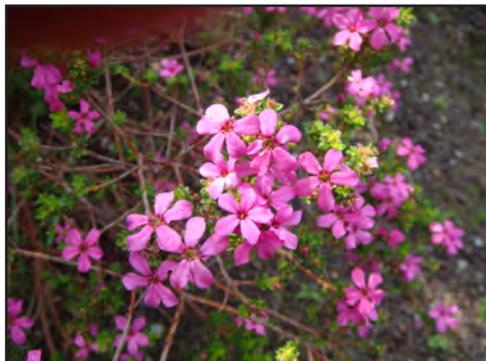
This interesting plant comes from the South Western Cape. It is a leafless succulent perennial that forms clumps or mats up to 50 cm in diameter.

The flowers exude a carrion like smell that attracts flies that pollinate them.



## ***Acmadenia heterophylla***

This plant is well adapted to our alkaline soil, growing wild on limestone outcrops in the Bredasdorp area. It is a small, compact shrub producing starry pink flowers for most of the year. It grows slowly but well in my garden.



## ***Acmadenia mundiana***

This species also comes from the Aghulas limestone area and should therefore be well suited to our alkaline soil. The specimen pictured below grew magnificently for 4 or 5 years but then died for reasons unknown.



## **Agathosma ciliaris (Bergboegoe)**

This buchu grows naturally on my plot.



## **Diosma Hirsuta (Rooiboegoe)**

This species also grows naturally in my garden.



## **Agathosma ovata (False Buchu)**

This species grows to about 50 cm and bears a profusion of mauve or pink flowers in spring.

Many bees are attracted to the plant when in bloom.



## **Coleonema album (Cape May)**

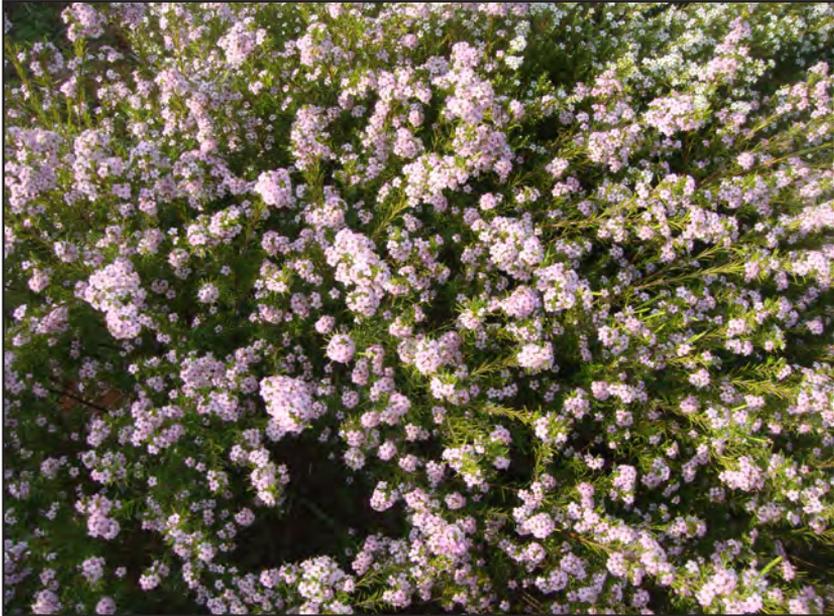
This species grows wild in Rooiels and is very easy to grow in our gardens.

It can grow to two meters and produces masses of small sweet smelling white flowers in spring.



## **Coleonema pulchellum (Confetti Bush)**

This species is similar to *Coleonema album* but somewhat smaller and with flowers ranging in colour from pale to darker pink.



## **Pelargonium betulinum (Kanferblaar)**

This pelargonium grows wild in my garden and throughout Rooiels.

It grows in sun or semi-shade, tolerates wind well and is happy in alkaline sandy soil.

It flowers during spring and summer.



## **Pelargonium citronellum (Lemon-scented Pelargonium)**

This pelargonium grows very well in my garden.  
A characteristic feature of this plant is the delightful strong lemon scent that its pointed leaves emit.  
Flowering time is early to mid summer. A great re-seeder!

