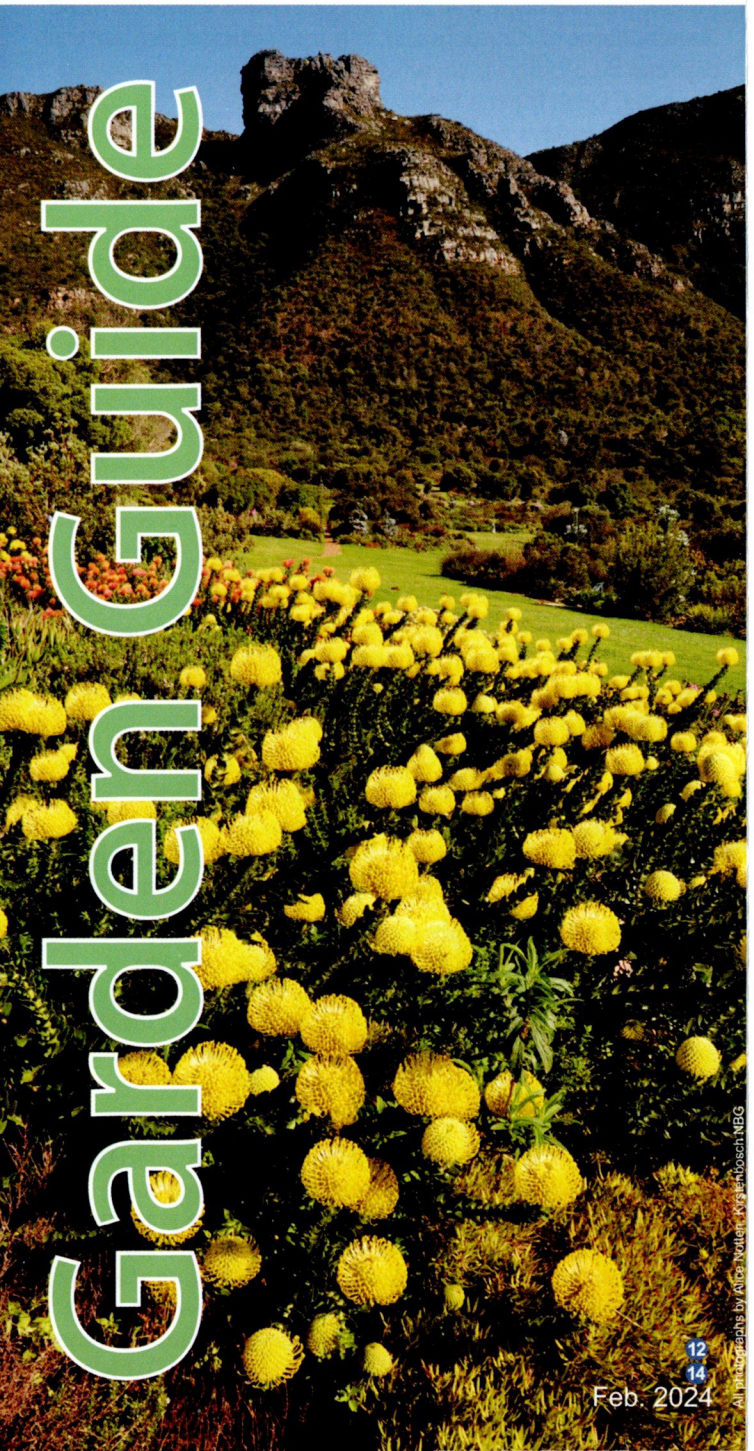
SANBI
Biodiversity for Life
South African National Biodiversity Institute

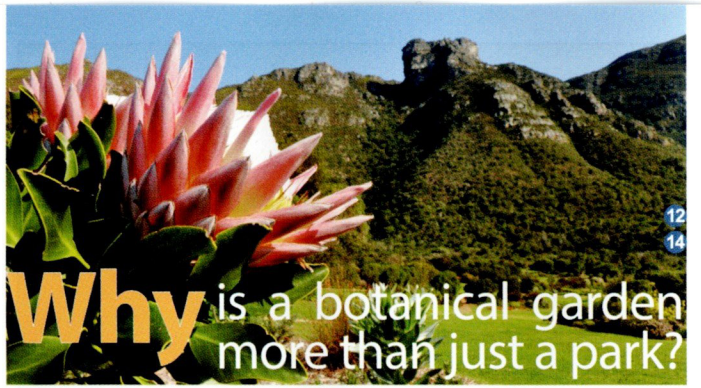
KIRSTENBOSCH
National Botanical Garden

Garden Guide



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Feb. 2024



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Why is a botanical garden more than just a park?

