To change from a dark background to a light background or vice versa, click on “Toggle theme” (above).

Our next SABG meeting is on Sunday!
See below.
(If you wonder why the symbol on the left, well, bulbs are what we do!)

Autumn 2026 meeting

M3 CLOSURE

The M3 will be completely closed all day between junctions 8 and 9. Avoid this area completely if you are driving up from the South-west – perhaps use the A303 instead, either to join the M3 briefly at Basingstoke, or (as suggested by my satnav) from the Andover by-pass take the B3400 to Whitchurch then the B3051.

Clocks go back one hour to GMT (winter time) the night before the meeting. Make sure you have an extra hour in bed instead of arriving one hour early.

The Autumn 2026 meeting will be on Sunday 25th October 2026 at Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road, Baughurst (near Tadley, between Basingstoke and Reading) RG26 5LU
https://www.heathendvillagehall.co.uk/

In the morning, **Jonny Hartnell** will talk on “**An overview of the *Nerine* genus including cultivation and propagation**”.

Jonny has always had a real passion for plants and this really took off following retirement from a fascinating career in the nuclear industry. A relocation back to Somerset (close to where he originally grew up) has given him the space and time to really expand his horticultural interests. He grows a huge range of plants in various greenhouses, polytunnels, indoors and in the garden. The range includes South African bulbs (he has previously been chairman of the Nerine and Amaryllid Society and continues to be heavily involved as treasurer and organising the bi-annual bulb and seed exchange), orchids (including both hardy and tropical, showing at Devon Orchid Society shows), woodland plants including snowdrops, tree ferns, as well as trying to be self sufficient in fruit and vegetables. He gives a range of talks to garden clubs on his interests including his travels to various parts of the world visiting botanic gardens and nature reserves.

In the afternoon, in addition to any other short talks which are offered or discussions which happen, our new Treasurer **Mark Wessels** will give a talk on “**The life and plants of the Hutton’s – 19th century Cape Colony plant collectors**”.

Mark’s interest in South African plants was initiated following a holiday to the Western Cape a number of years ago. Since that time, he has taken a special interest in geophytes from the region and enjoys the challenges of growing *Gladiolus* and *Moraea* species, and has just started collecting *Nerine* species. Although most of the collection of bulbs are winter growing, he is interested in growing summer flowering species for garden planting. Mark also has a small collection of pelargoniums and ‘mesembs’. Having moved to North Yorkshire from Norfolk the change in weather/climate has meant new ideas and practices have had to be adopted to ensure success with the South African plants. He

has an interest in plant collectors and exploration along with botanical illustration although he is a ‘hopeless’ painter! [Mark’s words, not mine!]

→ Read more...

More details of our meetings, including directions for getting there, are given on the meetings page.

November Bulb & Seed Exchange

Jon Evans has announced the timetable for the November (“Ephemeral”) Bulb and Seed Exchange. *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.*

Here is the announcement of the timetable etc.. Please note that the deadline for promising contributions is **1st November** 2026, and Jon needs to receive them by **8th November**. .

Further details can be found in the announcement (link above) or in November Bulb and Seed Exchange 2026.

Auction of Audrey Cain's books

Many of you will remember the late Audrey Cain, who was a greatly valued member of the SABG Committee for many years. Earlier in the year, with the assistance of her sons, I collected a large number of plant books from her house in Southampton. These have recently been offered to SABG members for sale by auction. The proceeds will go to SABG funds and thus help us to pay for hall hire and speakers’ expenses and other activities to benefit members.

The deadline for bids is now passed. There is an opportunity for those members who can attend our meeting on 25th October to collect their books from there. Otherwise I will post the books out by Royal Mail or another courier as appropriate, which will add something to the cost.

More details and the lists of books are here: Audrey Cain book sale.

Other dates



Newsletters and Bulletins

- The latest newsletter is **number 55** (July 2026). You can read or download all the SABG newsletters from our list of Newsletters.
- The latest **Bulletin** is number **55/1** (10 August 2026).



Lachenalia aloides var. *aurea*

News

- New additions to our Digital library include: Pauline Perry (1990) **Bulbinella -- a neglected garden plant?**, *Veld and Flora*, December 1990 *[7 November 2025]*
- Graham Duncan visited the UK again in October 2025, during which his main purpose was to photograph Nerines in cultivation. Thanks to an invitation by SABG member Peter Kohn, Graham gave a talk entitled "*Kirstenbosch, the most beautiful garden in Africa, and its collection of South African bulbs*", in the Dorothy Fox Education Centre in Sheffield Botanical Gardens on October 14th, attended by about 100 people. The meeting was hosted by the Friends of the Botanical Gardens, Sheffield, of which Peter is currently Acting Chair. *[15 October 2025]*
- **The SABG is 21 this year!** The original announcement about the formation of the Group appeared on 4th April 2004 in "The African Garden" web site run by David Fenwick. Unfortunately the original site may no longer exist, but thanks to the excellent work by the people at the Internet Archive (archive.org) a preserved copy of the web site can be seen at The African Garden. *[20 August 2025]*
- The **list of bulbs and seeds** in the 2025 Bulb & Seed Exchange is available: requests from SABG members to reach Jon Evans by 30th August. *[16 August 2025]*
- A video of Graham Duncan's talk **"*Agapanthus*, *Lachenalia* and a lifetime spent at Kirstenbosch Botanical Garden: 1979 – 2024"** is available to SABG and NAAS members for viewing after the meeting. SABG members can email Richard for the link. *[27 March 2025]*
- The new *Haemanthus* book from Dee Snijman is available online at https://www.sanbi.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2025_Strelitzia48.pdf *[Jon Evans, 13 March 2025]*
- **Older news items**

