

# NSCF NEWS

Communication from the Natural Science Collections Facility Hub Team

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## UKZN AND EZEMVELO KZN WILDLIFE COMBINE THEIR BOTANICAL RESOURCES

UKZN and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife have signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding on combining their botanical strengths and resources. Ezemvelo will integrate its 33,000-specimen herbarium into UKZN's Bews Herbarium, while UKZN will make all its digitised plant distribution data available for use by the provincial conservation agency.



The first specimen is being handed over by Dr. Clinton Carbutt, the current curator of the Killick Herbarium, to Dr. Benny Bytebier, the curator of the Bews Herbarium. From left to right: Mr. Sifiso Mnxati (Scientific Curation Technician), Dr. Clinton Carbutt (Ezemvelo botanist and curator of the Killick Herbarium), Dr. Boyd Escott (Ezemvelo Biodiversity Data Manager), Dr. Benny Bytebier (Curator of the Bews Herbarium), Ms Rose Hamilton (Ezemvelo Biodiversity Database Manager) and Dr. Christina Potgieter (Collections Manager, Bews Herbarium).

Ezemvelo currently holds the Killick Herbarium (CPF), which is housed at their Pietermaritzburg headquarters in Queen Elizabeth Park. Under a 99-year loan arrangement between the two partners, the Killick Herbarium will be relocated and integrated into the larger and better-equipped Bews Herbarium (NU) at the Life and Agricultural Sciences Campus of UKZN in Pietermaritzburg. All specimens will be barcoded, digitised and imaged before being integrated. This will extend the Bews Herbarium collection to over 180,000 plant specimens, a quarter of which have already been digitised.

The Bews Herbarium dates back to 1910. It is the fifth largest herbarium in the country and the largest in KZN. "This is a win-win situation whereby the Bews Herbarium extends its collection for botanical research and Ezemvelo gets access to a considerably larger plant dataset which will allow them to make more accurate conservation assessments" says Dr. Bytebier, the current Curator of the Bews Herbarium.

The integration of the Killick into the Bews Herbarium is financially facilitated by the Natural Science Collections Facility, which has contracted two curation technicians, Mr. Mnxati and Ms. Mathe, for a period of one year to help with the task.

## FORUM NEWS

Preparations for the 2019 Forum are well underway, with travel arrangements being finalised in the next week, so look out for your vouchers in your inbox.



Some exciting activities are being planned for this year's forum which we trust everyone will enjoy and participate in.

The **Gala Dinner** will take place on the evening of 28 May and we encourage you to wear your **traditional gear**, otherwise **smart-casual** will also do.

There will be a different spin on presentations this year with

### Open Air Marketplace Talks

taking place on the afternoon of 30 May. This involves marketing your talk in the Forum Marketplace, which gives participants a better choice on which talks they would like to attend. Talks will then be conducted outside in the open air without PowerPoint facilities. You are welcome to bring along any props or posters to display during your talk. If you have not chosen a topic from the ones offered in the draft programme you are welcome to talk on any subject related to the collections.

An exciting activity that is currently taking place around the forum is the **#CountDownToTheForum NSCF features** of research and collections staff on our social media pages. For those of you that are not on social media we've attached the past two weeks' features which you can read through and get to know your colleagues before the forum.

If you are interested in being featured please e-mail Audrey at [a.ndaba@sanbi.org.za](mailto:a.ndaba@sanbi.org.za)

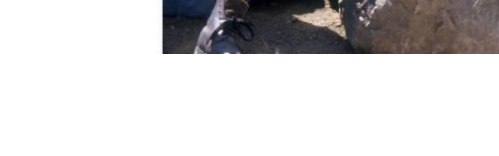
## SPECIMEN OF TAPINOCANINUS RETURNS HOME TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM AFTER 25 YEARS



Say my name ...John Nyaphuli, Fossil Hunter

In 1985 the legendary fossil collector and chief technician in palaeontology, John Nyaphuli, from the National Museum, discovered the skulls and skeletons of two dinocephalian therapsids, near Prince Albert in the Karoo. These three metre long animals were not only the earliest therapsids to have lived on land in Africa, but were also the largest land-living animals of the Middle Permian Period.

The discovery of a new primitive thera... [See More](#)



Unpacking a specimen of Tapinocaninus, the oldest most complete skeleton of a dinocephalian, an ancient ancestor of mammals. Back home from the University of the Witwatersrand to the National Museum after 25 years of preparation!



PSSA - Palaeontological Society of Southern Africa  
April 9 at 10:12 AM

Little press release for the return of Froda and Frod at the National Museum, Bloemfontein this morning. Great to hear about the discovery by John Nyaphuli and Prof Bruce Rubidge in 1985. 4 years of excavation and 20 years of preparation later, these dinocephalian Tapinocaninus parvulus specimens are finally home. Thank you to Museum Director Sharon Snell and Head of Karoo Palaeontology Management Dr. Jennifer Botha for hosting!

You can go follow this story on the National Museum's Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/National-Museum-Bloemfontein-548352835278566/>

## NSCF TRAVEL GRANTS: RESEARCH VISIT AT ALBANY MUSEUM



Cyrille Prestianni from the Royal Institute of Natural Sciences in Brussels, Belgium is currently in South Africa on a three and a half week travel grant from the South African Natural Science Collections Facility, working with Dr Rob Gess at the Albany Museum Earth Science Department's Devonian Palaeontology lab. Together they are describing exciting new types of Devonian (358 - 420 million year old) fossil plants. Some of these come from the famous 360 million year old Waterloo Farm fossil lagoon from just outside Makanda/Grahamstown. Others are older (watch this space!). Mr Chris Harris, who worked in the Devonian lab last year will be coming down from Wits, where he is currently doing his Masters degree to join them and discuss some of the plants he is studying from the Coombs Hill locality on Governors Kop, which is of a similar age to Waterloo Farm but has some different species of plant.



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