

Southern African Institute of Forestry

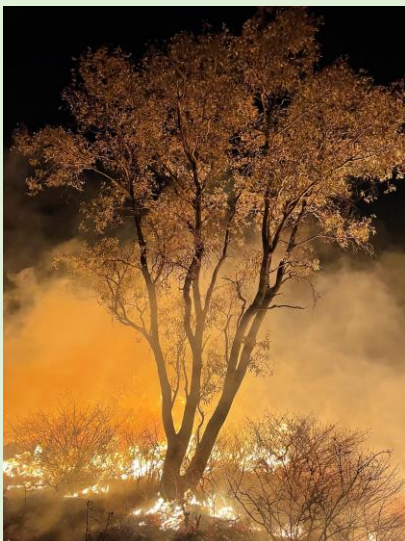


Delivering a professional service to forestry

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SAIF Calendar : April 2022 -Nightglow – R.Heath

From the President's Desk

Standing on their shoulders

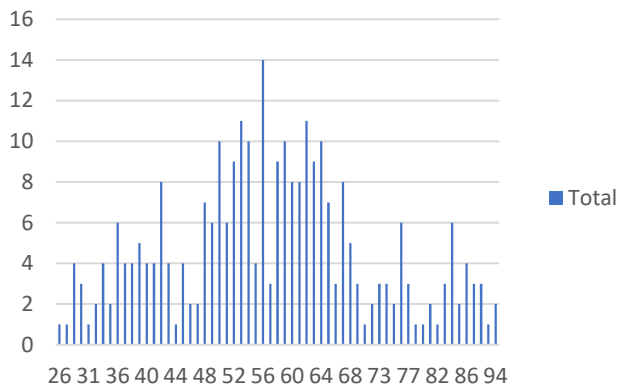
This month we would like to celebrate the contribution of our older members and stalwarts who founded and established the Southern African Institute of Forestry (SAIF). They did not only make their mark and left their wonderful legacy in the South African Forestry and Forest Products Industry, but also internationally. It is therefore with great pleasure that we place an article written by Prof. Klaus von Gadow who was ably assisted by several other well-known forestry colleagues and SAIF members amongst them messrs. Georg von dem Bussche, Horst Kassier and Botha Maree, in this edition of the SAIF Newsletter.

We tend to forget that we who have advanced in our individual professional career paths, had the wonderful privilege to have these gentlemen and occasionally ladies as well who acted as our mentors and coaches. They equipped us and taught us for our task. We would like to honour our senior members in this edition and we are truly privileged to still be able to tap into their wealth of experience. We truly stand on the shoulders of these great people who went before us !

This also reminds us of a very true saying which I heard recently namely : "We must never waste the valuable opportunity to learn from the people who have walked the road. They have lots of wisdom they want to give for free. The following African Proverb is also useful to remember: "When an old man dies, a library burns to the ground".



SAIF Members 2022



Graph Showing Age of members in 2022 (Y-axis Number of members; X-axis: Age in 2022)

The two oldest members are 94 years old and one more member in the nineties and no less than 85 of our members are between 80 and 89 years old with 22 members between 70 and 79 !

Although we can boast with an enormous amount of experience and wisdom locked up in these senior members, the average age of current members is approximately 57 years which is a matter of grave concern as we are not growing our membership amongst the young foresters.

The SAIF Council is very much aware of this situation and considering a strategy to address this situation and need all the support and advice of its members to be successful with this strategy.



The SAIF would like to sincerely thank Dr. Hannél Ham for the wonderful work she has done and progress made to manage the transition of the Southern Forests Journal from a journal in hard copy format to the current electronic on-line version we can now enjoy. She also elevated this flagship of the SAIF to a new high impact factor which is proof of the popularity and success rating of the Journal.

The SAIF would like to welcome Dr David Everard who is well known in forestry circles as well as in the SAIF,

as the new Editor-in-Chief of Southern Forests Journal. We are very glad and privileged to have David on board and wish him all the best in his new position. Please also refer to the article elsewhere in the Newsletter where you can read more about David and his illustrious career in Commercial Forestry.

Forestry South Africa (FSA) identified the need for a Position Paper on Prospecting and Mining Applications and compiled such a paper recently. It is currently in an advanced phase of finalisation.