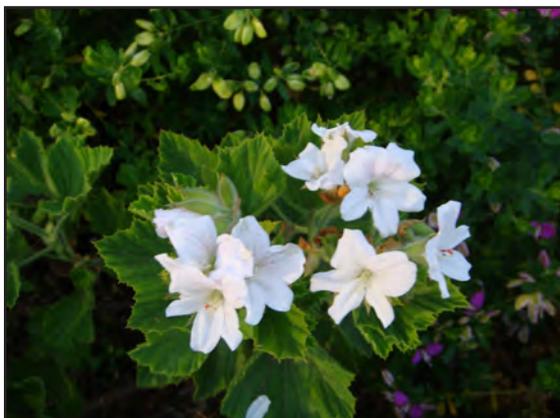


## **Pelargonium cucullatum (Wildemalva)**

This is a fast growing tough shrub which tolerates Rooiels conditions well.

It is widespread along the Cape coast and the purplish pink flowers are very conspicuous in early to mid summer. There is a white form as well.

It becomes rather lanky with age but can be cut back vigorously to produce fresh growth.



## **Pelargonium peltatum (Ivy-leaved Pelargonium)**

The unusual feature of this Pelargonium is that it can climb and trail through other plants including trees. It flowers mainly from spring to mid-summer.



## **Pelargonium quercifolium**

This is an attractive shrub with oak-like foliage that flowers throughout the year. It grows well in my garden.



## **Pelargonium sidoides (Kalwerbossie)**

This is a pelargonium with lovely little flowers that has been growing reasonably well in my garden for over 5 years now. It does require sufficient water during the hot summer months, however. It appears to be semi-evergreen.



## ***Brunsvigia orientalis* (Candelabra)**

These bulbous plants grow wild in Rooiels.

Similar to *Haemanthus coccineus*, a beautiful red flower bursts through the ground in later summer (March/April).

The flower head is large-up to 300mm in diameter.

Generally 4 to 6 large leaves appear a couple of months later-after the flower head has broken off- and they in turn die off in about October-to leave no trace of the plant until the flowers re-appear in late summer. This “die-off” strategy evolved to conserve moisture during the hot dry summers in the winter rainfall area.



## **Chasmanthe aethiopica (Suurkanol)**

This is a deciduous bulbous plant that grows wild in my garden. It flowers from April to July.



## **Clivia miniata (Bush Lily)**

These plants are endemic to the Eastern parts of South Africa but grow well in all parts of the country. They require shade and will be scorched in full sunlight.

In the wild they grow in forests and their roots remain near to the surface growing in the “natural litter” lying on the forest floor.

The “normal colour” of the flowers is orange, although other colours have been produced by plant breeders. They bloom in spring-from August onwards.



## ***Diets grandiflora* (Large Wild Iris)**

This plant forms a clump of erect sword-shaped leaves about 1m tall and 1m wide.

The flowers are borne on the ends of stalks and only last for a few days!



## **Haemanthus coccineus (April Fool)**

This bulb grows wild in Rooiels particularly on ground near to the coastal rocks. The plant becomes completely invisible during summer after the two broad leaves die off. Then from February onwards the red flowers burst through the soil, followed by fleshy berries containing seeds. Then the new leaves appear and eventually die away to complete the cycle.



## **Zantedeschia aethiopica (Arum Lily)**

This well known plant grows wild in Rooiels, including in my garden.

The faintly scented flowers appear between June and December.



## **Salvia Africana-lutea (Bruinsalie)**

This Salvia grows wild in Rooiels, even down to the sand dunes above the beach!

It grows well in my garden to over a meter tall. The grey-green leaves are aromatic and the flowers an interesting orange brown colour. It blooms between June and December.



## **Salvia chamelaeagnea (Afrikaanse Salie)**

This Salvia also grows wild in Rooiels and does well in my garden.

It produces many upright stems with attractive blue (or white) flowers at the ends.

The flowering season is between November and May.



## **Salvia dolomitica (Dolomite Sage)**

This is an attractive Sage which grows well in my garden. It produces pretty pinkish coloured flowers in early summer. It is endemic to our Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces where it grows at fairly high altitude. Surprising that it does well in alkaline sandy soil at the seaside!



## **Helichrysum cymosum (Gold Carpet)**

This is a good groundcover with small silvery grey leaves, covered with masses of bright yellow flowers in mid to late summer.



## **Helichrysum dasyanthum**

This Helichrysum grows wild in Rooiels and prolifically on my plot. It grows to about 1 meter in height and is covered in attractive yellow flowers in early summer. Like many other Helichrysums, the leaves are silvery grey.



## Helichrysum patulum ( Kooigoed)

This sprawling shrub grows wild on my plot and can become a “bit of a nuisance” sometimes. It grows rapidly to about 1 meter in height and spreads amongst other plants.

The soft woolly foliage was used as bedding in times-gone-by and hence the name.



