Original announcement on "The African Garden"

This original announcement about the formation of the Group appeared in "The African Garden" web site run by David Fenwick. The original site may no longer exist, but thanks to Archive.org a preserved copy of the web site can be seen at The African Garden. The announcement is included below for historical reasons. The details of members' roles have since changed. The contribution of all those mentioned, including the late Terry Smale and Margaret Corina, is especially appreciated.

Southern African Bulb group

About this group

For a number of years, various people have said that there is a need for a UK organisation devoted to the study of southern African bulbs. Eventually a plan was concocted between Stefan Rau and Terry Smale and initial steps taken. A number of growers within relatively easy reach of Epsom were invited to a meeting in the garden of Terry and Jennifer Smale on 4th April 2004. At this meeting, the twenty-two people present decided to set up an informal organisation under the above name for the study of such bulbs. Directions will need to be provided and the organisers of the group were agreed as:

Robin Attrill – Newsletter Editor / Secretary
Margaret Corina – Treasurer
Terry Smale
Stefan Rau

The principal objective of the Group is to enable the exchange of information between its members on all aspects of Southern African bulbs. The term "bulb" is being used in a general sense to cover corms and tubers as well as true bulbs. Most bulbs of interest will hail from South Africa, but plants do not recognise political boundaries and related plants from neighbouring states are also within the Group's field of interest. There are many South African gardeners and botanists who have an excellent knowledge of their own bulbous flora, but outside that country, the knowledge base is sparse. Various growers in the UK have been developing methods for the cultivation of these bulbs, but frequently in isolation from each other.

It is envisaged that there will be two main activities of the Group. First, occasional meetings in members' gardens so that members can see what is being cultivated there and also bring their own plants for display. This will provide opportunities for face-to-face exchange of information and also for exchange or sale of plant material. These were obvious features of the inaugural Epsom meeting and there are presently three other offers of venues for further meetings. Second, there will be mechanisms set up for the exchange of information by such means as the production of an occasional newsletter or perhaps in due course by means of a web-based news group. Initially, notes on plants and cultivation will be solicited by Robin Attrill, who will compile them and distribute either by e-mail or the ordinary post as required. Obviously the use of electronic communication will keep costs to a minimum.

A bank account has been established by the Group's treasurer, Margaret Corina, and the initial joining

fee of 5 pounds sterling will be stretched to cover as much of the administration as possible. Further subscriptions will be requested as needed. In this, the Group is modelled on the Crocus Group which historically has needed only very occasional further subscriptions.

The Group has made initial contacts with a number of potential members but there will obviously be many other southern African bulb growers that the organisers are not aware of. So please make any interested friends aware of this new organisation.

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