



AUGUST

UNIT 97

Unit 97 is officially complete and ready for our newest resident to move in. August saw the final touches being done to this beautiful Cottage and a

last top-to-bottom, inside and out spring clean. We look forward to welcoming our newest resident to the Kolobe family towards the end of September.



COMPLETED



JULY

UNIT 45

Besides the walls being built, they were also plastered inside and out and the roof is nearing completion too. Elsabé and Pieter's house will soon have its windows and doors installed so that the interior finishing can start such as wall paint, floor tiles, built-in cupboards, bathroom fittings, etc.



AUGUST



JULY

UNIT 73

The foundation of Johan and Werdi's new house is done. Next up are the walls, followed by the floor and roof. If all goes to plan, Johan and Werdi will hopefully be able to move into their new home by

November, just in time o spend their first Christmas in their new home.



AUGUST

DIE LEESKRING



Modimolle's Book Club has purchased 31 brand new books. Some of the Afrikaans authors include Jan Vermeulen, Deon Lamprecht, Irna van Zyl, Jodi Picoult, Carel van der Merwe, Jaco Wolmarans, Karel Schoeman, Hans du Plessis and Madelein Rust. Some of the English authors include James Patterson, Lynda la Plante, John Grisham, Karin Slaughter, Andrew Wilson, Tony Park, Andrew Gross, David Baldacci, Philippa Gregory, Nora Roberts, Joanne Trollope, Robin Cook, Peter James and Jeffery Deaver. Books can be taken out on Mondays and Thursdays only, between 09h00 and 12h00 and again between 14h00 and 17h00. The book club is located at 13 Steve Tshwete Street in Modimolle. For more information, call Marthie Alberts on 082 441 9047 or 014 717 5080 or Elsie Koch on 072 249 1205. Happy reading.

ARBOR WEEK

South Africa celebrates Arbor Week in the first week of September annually. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), as the custodian of forestry in South Africa, is responsible for the campaign. September is also heritage month and as Arbor Week is celebrated, the department also focuses on the country's champion trees which include some of the oldest, largest and culturally significant trees. These include the Sophia Town Oak Tree and the Sagole Baobab Tree in Limpopo, which are part of our heritage. National Arbor Week is an opportune time to call on all South Africans to plant indigenous trees as a practical and symbolic gesture of sustainable environmental management.



Sophia Town Oak Tree



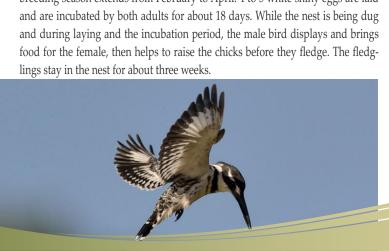


The pied kingfisher has, as its name suggests, black and white plumage. The male has a black crest and crown, a white stripe above its eye, a larger black stripe across the eye as far as its neck, and a white throat and collar. Its upper parts are black, edged in white, giving a mottled effect and its rump has black and white streaks. The wing coverts have white spots. The underparts are white, with two lines of fine black bars, the upper being wider and usually broken in the middle. The bill is black and long and looks like a dagger. The eyes are dark brown and the feet and legs are blackish. The female has just one breast band, which is narrower than that of the male. The tail is white and somewhat long, its median tail feathers and tips being black, and it fans out in flight.

Pied kingfishers live in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, the Asian mainland and southern China. These birds live beside streams, lakes, estuaries, rivers, irrigation ditches, canals, floodlands, bays and reedy inlets. They also live in river valleys near mountainous areas. The pied kingfisher feeds primarily on fish, but will take large aquatic insects and small crustaceans. It often uses the hovering technique for catching fish, searching for prey from a high vantage point in the air, then diving straight down into the water to grab the prey item. It immediately flies back to its perch, where it beats the prey to death, then swallows it.

Pied kingfishers are diurnal, often perching during the day beside streams in order to conserve energy. They will also perch on manmade structures such as fences, huts and canoes. At certain times of the year pied kingfishers form communal roosts. They are the biggest birds which can hover for a long period. Their characteristic behaviour includes regular bobbing of their head or tail. They bathe by diving into water repeatedly, fly in a straight line, and hardly ever hunt on land. As they fly, they emit noisy chirps, and they also make these sounds during nesting to mark territory. Individuals live either in pairs or in loosely tied families. These birds do not migrate.

