

NSCF NEWS

Communication from the Natural Science Collections Facility Hub Team

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New species: A new forest dwelling button spider from South Africa

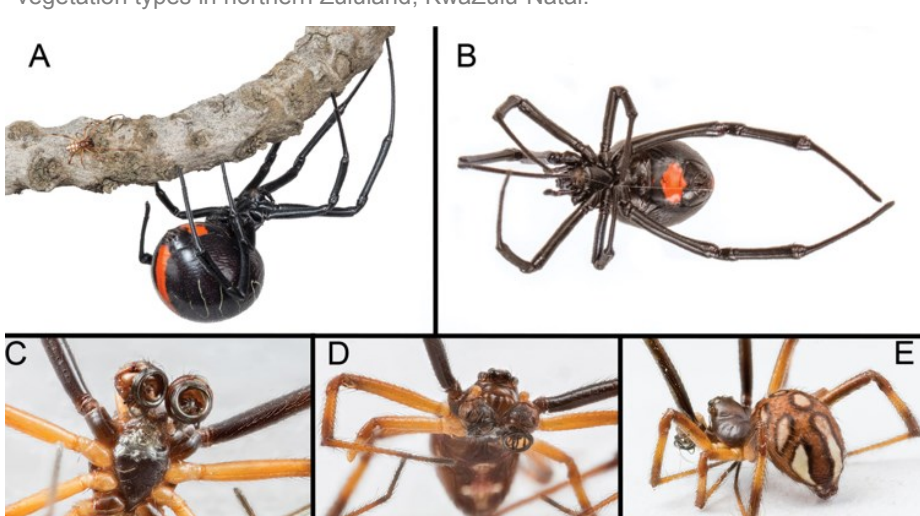
B.M.O.G. Wright, C. D. Wright, C.L. Sole, R. Lyle, R. Tippett, C. Sholto-Douglas, L. Verburgt & I. Engelbrecht

Our very own NSCF Data Coordinator, Dr Ian Engelbrecht, along with a team of researchers have described a new forest dwelling button spider species named *Latrodectus umbukwane* (*umbukwane* meaning *eye-catching* in IsiZulu), with common name Phinda Button Spider. According to Wikipedia, the common name was after the Phinda Private Game Reserve where research specimens were collected.

Latrodectus umbukwane is believed to be the largest of the *Latrodectus* genus and was described using morphology and the mitochondrial cytochrome oxidase I (COI) barcoding gene.

Females have red markings on both the ventral and posterior dorsal surfaces of the abdomen, parallel the reproductive tract and three loops of the copulatory ducts (reproductive organs). Males have an embolus with four loops and diagnostic white markings on the ventral surface of the abdomen that darken with age. Egg sacs are smooth, large, and bright purple when freshly laid, turning shiny grey with time.

Latrodectus umbukwane is known only from the critically endangered sand forest vegetation types in northern Zululand, KwaZulu-Natal.



Latrodectus umbukwane: A: male (left in image) dorsal view and female lateral view showing posterior dorsal and ventral red markings on abdomen; B: female, ventral view; C: male, ventral view showing pedipalps; D: male, anterior ventral view showing pedipalps and palid ventral marking on abdomen; E: posterior lateral view showing palid dorsal markings on abdomen.

See the full article attached.

Reporting on #IBSFSA2019

The Natural Science Collections Facility (NSCF) participated as exhibitors, for the very first time, at the Innovation Bridge/Science Forum South Africa 2019 event that took place on 4-6 December 2019 at the CSIR International Convention Centre Pretoria. The event was attended by over 3000 delegates from all spheres of science and innovation, including government, learners and students and academics.

The NSCF stand was branded with NSCF banners, a screen with slides of information and photos that represent what the NSCF is, brochures, paper pens, and most exciting, specimens. The specimens were mice, a mole rat, bats beetles, a snake, a lizard and a plant.

Manning the stand were: Fulufhelo Gelebe, Shanelle Ribeiro, Audrey Ndaba, Bronwynne Petersen, Fezile Mathenjwa, Ayanda Lawu, Emily Kudze, and Ketelo Dinala.

The NSCF stand attracted a good number and variety of visitors, approximately over 700 people over the three days. Many's attention was caught by the specimens, the snake especially, with some scared of it and wanting to know whether it was dead or alive, and some just fascinated by it.

One of the highlights has to be a group of sangomas that offered to buy the specimens to use in their work. They unwillingly and partly shared how they use the rat to cure a man-made/man-sent cancer, "tshipfula" in Tshivenda.

Another, major highlight was a tweet by Sarah Wild, a multi-award-winning science journalist, rating the NSCF stand at number one. The tweet caught many people's attention, getting 12 retweets and 20 likes.

Great thanks to Teresa Kearney and other colleagues at Ditsong Natural Science Museum Mothogoane and Mashiane and William Sepheka at the National Herbarium for loaning us your specimens. And, thanks to the team that manned the stand...you were great!

