Bulb & Seed Exchange

The Southern African Bulb Group runs a Bulb and Seed Exchange, for SABG members only, in Summer (August) and "Ephemeral seed exchanges" (primarily for seeds which need to be sown immediately on receipt) in Autumn (November) each year. See the section Overseas Members below regarding the position with respect to members outside the UK.

- The **2026 Bulb & Seed Exchange** has completed.
- The **November Bulb and Seed Exchange 2026** has been announced and the timetable is available.
- The next Exchange will be the **2027 Bulb & Seed Exchange**

Bulbs and seeds distributed in SABG Bulb & Seed Exchanges

General information on our exchanges

This is a service for SABG members only. If you are not already a member and would like to take part, please read About the SABG and How to join the SABG.

Please note that although we call them exchanges, if you don't yourself have material (bulbs or seeds) to offer, you will still be able to request seeds or bulbs from the list in exchange for a suitable donation to cover at least the cost of postage and packing.

Bulbs and seeds from the summer exchanges are sent out in early September, and can be planted and started into growth in a timely fashion. Seeds from the autumn "ephemeral" exchanges are sent out in mid-November, to be sown immediately.

Jon Evans, who does all the work, says "*This Exchange is now a key part of our activities, so we are hoping for many of you to provide your spare bulb or seed material for the benefit of other members! … I am hoping that many of you will have had more time to spend in your garden collecting seeds, and will have a chance to get the summer repotting done nice and early. Please note that although we call it an exchange, if you don't yourself have material to offer, you will still be able to request seeds or bulbs from the list in exchange for a suitable donation to cover at least the cost of postage and packing. The page on Payments provides some information on ways to pay.*"

Overseas Members

I would like to clarify our policy regarding sending items to overseas members. We are only able to send material to overseas members in ways complying with their government's regulations (i.e. no mis-labelling of contents etc), and only when conforming with those regulations is neither too onerous, nor expensive (e.g. we cannot issue phytosanitary certificates etc). We expect the relevant member to be able to guide us in following their government's requirements. Although we'll do our best to comply with the regulations where possible, we cannot be held responsible for any bulbs or seeds which are confiscated.

All **donations from all overseas members** must now, sadly, be accompanied by a Phytosanitary Certificate. We recognise that this makes it difficult or impossible for these members to donate to the exchange. This requirement applies to EU members from 1st January 2022, so EU members can unfortunately no longer donate material.

Also, because the UK is no longer part of the EU, any packages sent to EU members would need to be accompanied by a Phytosanitary certificate. These are now also required for material sent to Australia. This would be a difficult and expensive administrative burden, and we regret that as a result **we are unable to send bulbs or seeds to EU or Australian members at this time**. We are still able to send seeds to some countries outside Europe, provided that the members receiving them are conversant with their own regulations.

Although UK gardening societies are lobbying the UK government to change the regulations to facilitate international seed exchange, the import requirements set by the EU are outside the control of the UK government, and are unlikely to be affected by any changes.

There is more information about our Exchanges at Bulb & Seed Exchange and the lists circulated in previous exchanges can be read at Bulbs and seeds distributed in SABG Bulb & Seed Exchanges.

Corrections

- 2024 Exchange: Bert Zaalberg reports that the bulbs listed as *Gethyllis gerardii* are almost certainly *Gethyllis gregoriana*. He wrote that “Since *gerardii* is an unpublished species name, I tried to get more info through Paul Cumbleton to find out its proper name. Paul told me that he purchased them in 2006/2007 as *G. gerardii* from Gordon Summerfield. Location info was Nardouwsberg, Clanwilliam. After having seen pictures of flowers and leaves, I’m pretty certain this is *Gethyllis gregoriana*. Leaves are quite diagnostic for this species and match the description Paul gave me. I assume it was a simple typo from Gordon back then, since *gregoriana* was cultivated by Gordon Summerfield in those days.” (Thanks, Bert!)

Notes on previous Exchanges

This is included for information only. Check the more recent announcements for up-to-date information!

Bulbs and seeds from the summer exchanges are sent out in early September, and can be planted and started into growth in a timely fashion. Seeds from the autumn “ephemeral” exchanges are sent out in late November, to be sown immediately.

Jon Evans, who does all the work, says “*This Exchange is now a key part of our activities, so we are hoping for many of you to provide your spare bulb or seed material for the benefit of other members! … I am hoping that many of you will have had more time to spend in your garden collecting seeds, and will have a chance to get the summer repotting done nice and early. Please note that although we call it an exchange, if you don’t yourself have material to offer, you will still be able to request seeds or bulbs from the list in exchange for a suitable donation to cover at least the cost of postage and packing. The page on Payments provides some information on ways to pay.*”

Overseas Members

We are only able to send material to overseas (non-UK) members in ways complying with their government's regulations (i.e. no mis-labelling of contents etc), and only when conforming with those regulations is neither too onerous, nor expensive (e.g. we cannot issue phytosanitary certificates etc). We expect the relevant member to be able to guide us in following their government's requirements. Although we'll do our best to comply with the regulations where possible, we cannot be held responsible for any bulbs or seeds which are confiscated.

All **donations from all overseas members** must now, sadly, be accompanied by a Phytosanitary Certificate. We recognise that this makes it difficult or impossible for these members to donate to the exchange. This requirement applies to EU members from 1st January 2022, so EU members can unfortunately no longer donate material.

Also, because the UK is no longer part of the EU, any packages sent to EU members would need to be accompanied by a Phytosanitary certificate. This would be a difficult and expensive administrative burden, and we regret that as a result **we are unable to send bulbs or seeds to EU members at this time**. We are still able to send seeds to some countries outside Europe, provided that the members receiving them are conversant with their own regulations.

We are participating in endeavours with other UK gardening societies to lobby the UK government to change the regulations to facilitate international seed exchange, but the import requirements set by the EU are outside the control of the UK government, and are unlikely to be affected by any changes.

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