The life span of a pied kingfisher is around 4 years. They are sexually mature when they are one year old. Courtship involves displays of dancing, which are carried out by 3 to 12 males together. Males also offer food to females over a period that lasts about three weeks. Pairs are monogamous, and male and female both help to dig a nest hole in the soft earth of a bank, above water, or sometimes in a grassy ground. A burrow will be dug to a depth of about one meter. The breeding season extends from February to April. 4 to 5 white shiny eggs are laid and are incubated by both adults for about 18 days. While the nest is being dug and during laying and the incubation period, the male bird displays and brings food for the female, then helps to raise the chicks before they fledge. The fledglings stay in the nest for about three weeks.





The Clicking Stream Frog, also known as the Gray's Stream Frog, Spotted Stream Frog or Klik-langtoonpadda in Afrikaans, is a fairly small species (snout-to-vent length of breeding specimens about 25 to 50 mm). The snout is not as pointed as most of the genus, the snout profile being rather reminiscent of the Cape river frog. The ventral skin is smooth, pale to white, the dorsal skin colour is variable, generally shades of brown with darker blotches. Similar blotches form bars across the upper surfaces of the thighs. Often it has a vertebral line in a lightly contrasting colour, pale to reddish. Some colour variants have a broad russet band down the back. The dorsal skin is textured with scattered small, raised ridges, largely longitudinal. The toes are well developed and unwebbed, or nearly so, on all four feet. The front toes are slim and roughly as long as the fore legs are thick. The rear toes are long, with the longest (fourth) toe extending forward roughly as far as the front toes when the frog is squatting.

This is one of the few frog species that breeds in the winter in the winter-rainfall region, and in summer in the summer-rainfall region. Males call throughout the day and night in the rainy season. The call site is often well concealed by vegetation or leaf litter at the water's edge and the males are cryptic and difficult to locate. About 250–350 eggs are laid, usually out of the water, up to 30 cm from its edge. They are deposited singly or in groups, in a single layer, in moss, under leaves, on mud or in crevices under rocks. In wet weather, tadpoles emerge from the egg capsules after 5 days and enter the water, but can survive in the capsules for as long as 63 days in dry weather. Development takes place over a period of 3–6 months.

In the breeding season, the frog's voice is an inoffensive musical click, rather like a drop of water falling into a pond, but when a large chorus is active, such as in sedge around a dam, the effect is like a loud, continuous rattle. Though the males mainly sing in chorus at night, they may call at any time of the day from concealment, particularly in cloudy weather. Like most frogs, the species breeds in standing water and the adults take to the water if alarmed. They can swim rapidly and with agility, but if they are unable to leave the water, they die within a few hours. Rather than simple drowning, the cause of death seems to be absorption of too much water through the skin.





WHAT'S IN BLOOM

September is officially spring. Gardens are filled with flowers as blossom trees, such as crabapples and flowering peaches, burst into bloom and carpet the ground beneath with petals. Bulbs are at their best, as are the spring annuals you have tended to with such care. If you have a chance, visit the Western Cape to see nature's bounty - the fields of wild flowers along the West Coast. Make a note to obtain seeds of these to plant in your own garden. As regrowth starts, you will also notice an increase in insect pests feasting on tender new shoots. There is also an increase in the number of weeds, so much of your time will need to be spent keeping these under control. In drier areas, pay attention to maintaining moisture in the soil to prolong the spring display - spring blossoms are extremely delicate. Your workload increases in September. Spend time and energy feeding the garden as the plants put out new growth; any extra attention paid to the lawn now will be repaid with improved growth throughout the year.

GARDEN TASKS

THE FLOWER GARDEN - Remove faded flowers of annuals and bulbs. Pull out winter-flowering annuals which are now past their best and add them to the compost heap. Prepare beds for summer planting by digging over to a spade's depth and incorporate old manure, good quality compost and a dusting of hoof and horn and bone meal. For each square meter, dig in a handful of general granular fertilizer like 2:3:2. In warm areas, sow seed of annuals such as candytuft, cleome and cosmos *in situ*, and petunias, asters, celosia, phlox, gomphrena, lobelia and bedding dahlias in seed trays.