Good morning from @ScienceForumSA 2019. It is early, but I think I've already found the best stall at #IBSFSA. I am, however, prepared to be swayed by whoever offers the best coffee, sweets, or takeaway trinkets. #IBSFSA2019



Ubombo Mountain Reserve Bioblitz

News from KwaZulu-Natal Museum



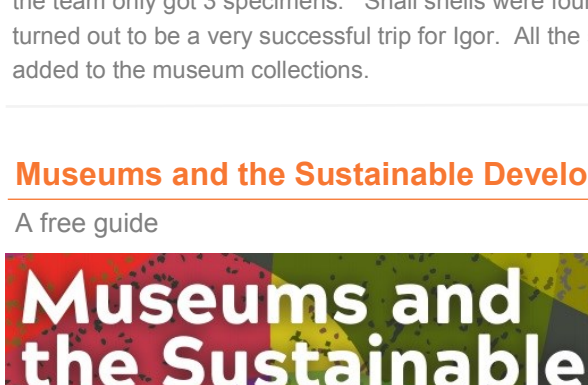
Staff from the Natural Science Department, KwaZulu-Natal Museum joined staff and students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and a bioblitz of the Ubombo Mountain Reserve from 9 – 12 October. The purpose of these bioblitz trips is to get a group of specialists together to do surveys of the fauna and flora of particular reserves to provide a species list for that reserve.

The information we provide will be fed into management plans for the reserves. The entomology department was represented by Kirstin Williams and Tricia Pillay who targeted flying insects. Thembeke Nxele and Matabaro Zinganira were looking for earthworms and Igor Muratov collected shells and snails.

It was very dry and dusty but despite this, the entomology team caught about 1000 specimens – mostly flies and wasps. The earthworms were few and far between and the team only got 3 specimens. Snail shells were found in huge numbers and it turned out to be a very successful trip for Igor. All the specimens we collected will be added to the museum collections.

Museums and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

A free guide



Henry McGhie, a consultant at Curating Tomorrow, a consultancy for museums and the heritage sector in the UK has written a how-to guide for museums, galleries, the cultural sector and their partners for supporting the SDGs.

According to Henry, the SDGs are the best blueprint across nations and sectors for achieving sustainability. Achieving the Goals would be a profoundly positive transformation for society and the environment. The more people, organisations and networks get on board with them, the more will be achieved.

In order to realise their potential, museums, museum networks and individual museum workers need to understand how they can contribute towards the SDGs. The SDGs are made up of 17 Goals and 169 targets. That is just too many to remember. Also, some Goals are more directly relevant to museums than others. For example, education and research are explicitly recognised in a number of the SDGs and museums have a direct role in addressing these, notably for people outside of formal educational programmes, or as an accompaniment to formal education. Protection of cultural and natural heritage is also explicitly recognised in the SDGs, as are participation in society and cultural life.

Read the full manual [here](#).

Join us on Social Media

Like/follow, share/retweet and comment



@NSCFSA

'Natural Science Collections Facility' Facebook group



@NSCF_SA

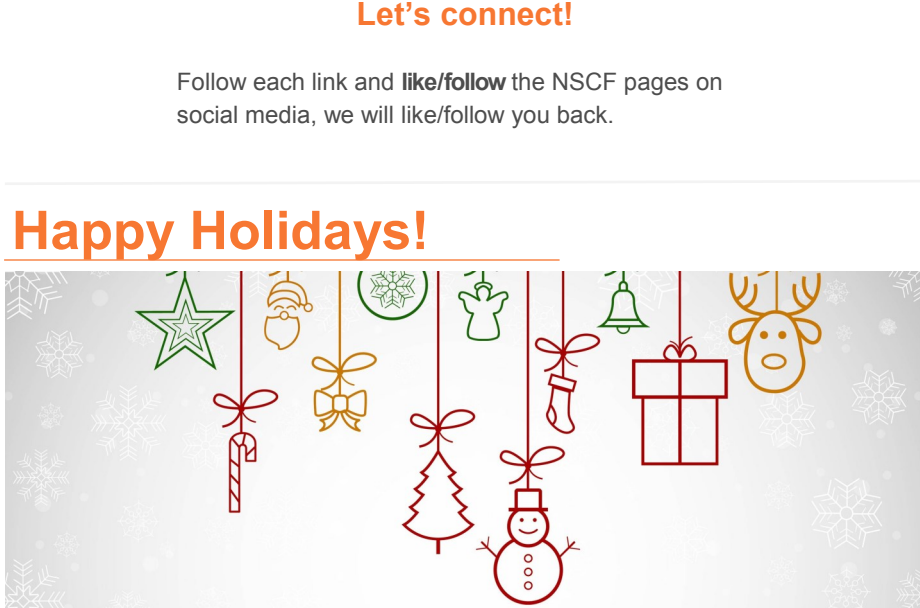


@nscf_sa

Let's connect!

Follow each link and **like/follow** the NSCF pages on social media, we will like/follow you back.

Happy Holidays!



Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!

The NSCF hub wishes the entire network well as you take the much needed rest to be with family and friends. We achieved a lot in a year as a network and look forward to doing more in the coming year. Thank you for your dedication throughout this past year. You are appreciated! See you in 2020!

The NSCF is a virtual Facility, comprised of a network of institutions that hold natural science collections that are accessible to external researchers. The NSCF was established as part of the Department of Science and Technology's Research Infrastructure Roadmap and co-ordinated by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI).

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