Apart from all the other challenges faced by the Forestry Industry, the applications for prospecting and mining pose just another challenge and threat to the sustainability of the Industry. Most of us are aware of the dramatic environmental and associated impact of mining operations on a portion of land and the long-term implications for growing trees on or even adjacent to such an operation.

Some of the major forestry companies receive almost weekly applications for mining in particular coal mining. This is clearly an effort to support the country's struggling power entity in its effort to generate enough power to keep the lights on and the economy running. One company namely the parastatal SAFCOL currently have in the order of 16 applications for mining for a variety of minerals ! This figure does not even include the illegal mining which pose an even bigger threat to commercial forestry operations.

One of the key messages of this paper which we as an industry do not emphasize enough or sufficiently is that forestry like agriculture, is a renewable resource unlike mining activities which are non-renewable and leads to a gradual to rapid decrease of mineral reserves. On the contrary, if practiced sustainably and responsibly, forestry operations can yield several rotations on the same land. The South African Forestry Industry can pride itself on the excellent research conducted and progress made in order to produce more timber on less land. The latest industry figures however proves that the area under commercial forestry has shrunk by more than 6% over the past 10 years and the question arise on how much more area can the industry afford to lose to mining and similar demands ?



Meet the Members of the Current SAIF Council

Over the next few months , one member of the current SAIF Council will be introduced to the readers .

MEET: Dr. David Everard

EDITOR IN-CHIEF : SOUTHERN FORESTS JOURNAL

Although Dave was brought up in the Eastern Cape on a pineapple farm near East London, he was born in Pretoria. Being of farming stock, he went to boarding school in Grahamstown at an early age, matriculating in 1976. He completed his 2-year military service before enrolling at Stellenbosch University.

After many years and 4 Universities (Stellenbosch, Natal now UKZN, Rhodes and Cambridge UK) with 4 degrees culminating with a Ph.D. from Cambridge, he joined the South African Forestry Research Institute based in Pretoria.

Soon after joining SAFRI it was transferred to the CSIR as Forestek and Dave was transferred to the Saasveld Office outside George. When the Saasveld Forestek office was closed it was back to Pretoria and Environmentek where he researched Natural Forest Ecology, Sustainability issues and partook in some impact assessments for large developments. He also did several environmental investigations for the forestry industry.

In 1998 he joined Sappi Forests as Environmental Manager and moved to Pietermaritzburg. He, together with his team was responsible for the implementation and management of the Risk Management System which Sappi Forests had developed, to manage all Safety, Health, Environmental and Quality aspects of the business. This system has met the requirements the Forest Stewardship Council. He was also appointed as a member of the Sappi Group Sustainable Development Council which is responsible for providing leadership in setting policy and objectives on sustainable development for Sappi as a group. He also led the group on reviewing its strategy on biodiversity.

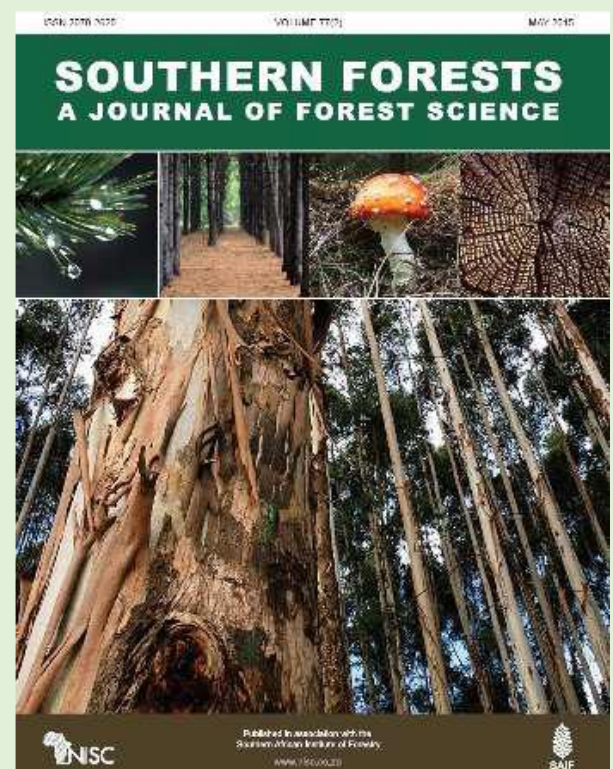
During his time at Sappi he represented Forestry on some important bodies such as the FSC's Standards Development Group, the National Governing Body of SAFAS (Sustainable African Forestry Assurance Scheme) and chaired the F.S.A.'s Environmental Management Committee for many years. During his time at the CSIR and Sappi Dave travelled extensively around the world to various fora mostly dealing with sustainable forest management issues. After a long and very rewarding time at Sappi Dave retired at the end of May 2021.

