

IPPS Southern Africa - President's Report 2025

With a huge effort from the conference organisers the year started with an excellent conference held at the Cumberland Hotel in Worcester from the 25th-27th March. A wide range of nurseries, growing facilities and industry were visited, both in the Grabouw and Breede River districts, by over 47 attendees. Mentionable highlights included the Geotex yarn and shade net factory, Haygrove test and trial site, Oak Valley Flowers and Sheilam Cactus succulent nursery and garden.

Two young horticulturists were elected by the membership to travel on the student exchange program in 2025. Franzél Gruber joined IPPS Australia on their tour and at conference in May, and Wenzile Ngubeni attended a symposium in New Zealand, followed by tour of North and South Island in October. Miranda Deutschländer represented IPPS Southern Africa as the International Director at the IPPS NZ Conference. Jason Myburgh attended the symposium in October since, for technical reasons, he could not represent in 2024.

The heart of the society is the ability to meet and share regularly with like-minded people from the industry. On a very wet day in May, Frontier Lab hosted a visit, centered around pest and disease management. 30 people attended including 20 horticultural students. Miranda Deutschländer organised a meet at The Aloe Farm in Hartbeespoort in July, which was attended by 10 people. Andy de Wet was the host and the Aloes did not disappoint. In early August, Arboreta Nurseries very graciously hosted a morning workshop followed by a nursery visit. This was well attended by over 45 people, including 18 students.

2025 sees the beginning of the New Zealand- Southern Africa exchange program, initiated by IPPS New Zealand. Jake Linklater, the New Zealand exchange student flew into OR Tambo in early October and was hosted by Miranda (Gauteng-Hartbeespoort and surrounds) and Franzél (Nelspruit-Lowveld, Sabie and Greater Kruger). Shortly after arriving in Gauteng, Jake gave an online talk about his horticultural work and experience in New Zealand. After being extremely well treated in 'the north', Jake then flew to Cape Town where he was hosted Andy Hackland (Frontier Lab and surrounds), Richard Faber (Nonke Plants & Stellenbosch University Botanical Gardens), Mpendulo Gabayi (Sanbi - Kirstenbosch) and Jenny Liedtke (Shadowlands and Cape Town surrounds).

A year-end gathering was held at the Stellenbosch University Botanical Gardens organised by Richard Faber on the 26th November. This was hosted by the Razelle Galant and guided by Wanga Ncise. A very interesting morning was spent primarily looking at the role the SUBG plays in the conservation of threatened plants species.

In conclusion, it is increasingly evident that general society membership is down globally, and IPPS has not been immune to this decline especially since COVID19. Our regions current membership stands at 66 members. Thank you for your support! It is only with the generosity of members' time that all these programs can exist and my hope is that more of the membership involves themselves in some way to continue this very important role the IPPS plays in the industry.

As our lives become busier and dominated by social media, it is evident that meeting face to face is so important as this underpins the essence of our being.

Greetings
Andy Hackland
26th February 2026

