

# ***In your garden***

Issue 5 - 5 August 2021



## **Noisy neighbour**

Homeowners, in many parts of South Africa, will probably be quite familiar with the Guttural Toad. In many areas it is extremely common but, wherever it is, it is noisy and makes sure that it is heard and seen.

I know that there are many people that are not happy about having frogs in their yards, for one reason or another, but it is hard to keep the Guttural Toad away. Apart from the breeding season, it does not need to be near water so, even if you do not have a pond or other water source nearby, they will still come and visit your yard!

Those of you who own swimming pools will often have to hook out these frogs who have ended up in the pool on purpose or by accident. Unfortunately, for the frogs, they cannot easily get out of a pool and will eventually drown after they have become tired from continuously swimming looking for an escape route.

The Guttural Toad is a large frog that may reach a length of 10 cm. They have big appetites, mainly feeding on insects and spiders. They have also been known to eat other smaller frogs. They have become established in the area around Cape Town and is proving to be a pest. They not only compete for food with the frogs that naturally occur there, but sometimes eat them as well. Efforts are underway to eliminate them from the region, but this is a difficult task as they are so prolific.



## **One of South Africa's finest exports**

This beautiful plant calls the bushveld its natural home. In particular the bushveld regions of Mpumalanga and Gauteng. From there the Barberton Daisy has spread to gardens around the country and the world.

Their claim to fame is their beautiful reddish flowers that are 6 cm across



## **Have you ever seen a Guineafowl with 6 legs?**

Perhaps you have and you did not realise it. We are all familiar with the Guineafowl from the world of birds but there is a butterfly that is also known as a Guineafowl. It also has spots like its feathered namesake but it has six legs.

The Guineafowl occurs from the

and appear during spring and summer. The leaves are large and grow from the ground upwards. They have deep lobes. In their natural habitat they may sometimes be found in some shade, but they are quite at home in full sun.

Barberton Daisies are perennial plants and are evergreen so they will always add something to your garden. They are fast growing and frost tolerant so they can be included in a wide variety of gardens. They are well suited to rockeries. Over time they will form clumps which can be separated if you like. Remove dead flowers and water them regularly.

Barberton Daisies have been cultivated into a number of colours, but I still prefer the natural reddish flower. The flowers are borne on long stalks, so they make ideal cut flowers. The flowers attract various insects including butterflies.

For many years the Barberton Daisy was the emblem of the Northern Transvaal rugby team. In 1997 the team was rebranded as the Blue Bulls and the logo was replaced.

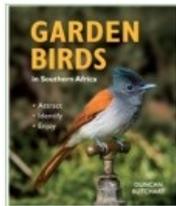
north-eastern parts of the Eastern Cape, through KZN and in a band across the northern region of South Africa. They may be seen all year round. Although they are not normally associated with gardens and parks, they may be encouraged by the presence of *Combretum molle* and *Terminalia sericia* trees. They are also attracted to overripe fruit. They are not very common in the southern parts of their range so you may have more luck attracting them to your garden if you live in the northern parts of the country.

The male and female are similar in looks although the wings of the female are more rounded. They are quite large having a wingspan of up to 7 cm. The top of their wings is brown with white spots. The under-wing colour is pale orange with white spots. The spots are ringed or tipped in black and are said to be more grey than white during the dry season although I haven't noticed this.

## Advertise in this newsletter

"In your garden" is looking for advertisers. This newsletter is aimed at South African gardeners, particularly those that are interested in indigenous plants as well as the birds, butterflies and more that their gardens attract. If you are interested, then please contact us at: [steven@natureinyourgarden.co.za](mailto:steven@natureinyourgarden.co.za).

I look forward to hearing from you.



### Subscriber Competition

As a subscriber to this newsletter, you are in line to win a copy of "Garden Birds in South Africa" by Duncan Butchart.

This excellent book describes around 100 birds that are likely to appear in gardens in South Africa. The book describes how you can set up a bird friendly garden to attract different species. 50 species of plants are described including trees, aloes, proteas and much more. The main part of the book covers 101 species of birds. This section not only helps to identify them but also how to attract them. Other chapters detail subjects such as feeding birds, providing nesting sites and migration.

This competition will close when the newsletter has 1,000 subscribers so why not encourage your friends and family to subscribe! Unfortunately, this competition is only available to subscribers in South Africa. Delivery will be done to the winner's nearest branch of Postnet.

## Send me your garden bird list

Do you keep a garden bird list, and you live in a housing complex or estate? I would like to start building up a database of garden birds for as many complexes and estates as possible. As I start getting information then I will make it available to anyone who is interested. So, if you have a garden bird list then I would like to ask if you would be kind enough to send me a copy, and to send any updates as new birds are added to your list. In future issues I will be inviting readers to send in a short article about the birds in their gardens. It is your chance to brag about the birds that visit you and how you attract them.

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