- **Recently changed web pages and documents**

Recent emails

The following emails were sent recently to all SABG members whose email addresses we have. (The dates are when the emails were sent, not the dates of any meetings or deadlines to which they might refer.) If you are a member and didn't receive any of them, please email Richard White (see "Contacts" on this page). (If you're not a member and are interested in what we do, see our pages About the SABG and How to join the SABG.)

Date	Subject
21 September 2026	November Bulb and Seed Exchange 2026, from Jon Evans
5 September 2026	Alpine plant magazines and books available from Colin Sykes
15 August 2026	Summer Bulb & Seed Exchange list from Jon Evans
10 August 2026	Bulletin 55/1
10 July 2026	Newsletter 55
23 May 2026	Bulletin 54/1
5 November 2025	Newsletter 54

Remember that reasons for not receiving our emails include the following:

- You haven't notified us of a change of email address (tell me now!)
- Your inbox is full or your total email quota has been exceeded (download and delete old emails!)

- Your email provider classifies some of our emails as “spam” (look in your “Spam” or “Junk” folder and mark our emails as “not spam”!)
- Our software encountered an error when sending
- We made a mistake (these things happen!)

Please let me know (with a copy of the email) if anything from the SABG (with the SABG’s *Lachenalia* logo, rather than from an individual member) ends up in your Spam or Junk email folder. Thank you.

Other meetings

- Saturday 17th October 2026: *Nerine* Day organised by the Nerine and Amaryllid Society at the Five Arrows Gallery, Exbury Gardens, Exbury, Southampton SO45 1AX, by kind invitation of Nicholas de Rothschild and Theo Herselman. These events are for NAAS members, but SABG members are also invited; see the NAAS events page, and please inform the NAAS Secretary Rosemary Walsh rosemary.walsh1@btinternet.com if you wish to attend so that numbers can be estimated.
- Saturday 7th November 2026: NAAS AGM, Holton Village Hall, near Oxford

Further information

- Help on cultivation, using the web site, etc.
- More information about our meetings, the location and directions are shown on our About our meetings.
- More information about the Group
- How to join the SABG
- We have a Google Calendar, so you can add our events to your phone or other device.
- A list of our Past, present and future meetings
- Links to other web sites including suppliers of bulbs and seeds
- We have started a Digital library
- We will soon start an online forum.

Photo gallery

I plan to include a photo gallery here. Until it is ready, why not visit Audrey Cain's BulbWeb? Her web-site, now hosted by the SABG, contains over 1,400 photographs of plants in 175 genera (not all of them are South African).

About the Group

The SABG is based in the UK and is for anyone interested in growing the beautiful and diverse bulbous plants of South Africa and neighbouring countries. You do not need to be an expert (I’m not!) or live in the UK, but our meetings have all been in England so far.

The objective of the Southern African Bulb Group is to further the understanding of the cultivation of

Southern African bulbs, where ‘bulbs’ is used in the broad sense to encompass bulb-, corm- and tuber- possessing Southern African plants, which are mostly ‘monocots’ (plants with strap-like leaves and flower parts in threes or sixes) but also including ‘dicots’ (with broad leaves and frequently five-petalled flowers) such as *Oxalis*.

Our activities include two meetings per year with talks and plant sales (recently these have been in Winchester in southern England), one or two Bulb & Seed Exchange per year, and three or four Newsletters per year.

Many of these plants come from the former Cape Province of South Africa, now the Northern, Western and Eastern Cape Provinces, and are easy to grow in a cool greenhouse or a sunny conservatory or window sill. They usually provide colourful flowers in autumn and winter and need a dry period in summer, because they are mostly winter growers from the winter rainfall areas of South Africa. Some are summer growers and a few of these will grow outside in southern or sheltered parts of the UK, such as *Agapanthus*, some Nerines and Tulbaghias, etc. Others, like *Lachenalia*, are real jewels to brighten up your conservatory when not much else is in flower.

- More about the SABG
- About the SABG web site

For help with finding your way around, click on Help (on the sidebar, which may appear on the left of the page on computers and at the top on small devices).

Contacts

- To join the group, or to enquire about joining, email Richard White richard@sabg.uk. See How to join the SABG.
- For enquiries about the Bulb & Seed Exchanges, email Jon Evans jon@sabg.uk. See Bulb & Seed Exchange.
- To enquire about the newsletter or web site, to send suggestions for additions and improvements, or to submit items for inclusion, email Richard White richard@sabg.uk.

Discussion

The following pages have discussion entries:

Bulb topics	11:23 14/04/2024	Richard White	0 Comments
Hardiness of South African bulbs	15:12 10/04/2023	Richard White	1 Comment

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From:
https://www.sabg.uk/ - **Southern African Bulb Group**

Permanent link:
https://www.sabg.uk/start

Last update: **12:24 24/10/2026**