## ***Elegia tectorum* (Dakriet)**

Most restios are found in the Western Cape fynbos region. They all have male and female flowers on separate plants. This species blooms in March and April.



## ***Thamnochortus spicigerus***

This plant has grown to over 3 meters tall in my garden. It blooms in February/March.



## **Thamnochortus insignis (Dekriet)**

This is a large restio that can grow up to 2 meters tall with a similar or greater diameter. It flowers in January and February.

The flowers of all restios are either male or female. The male flowers “droop” downwards and the female flowers have a “cup” facing upwards to catch the wind born pollen. Apparently each species has a (different) “grid of minute holes” which match the shape of its corresponding pollen to avoid hybridisation!!



## **Athanasia trifurcata (Klaaslouwbos)**

This shrub grows wild in Rooiels and seeds extremely easily producing numerous small plants. It is apparently regarded as a weed on certain farmlands and Klaas Louw is reputed to be the villain who initially allowed it to spread. It grows naturally on my erf and should be cut back vigorously each year after flowering.



## **Chrysocoma coma-aurea (Beesbos)**

This is a fast growing plant that grows wild in my garden, up to half a meter in height. It blooms during mid-summer and becomes covered in golden, button-shaped flowerheads. Individual plants don't seem to live for very long.



## ***Berzelia lanuginosa* (Kolkol)**

This plant grows wild in Rooiels and well in my garden as long as it receives plenty of water. It grows to 2m tall and has slender branches and fine threadlike leaves.

The creamy white flowers are borne in clusters at the ends of the branches. A reddish berry like fruit is produced.



## **Brunia albiflora (Coffee Bush)**

This plant grows wild in Rooiels, particularly in wetland areas.

It grows in my garden provided it receives enough water. The flowers are tiny, and are crowded into tight spherical knob-like inflorescences.

After flowering the knobby fruiting heads remain on the plant for some time.



## **Chironia baccifera (Christmas Berry)**

This plant grows extensively (wild) on my plot. It is fast growing and adds colour to the garden both in the form of its flowers and its berries. It flowers in midsummer.



## **Cyclopia genistoides (Honeybush Tea)**

This shrub grows wild in Rooiels and with mixed success in my garden. (Grows well in one spot but not elsewhere!!) It is a sturdy, dense shrub that grows to about one meter and bears beautiful yellow, sweet smelling flowers during the second half of the year.

A herbal tea containing no caffeine and a low tannin content is made from the shoots of the shrub.



## **Dimorphotheca fruticosa (Rankbietou)**

This sprawling shrub or ground cover grows wild in Rooiels and well in my garden.

It blooms in midwinter and spring but the flowers need sunlight to open.



## **Hymenolepis crithmoides**

This plant also grows wild in Rooiels and well in my garden. The leaves have a feathery texture . Masses of yellow flowers are borne in November and December.



## Leonotis leonurus (Wild Dagga)

This is a fast growing shrub which grows to 2 meters or more.

It grows wild in Rooiels and very well in my garden.

It should be cut back substantially in winter to produce good flowers in summer.

The common form is orange but other colours are also available.



## ***Lessertia frutescens* (Balloon Pea)**

This plant grows wild in Rooiels and also as an annual in my garden.

It seeds easily and new plants come up each year. The red flowers appear in the second half of the year and are followed by fruit taking the form of large, bladder-like, papery inflated pods (Hence the common name).



## **Muraltia satureioides**

Muraltia is a genus in the Polygalaceae family and hence is a relative of the common Polygala myrtifolia. It grows wild in Rooiels and well in my garden. It forms a sprawling bush which becomes covered in flowers in early summer.



## **Phaenocoma prolifera (Rooisewejaartjie)**

These plants cover the mountain slopes above the gravel road to Pringle Bay. They grow in my garden but don't bloom as prolifically as in the wild. Flowers are borne during summer. The bright pink bracts fade to white after a while.



## **Orphium frutescens (Sea Rose)**

This showy plant grows wild in Rooiels particularly in wetter areas.

In the garden it needs plenty of water.

It blooms in midsummer and there is also a white variety.



## **Phylica ericoides**

This plant grows wild in my garden. It produces masses of tiny white flowers, mainly in late summer.



## **Psoralea pinnata (Fonteinbos)**

This plant grows rapidly and can attain the size of a small tree (3-4 meters). In nature it grows in wet areas but it grows happily in my garden as well. It blooms during early to mid summer. The flowers are small but delicate and charming along its slender branches.