Botanical gardens are living museums. They contain collections of plants that are used for display, scientific research and education, and play a vital role in the conservation of plant biodiversity.



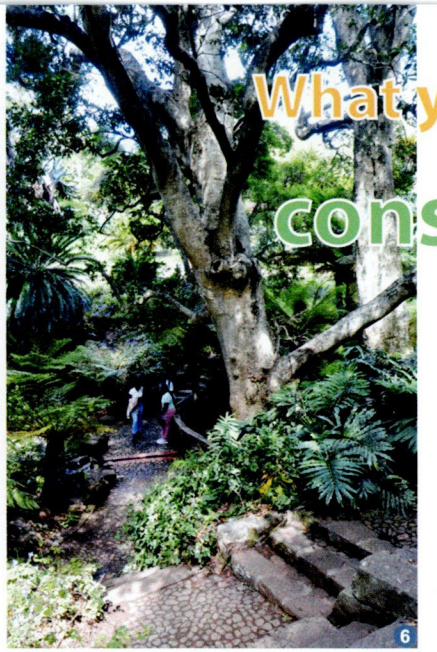
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Kirstenbosch is the largest of a country-wide network of eleven botanical gardens administered by the South African National Biodiversity Institute.

SANBI also maintains plant reference collections at three national herbaria, and is actively involved in research and environmental education.



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What you can do to conserve

Please help us to maintain these plant collections by supporting your local Botanical Garden

Our 11 National Botanical Gardens



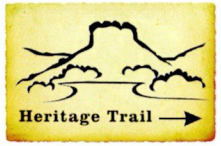
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Our mission is to promote the sustainable use, conservation, appreciation and enjoyment of the exceptionally rich plant life of South Africa, for the benefit of all people

Traces from the past

Follow the Heritage Trail and find out about the history and development of Kirstenbosch. It is a self-guided circular trail that can be picked up anywhere along its route. Look for the Heritage Trail direction markers and storyboards. The trail takes you on a tour of the oldest, most historic parts of the Garden and features old photographs of Kirstenbosch where they can be compared to today's landscape. The trail is 2 km long, and takes ±2 hours to complete.



Even in prehistoric times, people were living here. Stone age hand axes were found near the spring in the Dell (no. 6), and this land formed part of the territory of two Khoikhoi clans. Jan van Riebeeck, commander of the Dutch East India Company, surveyed the forests here in October 1652, and appointed the first forester Leendert Cornelissen, in 1657, to protect the forests and to supply the Company with timber.

Van Riebeeck planted the hedge of Wild Almond trees (no.17) in 1660 to mark the boundary to the settlement. He also established many fruit trees, wheat lands, and trees like oaks and chestnuts on his own farm called "Boschheuwel" which is adjacent to Kirstenbosch, and planted ten thousand Muscat d'Alexandrie grapevines on the slopes of Wynberg.

During the 1700s the land was owned and used for timber by the Dutch East India Company. After the 2nd British Occupation (1806) the land was bought by the Colonial Secretary Henry Alexander and his deputy, Col. Christopher Bird, who built a brick bath at the spring (no. 6) in the Dell.

During the 1800s Kirstenbosch was a farm, owned by the Cloete family. Very good wine was produced by their vineyards. The last private owner of the land was Cecil John Rhodes, who bought it in 1895 for £9000 to protect the eastern slopes of Table Mountain from urban development. He planted the avenue of camphor trees (no. 18).

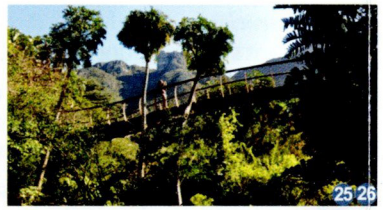
Kirstenbosch was left to the nation in 1902 when Rhodes died, and on 1st July 1913 it became a botanical garden dedicated to the cultivation and study of the indigenous plants of South Africa. Prof. Harold Pearson, a Cambridge botany graduate, was appointed the first Director (no. 8) and established the Cycad collection at Kirstenbosch (no. 7). Mr. J.W. Mathews, who trained at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, was the first Curator, and he was responsible for the layout of much of the Garden, including the Dell (6), Koppie (5), Cycads (7), Main Lawn, Vygie beds (10) and the Mathews Rockery (9).