BULBS - Give a second application of high potash fertilizer to aid the development of flowers in bulbs and continue to water until the leaves turn yellow. Plant out summer-flowering bulbs purchased in August; stagger planting of gladioli for a longer display. Divide dahlia tubers or take cuttings from the new shoots. Keep hippeastrums and other sold-sensitive bulbs in the fridge.

PERENNIALS - As new growth starts, continue to lift and divide crowded perennials. Discard the old central portion and replant the outer growth in well-prepared beds. Protect the shoots of deciduous perennials from snails. Untidy ground covers should be cut back, mulched and fed.

ROSES - Roses should be growing strongly now. Apply 60g of granular fertilizer (3:2:1. 3:1:5 or 8:1:5) or an organic equivalent to each bush, sprinkle around a handful of Epsom salts and water deeply. Replenish mulch. Pinch back strong growth on new roses to encourage plants to bush out; nipping the tips of some flowering stems will stagger the flowering period. Water frequently.

WATERING - Maintain a regular watering programme.

LAWNS - Spike compacted lawns to aerate them. Apply the first high nitrogen feed of the season by broad-casting 56-60g granular fertilizer (3:2:1 or 7:1:3) with every step.

BULBS

As gardeners revel in their displays of spring-flowering bulbs, they often overlook the multitude of easy-to-grow, summer-flowering bulbs. Among these are some of the most rewarding garden subjects which, with some forethought, can not only become the mainstay of the summer garden, but can carry colour through into the autumn. Bulbs are particularly valuable, as many multiply freely and can be left in the ground from year to year. Many bulbs are adapted to survive with only minimal water, making them suitable for water-wise gardens. Some tall plants that are grown from bulbs, such as cannas, red-hot pokers and agapanthus, may become so familiar that gardeners tend to ignore their visual potential and use them in unimaginative ways. Others, like zephyrantha, are small and dainty, while Asiatic lilies add an exotic touch to the garden. When gardeners refer to bulbs, they mean any plant with an underground bulbous structure that is capable of storing food and surviving periods of dormancy or drought. They include:

- True bulbs (such as daffodils), whose modified leaves store food and water to enclose the dormant flower.
- Corms (anemones, gladioli), where the storage organ is the swollen stem from which roots and leaves develop.
- Rhizomes (irises, cannas), which are thickened underground runners.
- Tubers (potatoes, tuberous begonias), which are swollen stems with new shoots developeing from buds on the surface.

FLOWERS THIS MONTH

<u>ANNUALS</u> - Malthiola incana (Stock); Mimulus luteus (Monkey flower); Myosotis alpestris (Forget-me-not); Nigella damascena (Love-in-a-mist); Viola spp (Pansy)

<u>PERENNIALS</u> - Bulbine frutescens (Burn jelly plant); Gerbera jamesonii (Barberton daisy); Iris japonica; Paeonia officianalis (Garden peony) <u>BULBS</u> - Ixia spp; Muscari botryoides (Grape hyacinth); Mervilla plumbea (Natal quill); Sparaxis spp; Zantedeschia aethiopica (Arum lily) <u>CLIMBERS</u> - Combretum microphyllum (flame creeper)

<u>SHRUBS</u> - Bartlettina sordida sun Euphatorium (Giant ageratum); Cistus spp (Rockrose); Kerria japonica; Kolkwitzia amabilis (Beauty bush); Magnolia stellata (Star magnolia); Podalyria calyptrata (Water blossom pea); Rondeletia amoena; Spiraea x arguta (Garland spiraea)

BIRDS

Our feathered friends are one of our biggest allies in the fight against pests. One just has to watch white eyes working on a rose bud covered in aphids or a flock of starlings pick their way across a caterpillar-infested lawn to realise their worth. Some birds, like thrushes, are unobtrusive and systematically turn over leaves in the shelter of shrubbery as they search for food. Others, such as hadedahs, are noisy and strut unconcerned around lawns delving into soil with their long beaks. Shrikes are a mixed blessing; they eat many insects, but they also prey on the young of other birds, chameleons and lizards. Coucals (rain birds) often take snails out of their shells. Many seed eaters eat weed seeds, preventing their spread, while nectar feeders help pollinate plants. When considering birds as the gardener's friends, we must also consider the pleasure they bring. What would a garden be without the song of birds and their highly entertaining antics?