## **Solanum africanum (Dronkbessie)**

This shrub grows well in the wild in Rooiels and also well in my garden.

It climbs into surrounding bushes and also puts out long horizontal trailing stems up to several meters in length. The small purple flowers (January to October) are followed by green berries that turn black.



## **Eriocephalus africanus (Wild Rosemary)**

This is a bushy shrub up to 1 meter tall with distinctive small leaves in tufts along the branches. The pretty white flowers are borne mainly in winter and are soon followed by fluffy seed heads. Long tap roots make this plant very drought resistant. It grows very well in my garden.



## **Euryops pectinatus (Wolharpuisbos)**

There are different variations of this shrub and I have found an exquisite form that has soft attractive foliage and bears masses of flowers in early summer. It grows to about 1 meter in my garden.



## **Felicia filifolia (Wild aster)**

This plant grows very well in my garden and produces masses of mauve flowers with yellow centres in spring.



## **Hypoestes aristata (Ribbon Bush)**

This shrub grows very well in my garden, in semi-shade. It produces masses of flowers in winter and grows naturally in the eastern parts of our country. It seeds easily in the garden.



## **Kniphofia uvaria (Red Hot Poker)**

This plant forms clumps of long, narrow, arching leaves. They produce spikes of orange flowers in summer which are frequented by nectar-feeding birds like sunbirds. The plants can be propagated by division.



## **Lobostemon fruticosus (Pajama Bush)**

I have had mixed success in Rooiels with this lovely shrub. They tend to get woody with age and produce fewer and fewer flowers and don't seem amenable to pruning back.



## **Plectranthus neochilus (Spur Flower)**

This plant can be used as an attractive ground cover and grows in sun or light shade. (Most Plectranthus plants grow well in shady areas). It produces attractive purple flowers between September and April.



## **Podalyria sericea (Silky podalyria)**

This lovely plant grows in my garden but does not thrive. Its sister, *Podalyria calypstrata* which is common in the Kleinmond area ,grows well in my garden but has not yet bloomed! *Sericea* has soft shiny silver-grey leaves and small pretty pink flowers (From May to August) followed by unusual swollen seed pods.



## **Polygala fruticosa (Butterfly Bush)**

This species is not quite as robust as its relative, *Polygala myrtifolia*, described under the tree section above. It grows to about 1 meter in sun or shade and produces pretty purple flowers in early summer.



## **WILD PLANTS GROWING ON MY ERF THAT ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE 123 “GARDENING SPECIES” LISTED PREVIOUSLY.**

On the following 8 pages I have listed the remaining plants growing wild in my garden, showing names and pictures only. They are the plants that I might not personally have introduced into my garden-if they had not already been there! In other cases they might not be available from nurseries. They would, however, presumably grow happily in many of the other parts of Rooiels which also lie in the Dune Strandveld area and this information may be useful for others developing gardens in Rooiels.



*Albuca flaccida* (Slime Lilly)



*Arctotheca calendula* (Cape Weed)



*Aspalathus forbesii*



*Asparagus rubicundus* (Wild Asparagus)



*Carpobrotus acinaciformis*  
(Sour Fig)



*Cotula turbinata*  
(Ganskos)



*Cyrtanthus leucanthus*  
(Witbergpypie)



*Felicia aethiopica*  
(Wilde Astartjie)



*Felicia echinata*  
(Bloublommetjie)



*Ferraria crista*  
(Spinnekopblom)



*Gazania pectinata*  
(Gousblom)



*Heliophila africana*



Hermannia ternifolia  
(Dolls Roses)



Indigofera  
brachystachya



Kedrostis nana  
(Ystervarkpatat)



Knowltonia  
vesicatoria  
(Brandblaar)



*Lessertia miniata*



*Linum africanum*  
(Flax)



*Metalasia muricata*  
(Blombos)



*Moraea fugax*  
(Soetuintjie)



*Morella cordifolia*  
(Waxberry)



*Morella quercifolia*  
(Maagpynbos)



*Otholobium fruticans*  
(Cape Town Pea)



*Passerina corymbosa*  
(Gonnabos)



Roella incurva



Searsia (Rhus)  
glauca  
(Blue Kuni-bush)



Searsia (Rhus)  
laevigata  
(Duinetaaibos)



Searsia (Rhus)  
lucida  
(Blinktaaibos)



*Senecio elegans*  
(Wild Cineraria)



*Senecio halimifolius*  
(Tabakbos)



*Struthiola*  
*dodecandra*  
(Heuningblommetjie)



*Zaluzianskya capensis*  
(Verfblommetjie)

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