A living display

of the floral riches of southern Africa

Kirstenbosch – flagship of the South African National Biodiversity Institute – was established in 1913 to conserve and promote the indigenous flora of southern Africa. Kirstenbosch is internationally acclaimed as one of the great botanical gardens of the world.









Situated on the eastern slopes of Cape Town's magnificent Table Mountain, the estate, covering 528 hectares, includes a cultivated Garden and a nature reserve. The developed Garden (36 ha) displays collections of southern African plants including many rare and endangered species. Theme gardens include the Fynbos Garden, Forest Braille Trail and Fragrance Garden, Useful Plants Garden and Water-wise Garden. The Botanical Society Conservatory is a desert house that displays the succulent treasures of southern Africa, as well as collections of bulbs and cliff plants.

The Kirstenbosch Visitors' Centre houses the Kirstenbosch Shop and Botanical Society Bookshop, a coffee shop, Information Desk and the Old Mutual Conference and Exhibition Centre – a popular venue for botanical art exhibitions and environmental events. There is a fine restaurant and a tea room situated in the Garden.

Kirstenbosch also houses the Gold Fields Environmental Education Centre, the Kirstenbosch Research Centre, The Centre for Biodiversity Conservation, the Compton Herbarium and Harry Molteno Library.

Information: ☎021 799 8783 or 021 799 8620 (021 799 8618 a/h)

Hours

The Garden is open every day from 08h00 to 18h00 in winter (April to August) and 08h00 to 19h00 in summer (September to March). The Conservatory (glasshouse) is open from 09h00 to 17h00 daily.

Wheelchairs

All visitor facilities are accessible to wheelchairs, but not all areas of the Garden are wheelchair friendly. A map showing wheelchair accessible paths can be downloaded from our website. A wheelchair can be borrowed from the Information Office, Visitors' Centre.

Guided Tours, Walks and Trails

Free guided tours leave from Gate 1 (Visitors' Centre) at 10h00 and 14h00 Monday to Friday. NB please check the notice board at the meeting point for any changes to the programme of walks.
For self-guided walks and hikes through natural forest and fynbos at Kirstenbosch, get the Walks and Trails map at the Ticket Office.

Visitors' Centre (Gate 1)

Situated at Gate 1, open during Garden hours, the centre includes the Kirstenbosch Shop (gifts, curios, clothing, homeware) ☎0217622510, Vida e Caffé (coffee, snacks, light meals) ☎ 0217626841, the Botanical Society Bookshop ☎0217621621, the Old Mutual Conference and Exhibition Centre, the Information Office and main Ticket Office.

Centre for Home Gardening (Gate 2)

Situated at Gate 2, open 09h00 to 17h00, this centre houses the Kirstenbosch Garden Centre (indigenous plants specialist nursery) ☎0217971305, a branch of the Kirstenbosch Shop (gifts, curios, clothing etc.) ☎021 7622510, the Kirstenbosch Tea Room (see below), the Richard Crowie Hall (lecture hall), the marquee lawn and toilets.

Restaurants

Moyo Kirstenbosch, situated near the Visitors' Centre (Gate 1), is open from 09h00 to 18h00 daily and is available for functions and weddings. ☎ 021 762 9585.
Fynkos Kirstenbosch Tea Room, situated at the Centre for Home Gardening (Gate 2), is open from 09h00 to 16h00 daily and serves breakfast, lunch, teas and picnics. ☎074 142 1100.

School Groups

A variety of exciting educational programmes are available.
Bookings: Gold Fields Environmental Education Centre ☎0217998670

Contact Kirstenbosch: The Curator, Kirstenbosch NBG
Private Bag X7, Claremont 7735
Tel: 021 799 8800, Fax 021 797 6570
email: KirstenboschInfo@sanbi.org.za

Visit our website: http:/www.sanbi.org/gardens/kirstenbosch

Find out more about our plants, and how to grow them and garden with them on PlantZAfrica

Share nature sightings on iNaturalist www.inaturalist.org

Keep in touch with Kirstenbosch on social media platforms and share your photos, experiences and comments.

Lots to see . . .