David Everard continues to contribute to various industry wide forums and committees in South Africa. He is a non-executive director of the Sustainable African Forestry Assurance Scheme and is involved with a water stewardship project and with rolling out forest certification to small growers. His burning goal is to make certification meaningful, practical, and accessible to all, and thus improving the sustainability of forestry.

Dave has been happily married to Michelle for 36 years now. They have 2 sons both working professionally, but no grandchildren yet! Dave is an avid golfer and loves the outdoors where he is a keen naturalist and photographer, concentrating on bird, frog, butterfly, dragonfly and wildflower photography. He is also a registered bird atlasser.



Dave Everard (far right) with his Family



Rob Thompson Column March 2022

Headlong into disaster... or not?

I have a small and tenacious Jack Russel characterized by the spectacular ability to control human minds. One look into its eyes and there one goes off on a walk around the neighbourhood!

Whilst engaged in this evening practice, he regularly attempts an unprovoked assault on a Rhodesian Ridgeback often being walked around the same time. According to the owner, the Ridgeback has no mind control ability, but ably encourages daily walks by subtly displaying an impressive array of fangs and an evil glare from glow in the dark eyes. This potential opponent is around 50 times the Jack Russel's size and that's just the head measure. Should engagement actually occur, the skirmish is likely to be short-lived and not end particularly well ... for the Jack Russel, unless of course he manages to strategically lodge himself in the Ridgebacks' throat, as per the rather risky military strategy referred to by few survivors as an "immersion raid".

One would think that the Jack Russel would know better and rather pick a fight in which the odds weighed more positively in its favour? The little Maltese of little brain, which we pass daily comes to mind, but my dog does not even acknowledge its presence let alone consider it being a potential target for hostile neutralization.

I guess this is the difference between humans and animal kind? We, as humans, have comparatively massive frontal brain lobes, allowing us to assess past and current experiences, against future potential outcomes, all in terms of risk, and to choose an appropriate current action. Yes, I know certain local politicians and world leaders are totally proving me wrong with this assertion, but you get what I'm trying to say!

Simplistically expressed, dog owners are likely to have more acumen in terms of risk management than their dog, except of course if you own a sheep dog. Sheep dogs are always more clever than their owners.

There is always risk. Risk is a given. Should we listen to risk and make our decisions based on its likely presence, or not?

We often encounter crossroads at which we have to take particular and difficult decisions. Imagine what our forest industry would look like now if we had taken the following decisions based merely on the presence of risk :-

1. We are not going to plant eucalyptus due to the real risk of pests and disease.
2. We are not going to manufacture pulp and paper and risk it not being consumed by an increasingly digitized global population.
3. We cannot plant long rotation softwoods as the real risk of fire, pests and country risk may impact before harvest.
4. Further investment in our plantations, training, staff-wellness and cost efficiencies will not be pursued due to the risk of current and future legislation changes.

These decision-crossroads are regularly encountered in our personal lives as well. If we were totally risk averse, imagine just how hamstrung we would become?

1. I am not going to apply for the new position because of the risk of rejection.
2. I am not going to buy that new bike and risk road rash.
3. No more dog walking...there is the risk of a terrible conflict!
4. No more articles for the SAIF newsletter to prevent risk of ridicule from the members ... what is he thinking?

One of the aspects of my professional job is to maintain oversight over the strategy and risk profile of the forestry organization and its operations. We strategise around risk identification and risk mitigation. Over the years, we have realized that risk prevention is impossible given that Black Swans (discussed in detail in a previous article) are prolific breeders and appear where one least expects them, generally causing mayhem having emerged.