GARDENING WITH NATURE

- MAINTENANCE

In the previous issue of Kolobe Times, we discussed that the best aspect of a wildlife-friendly garden for busy gardeners, is that it requires less maintenance than a more formal arrangement: less pruning, mowing, spraying and, importantly, less watering. But the most satisfying thing about it is that, over time, all the elements come into play to achieve an overall balance.

The shape of a tree or shrub lies in your capable hands. Young trees bought from a garden centre are generally 'cleaned up' by the grower and consist of a single stem with a few tiny branches on the top. Gardeners seldom interfere with the growth after the tree has been planted and this can be disastrous. If you wish the tree to branch at three meters high, then ensure that all the side branches are pruned off up to this height. Once the tree has reached the desired height, you can decide how many branches it should have and where they should grow. Prune off excess branches and bend the remaining branches in the direction in which you would like them to grow. The branches can be secured by using string and a soft material placed around the branch. (This manipulation is how woven figs are converted into such popular pot plants).

A tree such as the karee makes an excellent wind break if the plant is allowed to 'bush'. Instead of a single trunk with an elevate canopy, the plant becomes bushy with foliage from ground level upwards on several stems. If you would like a tree to 'bush' in this way and not have single stem, simply break off its 'head' after planting. Once the main growth point has been removed, the plant will shoot from the base and along the remainder of the stem. Sealants should not be used when branches are removed. They tend to prevent natural healing and can give rise to infection that rots living tissue. When removing large branches from a tree, cut them cleanly, about 20cm away from the trunk. The stump can ne trim-med back flush with the trunk.

Do not be shy to manage your garden. It is, after all, the space in which you are going to relax and it should be maintained primarily to your satisfaction and then for the wildlife. Traditional 'English' gardens are generally well maintained, with much energy being expended to ensure that the plants are pruned and any dead wood is removed. Wildlife gardens generally require less maintenance, as shown by the following three options:

Zero-maintenance gardens - If you are a fan of the wild and woolly look, this is the kind of garden for you. No maintenance is carried out, except for possibly mowing a small section of lawn. Plants are left to grow in any pattern they wish, new trees and shrubs are allowed to germinate in the soil and 'weeds' form an integral part of the landscape. These kinds of gardens are generally not irrigated and natural climate cycles are allowed to take place. The garden will be drab in winter and start to show life after the first rains. The advantage of this type of garden is that it closely resemble nature and has a 'wild' appeal about it. Natural succession is allowed to take place, with more dominant plant species taking over and the weaker pioneer plants being replaced. The disadvantage for some is that the aesthetic value (to the human eye) is reduced. Plants like the Cape honeysuckle, for instance, will become woody and produce flowers on the branch tips which may be as high as three meters, whereas if they are pruned, they will produce masses of flowers where they can be appreciate by all. These gardens will not be as productive as those that enjoy some form of management. Human intervention ensures that the plants remain in tip-top condition, able to produce the maximum number of flowers, seeds and fruit.

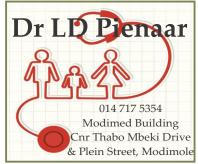
Manicured gardens - The typical 'English' garden is most represented in urban areas and requires high maintenance. Clipped hedges, shaped topiaries and carefully weeded flower beds are the order of the day. Money and time are required to make sure that each and every plant is at its most presentable. These gardens are normally filled with exotic plants and have a pleasing impact on the human eye. They are also generally green deserts with little or no value to wildlife. The vigorous cleaning between plants and the continual digging over of the soil deprive wildlife of suitable habitats and make it a place for the more resilient species with basic life requirements. The same manicured appearance can be created using indigenous plants and this will overcome, to some extent, the sterility of exotic plant use. Dogwood, sage, Cape leadwort and Cape honeysuckle, kept between 0.5m and 2m high, can be used effectively for hedging. The dogwood will produce fruit, enjoyed by birds, on a metrehigh hedge while still giving a formal look. The Cape honeysuckle will also produce flowers and nectar that can be utilised by sunbirds. The same functionality can be achieved when using these species in topiary, or 'lollipop'-shaped plants, whereas exotic species will tend to be sterile for wildlife.

