



# Newsletter February 2017

## Rooibos, Honeybush & Bush Tea

Rooibos and Honeybush certainly are the most renowned indigenous herbal teas of South Africa. However, *Athrixia phylicoides* – known as bush tea – has an equally impressive history of use by indigenous people. It is most often prepared as an herbal infusion by Zulu, Sotho, Venda and Xhosa communities, and is widely distributed in the eastern part of South Africa from the Soutpansberg to Queenstown, King William's Town and East London; throughout KwaZulu-Natal from the coast to the Drakensberg. This shrub is found in

grassland, forests, bushveld, rocky and sloping habitats. The medicinal uses of *A. phylicoides* include the treatment of a wide variety of ailments and conditions, such as sores, boils, acne, infected wounds, hypertension, heart problems, diabetes, diarrhoea, vomiting and some skin conditions. Its use as an anthelmintic, cough remedy and a purgative has also been documented. Recent field studies have further revealed that the plant is used to detoxify the body, to relieve headaches, stomach-ache and influenza. The most popular use

however, remains the use of twigs and leaves as a refreshing caffeine-free tea. However, the commercialization of bush tea is still in its infancy, as available scientific research is far from adequate.

### Who is SARC?

The South African Rooibos Council (SARC) is an independent organization, representing Rooibos processors, packers and branders. Its mission is to responsibly promote Rooibos and its attributes to the consumer, and protect the interests of the Rooibos consumer and SARC stakeholders. This mission is supported by effective research and communication.

SARC's vision is to:

1. Use available resources to effectively and efficiently promote, grow and protect the Rooibos industry of South Africa for its stakeholders, locally and internationally.
2. Support appropriate research and communication to promote the benefits of Rooibos.
3. Respond to threats and crises in the Rooibos industry on behalf of its stakeholders and to protect the interests of the consumers.
4. Disseminate relevant information to facilitate consistent product quality and adequate supply.



## High Tea with your pooch

Turns out, Rooibos tea is just as beneficial for dogs as it is for humans. It is used to treat allergies and most skin related problems such as 'hot spots' on dogs. It is also anti-inflammatory and promotes healthy circulation and good bone health in dogs. If your pooch suffers from an itch and has inflammation of the skin, Rooibos alleviates the discomfort and the inflammation.

Rooibos is finding its way into a growing number of health products for dogs, including treats, shampoos and anti-itch oils. DIY: Simply brew the tea, allow it to cool, store it in a

glass jar in your refrigerator, and add it to your dog's meals. The liquid tea can also be used topically in the form of a soothing rinse or soak to help ease skin discomfort like itching, scratching and hot spots, or as a soak for irritated paws. The tea leaves or powder can be combined with a little aloe vera juice to make a soothing compress.

For the minimum daily dosage based on dog's weight, visit: <http://ottawavalleydogwhisperer.blogspot.co.za/2012/06/health-benefits-of-red-rooibos-tea-for.html>

## Flower petal Rooibos iced tea

It is the month of love, so why not try out this romantic Rooibos iced tea.

### Ingredients:

- 2 litres boiling water
- 4 Rooibos tea bags
- 4 tbsp light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp of rose syrup
- 1 drop pink food colouring
- Fresh rose or edible flower petals
- Fresh strawberries

(Serves 8)

### Method:

1. Pour boiling water over the tea bags and leave to steep for 5 minutes. Remove tea bags and add the sugar and stir to dissolve.
2. Allow tea to cool and then add the rose syrup and the food colouring and stir.
3. To serve, add lots of ice and garnish with fresh strawberries and fresh rose or flower petals.



## Nagoya Protocol: Overview

The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS) to the Convention on Biological Diversity is a supplementary agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It aims to provide a transparent legal framework for the effective implementation of one of the three objectives of the CBD: the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. This framework aims to:

- Establishing more predictable conditions for access to genetic resources.
- Helping to ensure benefit-sharing when genetic resources leave the provider country.

## Rooibos protects against sun exposure



South Africa has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world with about 20 000 reported cases every year, which results in more than 700 deaths. Researchers have discovered that Rooibos can undo some of the damage caused by the sun's harmful rays. For the past 11 years, scientists from the SA Medical Research Council (MRC) and Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) have been involved in studying how Rooibos protects against inflammation in skin cells, since chronic inflammation is one of the

hallmarks of skin cancer development.

Prof Wentzel Gelderblom, based at CPUT's Institute of Biomedical and Microbial Biotechnology, says once the skin has been exposed to the sun's ultra-violet (UV) rays, Rooibos extracts can remove precancerous damaged cells and block the onset of inflammation. It does so by stopping the multiplication of cancerous cells and removing these cells through programmed cell death. The abundance of polyphenols (antioxidants) – natural compounds in Rooibos – gives it this restorative power. These compounds are linked with the prevention of various chronic disorders, including skin cancer.

Visit the SA Rooibos Council's website for more information: [www.sarooibos.co.za](http://www.sarooibos.co.za)