Risk preparedness on the other hand, is totally within our control and is an effective weapon to have in our armoury. A Black Swan is most often neutralized or controlled by a well-aimed burst of preparedness much like a rocket propelled grenade against an invading tank.

Preparedness reduces the chances that we become target-fixated on the expected negative outcome. It allows us to take our eyes off of what we believe is an inevitable “crash and burn” scenario and realign our trajectory towards a more acceptable and appropriate result. Of course, particular levels of preparedness differentiate organisations and individuals, into varying levels of either success or failure, in the face of risk occurrence. Fortunately for the less successful, frontal lobe capacity does provide the opportunity for continuous re-alignment and re-calibration towards an improved outcome.

Think about the current massive unprecedented outbreak of bark beetle across European pine forests. Hundreds of thousands of hectares of dead or dying softwoods must now be salvaged and marketed to arrest financial losses. The sudden and unexpected Russian invasion of Ukraine has further impacted negatively on global softwood availability, and in particular, certified resource.

The fall-out of the war affecting prices of fuel and chemicals has caused a number of European wood processing plants to close given huge unaffordable spikes in the cost of energy. Closer to home, risks of obtuse legislation, political divides, poor infrastructure, compromised service delivery and many others, have, and are, continuing to surface, placing seemingly insurmountable hurdles in the way of our forestry and personal endeavours.

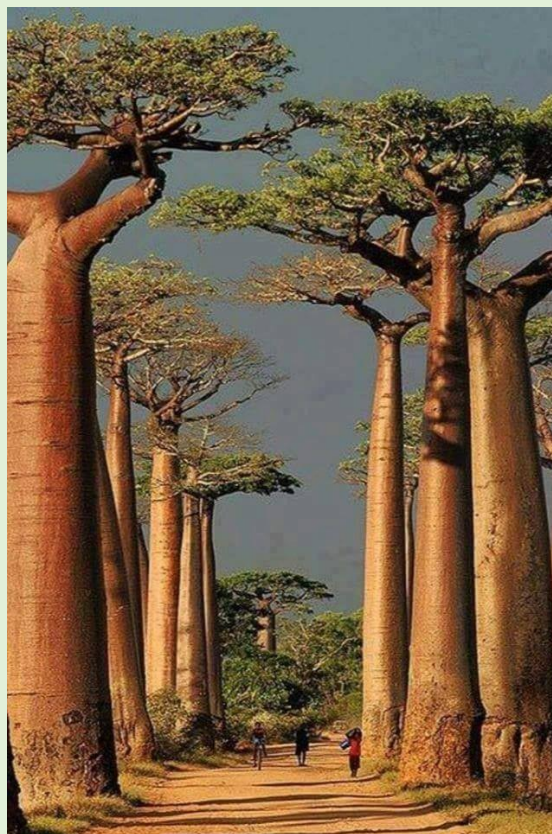
Time will tell how, or if, these risk hurdles are conquered.

With my interest in strategy, it will be interesting to observe just how innovatively they are overcome.

With the current trajectory arguably heading towards calamity, just how will human spirit and intellect conspire to overcome and divert?

Will the Jack Russel approach apply with a headlong charge into disaster and angst? Perhaps some may try a “Ridgeback-esqe” show of confidence in the face of impossible odds? Maybe the wily sheep dog characteristic will apply?

Placing satire aside, I do know that we all have an innate ability to assess past, present, and future. I don't think that enough of this ability is actually recognized and practiced, which arguably is humankind's' weakest trait. Those of us however, who understand and recognize that we do have incredibly strong assessment capacities, and consciously develop these skills, will come to realise very quickly, that our trajectory through life is quite literally totally in our hands.



Huge Baobab Trees growing in Madagascar



Klip in die Bos

Junk Forests - Trash or Treasure ?

