

## Uncrowned Monarch of the Namib Kronenlose Herrscherin der Namib



*Welwitschia mirabilis*  
Ernst van Jaarsveld & Uschi Pond

### The book

This book is an illustrated guide and aims to provide background knowledge of the plant to the professional and amateur botanist alike. Topics include:

- botanical background
- ecology
- habitat
- history
- evolutionary history
- conservation
- cultivation
- where to find it
- art & *Welwitschia*
- over 400 photographs

The format is 32 x 25 cm; it has 290 pages; threadsewn in sections; a hard cover with jacket. Our book is published bilingually, in German and English.

### The Authors

Ernst van Jaarsveld is a well known, highly accomplished horticulturist of international standing. He has published widely and is a renowned specialist on succulents.

Uschi Pond is known for her detailed approach to natural science and design, vividly expressed in this biography of a botanical 'Monarch'.

### The Photographers & Artists

The passion for the natural environment of the photographers Ernst, Uschi and Jürgen Obstfelder is exemplified in this publication, recording *Welwitschia* in all its splendour.

Thirty-two Artists from South Africa, Namibia, Germany and England have paid tribute to *Welwitschia*, presenting an eclectic mix of works: botanical drawings, paintings, abstracts, copper etchings and a metal sculpture.

We are pleased to announce the publication of  
'Uncrowned Monarch of the Namib  
*Welwitschia mirabilis*'

A monograph on a unique African plant with a wonderful array of photographic illustrations, paintings and scientific information for the book connoisseur and collector, the traveller, botanist, gardener or student alike!

The launch in 2013 coincided with the centenary celebrations of the Kirstenbosch Gardens and its founder Henry Pearson who came to Africa to find *Welwitschia*.

### *Welwitschia* - an extraordinary plant

With the family, genus and species all rolled into one, *Welwitschia mirabilis* is truly one of a kind. A rarity among rarities, it is found only in the Namib Desert extending from Namibia to Angola. Throughout the biological world and since the discovery of this bizarre Namib endemic in 1859, no other single plant has aroused the curiosity and attention of so many scientists.

*Welwitschia* is the national plant of Namibia, and in Angola the coastal town of Tumboa bears the local name for *Welwitschia*. *Welwitschia* is a true flagship species of the Namib Desert and although not the prettiest, it is the most peculiar and advanced due to its amazing botanically engineered life form with an incredible capacity to survive the Namib desert environment. It is no small wonder that *Welwitschia* is one of the most researched desert plants in the world. This book explains not only where *Welwitschia* fits into the biotic world, but also its adaptations to a dry desert environment and its place in the Plant Kingdom.

What makes this plant so unique, apart from being highly adapted to the Namib climate, is that it is a remnant of the past, representing a group of plants which flourished on earth some 125 million years ago. *Welwitschia* is thus a true living fossil! *Welwitschia* is estimated to grow to about 500 -1500 years old. It is striking in its morphology and physiology, placing it in a family of its own, the Welwitschiaceae.

*Welwitschia* attracts botanists and naturalists from all over the world who come to observe it in its native habitat. *Welwitschia* is a protected plant. It grows in a rugged, harsh and starkly beautiful environment that leaves man spellbound!

## *Welwitschia mirabilis*

- The first edition is limited to 1000 copies

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