Sensible gardens - The happy medium in a garden is a compromise between the wild and woolly look and the manicured version. The area immediately around the house, particularly at the front entrance, can be manicured using pruned and clipped indigenous pants to give the formal look that many gardeners desire. Substitute the lavender hedge for a Cape leadwort hedge which will produce masses of powder-blue flowers; for topiary-style plantings, use indigenous pink mallow or wild violet. As you move deeper into the garden, the formality can be more relaxed and a 'wilder' appearance can be created, although a certain amount of management can be carried out even in the more remote parts of the garden. Annual pruning will ensure that the plants are kept in the shapes that you desire and will improve the flowering potential of many species.



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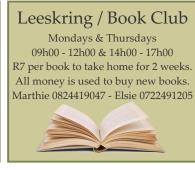


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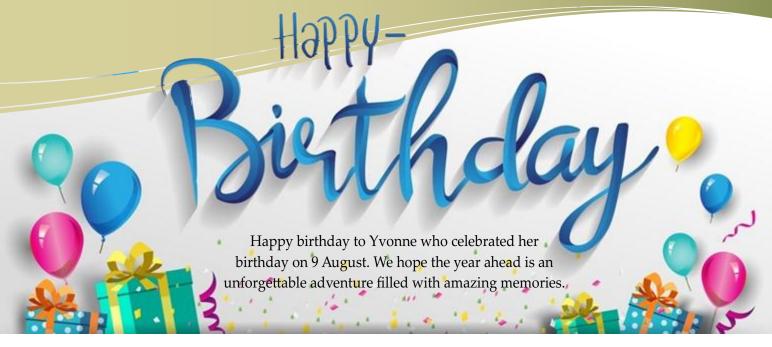
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RIDDLES

- 1 What can run but never walks, has a mouth but never talks, has a head but never weeps, has a bed but never sleeps?
- 2 What is so fragile that saying its name breaks it?
- 3 What can fill a room but takes up no space?
- 4 If you drop me I'm sure to crack, but give me a smile and I'll always smile back. What am I?
- 5 The more you take, the more you leave behind. What are they?
- 6 What breaks yet never falls, and what falls yet never breaks?
- 7 I turn once, what is out will not get in. I turn again, what is in will not get out. What am I?

ORIGIN OF AUGUST

Named to honour the first Roman emperor (and grandnephew of Julius Caesar), Augustus Caesar (63 B.C.– A.D. 14). Augustus (the first Roman emperor) comes from the Latin word "augustus," meaning venerable, noble, and majestic.











Total Rainfall for AUGUST

 $2017 = 0 \, \text{mm}$

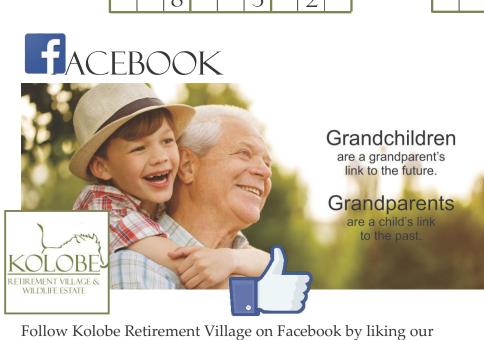
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 $2019 = 0 \, \mathrm{mm}$

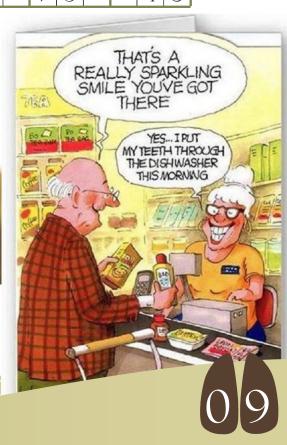
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SUDOKU CHALLENGE

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Don't count the days, make the days count.

CONTACT DETAILS

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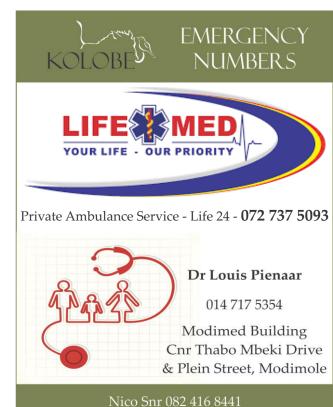
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