Klaus and Marga von Gadow

Kleinmond; 1st April, 2022

On a narrow stretch between the Southern Oceans and the Kogelberg mountains, between estuaries to the east and west, Kleinmond has been described as one of the hotspots of biodiversity in Africa. The Kleinmond flora, known as Cape Fynbos, evolved during the Pliocene and Late Miocene in response to progressive aridification. This very diverse flora with high levels of endemism, has been tragically vulnerable to the proliferation of alien plants that thrive so well in this area. It is not unusual therefore, to experience a feeling of deep sadness at the fate of these unique plant communities. Approaching Kleinmond from the east, there is a turnoff to Rooisand on the gravel road that leads to the Botriver estuary. That particular location had fascinated us for a long time. About 10 years ago, we could witness State funded manual clearing of alien vegetation (with associated, cut stump chemical treatment) along the road. Now, the plant communities on either side of the narrow road are a world apart following more recent, privately funded clearing by the owner of the area to the right of the road.



Area to the left of the road



Rooisand road



Area to the right of the road

During the recent clearing in the right hand area, each invasive shrub and tree had been cut; stumps were poisoned to prevent re-sprouting and suitably colour marked to avoid treatment oversight. This massive clearing was then followed up with timeous and on going manual hand pulling of alien seedlings, operations that apparently had cost the owner several million Rand. The result can only be admired. The owner's efforts were formally recognised for this very significant and much appreciated contribution to the restoration of the farm to a natural, alien plant-free state which it had not enjoyed for several decades. The ongoing combating of invader plants will restore the erstwhile habitat diversity and lend significant support to the protection and conservation of the much valued natural environment and heritage. However, we keep asking ourselves: can this effort be sustained, is it repeatable in other infested areas? The existence of the badly invaded area at left constitutes a permanent threat to the area at right. There may be seed banks just waiting for a fire to revive and re-colonize the area.

Instead of spending another mindboggling sum of money on eradication, why not join the forces of nature? Research is always a good start. Collecting evidence about these "trash" forests, their biology and structure, their resilience and dynamics, their potential to provide new habitat will help to deal with the issue in a more pragmatic way. Invasion biology has become an emotional issue, especially when cherished plant and animal species that have taken so long to adapt to local conditions, are replaced within a short time by more vigorous and more resilient invaders. A battle against the forces of nature may be expensive. It will be lost when the funding dries up.



The invaded left side of the road looks ugly and messy, but the trees are lush and vigorous. There are no signs of effective fire protection, no signs of active management. Is this the *New Normal*? One may feel helpless and even benumbed at the loss of the Garden of Eden.

The trash forest problem is not limited to South Africa, it has become a world-wide phenomenon. These new invader communities go under the heading "Novel ecosystems". Novel ecosystems are widespread, as documented in the inspiring publications of Dave Richardson and Cang Hui. Novel ecosystems may be a nightmare, but they represent the new normal whether we like it or not. Novel ecosystems won't go away, they are here to stay. A pragmatic view would thus be based on the proverbial "If you can't beat them, join them".

On the positive side, these trash forests present numerous opportunities for research. Research about new complex plant communities and their effects on catchment runoff and the carbon cycle might be of interest to forest plant scientists and ecologists. Forest management research may deal with more effective sampling strategies, natural regeneration, selective harvesting schemes, biomass productivity and new markets.

Wood scientists may be interested in studying specific properties of new wood products. The fact that this is a global issue, not limited to South Africa, might make the problem very attractive for a number of international funding agencies that specialize in supporting research on the biodiversity and resilience of new invasive plant communities.

Literature

Hui C, Richardson DM (2017) Invasion dynamics. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 322 p

Richardson DM, Hui C, Nuñez MA, Pauchard A (2014) Tree invasions – patterns, processes, challenges and opportunities. *Biol Invasions* 16:473–481. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10530-013-0606-9>

Acknowledgements: Helpful comments on previous drafts were received from Botha Maree; Georg von dem Bussche, Thea Brink and Horst Kassier.

These 4 types of trees are now protected in SA – disturbing them could land you in jail

- Four more species have been added to South Africa's list of protected trees, as per a gazette signed by the minister of forestry, fisheries, and the environment on Friday.
- The list now contains 52 species of trees.
- It's illegal to cut, damage, or disturb these trees protected under the National Forests Act.
- And those caught, without explicit permission, could spend up to three years behind bars.
- For more stories go to www.BusinessInsider.co.za.

Four more trees have just become protected in South Africa under the National Forests Act. Cutting, disturbing, damaging, or removing protected trees could land offenders in jail for up to three years.