1. **Fragrance Garden** – features plants with scented flowers, aromatic leaves or unusual textures.
2. **The Forest Braille Trail** – a short, self-guided, sensory trail through natural forest and wetland.
3. **Centre for Home Gardening** – gardening with bulbs, tea room, garden shop, lecture hall.
4. **Useful Plants** – discover how indigenous plants are used for making tea, dyes, rope, baskets and for many traditional medicinal uses.
5. **The Koppie & Pelargonium Garden** – a well-drained sandstone outcrop displaying mainly Pelargoniums.
6. **The Dell** – the oldest part of the garden, featuring Colonel Bird's Bath, tree ferns and a wide variety of shade-loving plants.
7. **Cycad Amphitheatre** – features an ancient plant group that has survived almost unchanged since the time before dinosaurs roamed the earth.
8. **Pearson's Grave** – Prof. Harold Pearson was the first director of Kirstenbosch, and the man whose vision led to the establishment of the Garden in 1913.
9. **Mathews Rockery** – displays succulents and bulbs from the dry parts of southern Africa.
10. **Vygies** – a kaleidoscope of colour in Spring (Sept.-Oct.) when these succulent plants are in flower.
11. **Annuals** – enjoy a spectacular show of colour in Spring (mid Aug-Oct.). Best viewed at midday when the Namaqualand Daisies have fully opened.
12. **Fynbos Walk** – leads from Rycroft Gate through gardens displaying fynbos, the vegetation unique to the Cape Floral Kingdom, and offers panoramic views.
13. **Erica Garden** – contains a selection of the over 600 species of *Erica* (heath) found in South Africa.
14. **Protea Garden** – displays members of this remarkably diverse family. Proteas, serrurias, conebushes and pagodas flower winter to spring (May-Nov.). The pincushions flower spring to midsummer (Aug.-Dec.).
15. **Restio Garden** – displays the incredible variety of texture and form found in the Cape Reed Family (Restionaceae).
16. **Buchus** – a highly aromatic plant group belonging in the Citrus Family (Rutaceae).
17. **Van Riebeeck's Hedge** – a remnant of the hedge planted in 1660 as a boundary to the newly established settlement at the Cape.
18. **The Camphor Avenue** – this historical avenue (planted in 1898 by Cecil Rhodes) provides a cool, shady walk.
19. **The Botanical Society Conservatory** – a desert house that displays the succulent treasures of southern Africa, as well as bulbs, ferns, welwitschias and cliff plants.
20. **The Botanical Society Office**.
21. **The Vlei Garden** – a boardwalk over a natural seep that is rich in plant and animal life.
22. **Peninsula Garden** – displays some of the over 2 500 plant species found on the Cape Peninsula.
23. **Water-wise Garden** – demonstrates how you can create a lush, colourful garden that needs less water and maintenance than an ordinary water-thirsty garden.
24. **Fynbos Garden** – demonstrates how fynbos can be used in a home garden.
25. **Arboretum** – displays over 450 southern African tree species in a beautiful forest setting. Bird life in the Arboretum is abundant.
26. **Centenary Tree Canopy Walkway** – the 'Boomslang', a raised walkway through and over the trees of the Arboretum, with panoramic views.
27. **Wildlife-friendly Garden** – how to attract birds, bees and butterflies to your garden.
28. **Garden of Extinction** – displays some of the nearly 1500 South African plants that face a high risk of extinction in the near future. Find out what is causing extinctions and what you can do about it.
29. **Garden of Weeds** – displays South African plants that have become weeds in other parts of the world. Find out how plants become weeds and what you can do to stop the spread of weeds.

Enjoy your visit and abide by the following:

- ✓ *Learn about plants & animals*
- ✓ *Walk, Hike, Explore*
- ✓ *Take photographs*
- ✓ *Bird watch*
- ✓ *Picnic on the lawns*
- ✓ *Relax at concerts*
- ✓ *Enjoy sculptures & art*
- ✓ *Supervise your children*
- ✓ *Take litter home*
- ✗ *Disturb or remove or damage any plants or animals*
- ✗ *Balls, Bikes, Skateboards*
- ✗ *Dogs, Pets, Drones*
- ✗ *Garden furniture*
- ✗ *Radio, Music, Noise, Games*
- ✗ *Climb trees or sculptures*
- ✗ *Walk in the flower beds*
- ✗ *Litter, Fires, Braais*
- ✗ *Swimming*

Entry to Kirstenbosch is at own risk. SANBI will not be held liable for any loss, damage or injury sustained on its premises. Right of admission is reserved.

