



grass roots

Newsletter of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa

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GSSA Congress special

**Whither pasture
research in southern
Africa?**

***Pastures
information day,
Cedara***

Jobs, bursaries and news

Editorial

Dear Members

This issue focuses on the GSSA Congress in Grahamstown, yet another successful Congress and, this time, jointly hosted by the GSSA and the Thicket Forum.

Mark Hardy, the outgoing President, raised the issue of the decline in Pasture (as opposed to Rangeland) research in southern Africa in his Presidential address (see p. 14).

Another issue that has me deeply concerned is the state of traditional grassland science research in general. The age profile of the Congress delegates is getting younger every year. Injection of new blood and new ideas into any discipline is healthy; but although we've got the new blood, I'm concerned that we don't always have the new ideas. It seems that researchers are rehashing many old questions that were addressed decades ago. This is not a reflection on the enthusiasm or dedication of the scientists; rather, it is a reflection of the chaotic state of research in many government institutions. The new generation of scientists are entering the profession with few mentors left to guide them, and with little communication between government departments. Government research needs a shake-up, and if we don't do it, who will?

Alan Short

The Grassland Society of Southern Africa is dedicated to the advancement of the science and practice of range ecology and pasture management.

We welcome any contributions to the Grassroots, in the form of news, informative articles, reports, short research notes, scientific papers and letters to the Editor. Email alan.short@dae.kzntl.gov.za or admin@gssa.co.za or fax 033-3559 605 or 033-390 3113

GSSA Council

President:
Rina Grant
rina@sanparks.org

Immediate Past President:
Mark Hardy
markh@elsenburg.com

Vice-President:
Pieter Conradie
pw_conradie@yahoo.com

Honorary Secretary:
Lorraine van den Berg
Lorraine.VDB@nda.agric.za

Honorary Treasurer:
Justin du Toit
dutoitJCO@ukzn.ac.za

Scientific Editor:
Peter Scogings
pscoging@pan.uzulu.ac.za

Publications Editor:
Alan Short
Alan.Short@dae.kzntl.gov.za

Public Relations Officer:
Luthando Dziba
Ldziba@arc.agric.za

Chairperson of Trust:
Klaus Kellner
plbkk@puknet.puk.ac.za

PAC Chairperson:
Leslie Brown
lbrown@unisa.ac.za

Additional Member: Editorial Assistant
Khanyisile Mbatha
mbathakr@yahoo.com

Additional Member:
Jorrie Jordaan
jordaanj@agricho.norprov.gov.za

Additional Member:
Susi Vetter
S.Vetter@ru.ac.za

Additional Member:
Susi Vetter
S.Vetter@ru.ac.za

Administrator:
Freyndu Toit
admin@gssa.co.za

Printed by CPW
49 Langalibalele St
Pietermaritzburg
cpwart@telkomsa.net

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