The Minister of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment, Barbara Creecy, first signalled [the intention to add four new species](#) to South Africa's list of protected trees back in November 2021. The public had an opportunity to comment on the proposed amendments to the list before March.

"The species are proposed for addition to the existing list of protected tree species after evaluation by an expert panel, on the basis that they are keystone species and vulnerable to particular threats in specific parts of their distribution range," noted the proposal bearing Creecy's signature.

A [government gazette signed by Creecy and published on Friday](#) declared these four species protected under Section 12 of the National Forests Act.

Following the recent additions, South Africa's list of protected trees now contains 52 species. The list covers species like the iconic Camel thorn, *Vacheilia erioloba*, to the Outeniqua yellowwood. Trees indigenous to dense forests in the Western Cape, to hardy species which dot the arid Namaqualand can be found on this list.

"No person may cut, disturb, damage or destroy any protected tree or possess, collect, remove, transport, export, purchase, sell, donate or in any other manner acquire or dispose of any protected tree except under a license granted by the Minister," notes the gazette.

Exceptions to this only apply to those who've been granted a licence or exemption by the department.

Without an exemption, interference with any species on South Africa's list of protected trees can be met with a fine or imprisonment for a period of up to three years, or both.

That now includes tampering with the four recently added species below.



Berchemia zeyheri

(Image :Wikimedia Commons)

Berchemia zeyheri, commonly known as Red Ivory in English, Rooihout in Afrikaans, and munia-niane in Tshivenda, is one such species.

Red Ivory usually grows in dense groups with other trees, reaching 15 metres in height. It's evergreen to semi-deciduous and is commonly found in Limpopo, where, according to the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), its fruit is picked and sold on the street.

Wood from the tree has also been used to craft durable furniture, while its leaves and fruit are favoured by birds, bushbuck, and people alike.



Diospyros mespiliformis

(Image : Wikimedia Commons)

Diospyros mespiliformis, better known as African ebony or jackal-berry, can grow 25 metres high, with a trunk circumference of 5 metres and dense evergreen canopy. It produces a fleshy oval fruit, yellow-green in colour, and is sought after by nyalas, impalas, warthogs, baboons, and hornbills.

Jackal-berry trees are found throughout Africa and, locally, are common on savannas or savanna woodlands, like the Kruger National Park, where it can be found growing on termite mounds.

The third species is known as ***Schinziophyton rautanenii***

The *Schinziophyton rautanenii*, best known as the Manketti tree or Mongongo nut, is not endemic to South Africa, but can be found in northern Limpopo. It's a large spreading tree which usually grows to between 15 to 20 metres tall, with grey to pale golden-brown bark.

The Manketti tree's light grey-green fruits are covered in velvety hairs, while its hard seeds produce an edible oil.





Schinziophyton rautanenii

(Image :Wikimedia Commons)

The fourth new species added to the list of Protected Tree Species , is *Umtiza listeriana*, or simply Umtiza, localised and endemic to South Africa which is found only in a small area in the Eastern Cape. Part of the legume family, this rare evergreen tree grows up to 12 metres and produces oblong leaves 20 to 60 mm long.

Umtiza also produces fruit which matures into brown and woody pods. It's found in the forested kloofs of the Eastern Cape, in the East London, Kentani, and King William's Town Districts. Rapid human expansion in these areas threatens Umtiza, with the species recently being restored in the Umtiza Nature Reserve.



Umtiza listeriana

(Image :PlantZAfrica -SANBI, Creative Commons)

Note: This article, originally published on 10 November 2021, detailing the proposed amendments to the list of South Africa's protected trees, has been updated to reflect the official change made, by way of gazette, on Friday 25 March.

<https://www.businessinsider.co.za/new-list-of-protected-trees-in-south-africa-2021-11>

For more information, please also refer to:

<https://www.gov.za/speeches/minister-barbara-creecy-updated-annual-list-tree-species-south-africa-29-mar-2022-0000>

The consequence of declaring a tree, species of trees or a particular group of trees, or a particular woodland as protected in terms of the National Forests Act, means that no person may:

- Cut, disturb, damage or destroy any protected tree, or
 - Possess, collect, remove, transport, export, purchase, sell, donate or in any other manner acquire or dispose of any protected tree, or any forest product derived from a protected tree,
- Except –
- Under a licence granted by the Minister, or
 - In terms of an exemption from the provisions if approved by the Minister on the advice of the Council

SAIF AWARDS

Nominations are eagerly awaited in the following categories :

THE DISTINGUISHED FORESTRY AWARD

Purpose:

The purpose of the award is to give recognition to those contributions to or the application of forestry in Southern Africa, which have been individual and outstanding. This is the highest award given by the Institute.

THE DEDICATED SERVICE AWARD

Purpose:

The purpose of the award is to give recognition to members of the Institute for continuous and dedicated service to the SAIF over many years.

THE CONTINUOUS SERVICE EXCELLENCE AWARD TO THE FORESTRY INDUSTRY

Purpose:

The purpose of the award is to give recognition to individuals at all levels through the forestry industry in Southern Africa for excellence in their field of expertise and to reward efforts towards continuous improvement.

THE MERIT AWARD

Purpose:

The purpose of the award is to give recognition to the work of young and deserving students within or outside the field of forestry in order to promote the forestry profession in Southern Africa and its visibility and interest to a wider and important target audience.

NOMINATIONS

Please submit your Nominations urgently to the National Secretary : Mrs. Corine Viljoen at saif@mweb.co.za

PRESENTATION

The award will be presented either at the Branch Annual General Meeting, or at a special general meeting convened for the purpose, or at any other appropriate gathering.

Forester of the Year Award/ Floating Trophy

Purpose

The purpose of this award is to annually recognise **individuals** who have made an outstanding contribution to forestry practices, or have improved the reputation of forestry in South Africa through their individual operational actions. The award aims to recognize foresters for a specific forestry practice or action, as opposed to cumulative achievements. The award aims to recognize operational foresters whose achievements might not always be noticed at a national level, due to their lack of exposure.

Criteria

The Award will be made for application of an economical, social or environmentally positive innovation or practice (plantation or natural forests) in the area of general forestry in Southern Africa.

Examples of achievements by an individual which could be judged as outstanding, include the following areas:

- A new tool, machine or method to carry out forestry work
- Providing outstanding service to a surrounding community
- Show excellence in a particular environmental situation
- Commit an act of bravery during forestry duties
- Other specific circumstances which warrant a nomination

SAIF PHOTO COMPETITION 2022

The popular SAIF photo competition will again be taking place in 2022. The top 14 photos will be used to compile the 2023 SAIF calendar.

Stihl has kindly confirmed sponsorship of the photographic competition prizes.

1st Prize: GTA 26 Handheld Pruner

2nd Prize: HSA 26 Pruning Shears

3rd Prize: SE 62 Vacuum Cleaner

The closing date for the competition is **31 August 2022**.

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BIRTHDAYS APRIL 2022

LEO LONG	POLLA DU PLESSIS
MIKE EDWARDS	JACO VAN DER MERWE
MICHAL BRINK	MICHIEL BRITZ
LEM LE ROUX	ANDRE DE WET
MARK NORRIS-ROGERS	MIKE HUNTER
GEORG VON DEM BUSSCHE	SHARMANE NAIDOO
BRUCE TALBOT	AAT VAN DER DUSSEN
MAARTEN GROBBELAAR	JAMES VAN ZYL
GARY OLSEN	THEUNISSEN RABIE
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The Southern African Institute of Forestry

Handbook order form

The Southern African Institute of Forestry publishes three industry specific handbooks.

I would like to order:

South African Forestry Handbook

Price: SAIF members: R400

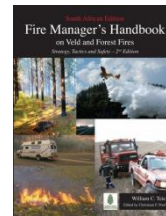
Non members: R500



Fire Manager's Handbook on Veld and Forest Fires

Price: SAIF members: R300

Non members: R400



There's Honey in the Forest

Price: SAIF members: R100

Non members: R150



International orders must contact the Secretariat for a quote due to currency and postage fluctuations.

A bulk discount of 10% applies on orders of 10 or more copies.

Price includes VAT and postage **(within SA)**

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Bank details: Nedbank Retail Park Branch code: 169745 Account: 1697009913 Account name: SAIF

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