



GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

GRASSROOTS NEWSLETTER

Overview and Guidelines to Authors

Mission

To keep Grassland Society of Southern Africa members and other interested parties informed of news, events, publications, reports and opportunities in their field of interest, and to provide a forum for debate and exchange of ideas in rangeland ecology and pasture management

The Mission will be achieved by:

- Summarising interesting and important scientific publications and reports from natural, social and economic science disciplines, particularly those with policy implications, into short and easily understood articles
- Providing a credible platform for publishing short research notes and observations that are important and of interest to a broad cross-section of readers but which may not be suitable for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. However, *Grassroots* is not a repository for substandard science.
- Providing industry with the opportunity to market their services and products that contribute to the vitality and development of the science and practice of this discipline
- Advertising relevant forthcoming conferences, symposia and workshops of interest
- Alerting readers to post-graduate research opportunities
- Alerting readers to opportunities for input into draft legislation and policies, unpacking new legislation and policy documents, and providing a forum for debate on these matters
- Providing an opportunity for members to make suggestions for improving management of the Society
- Introducing the President and Council members to the Society

Editorial Committee (2012/2013)

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Deadlines for 2013

Issue One: 18 January 2013

Issue Two: 23 March 2013

Issue Three: 20 June 2013

Issue Four: 21 September 2013

Submission of Material

Material for consideration can be submitted electronically, preferably in Microsoft Word document format, to the Publications Editor or any member of the Editorial Committee.

Nature of Submissions

The type of submissions that will be considered for submission should be relevant to the interests of the members of the GSSA. Articles on agricultural or environmental issues will be most common, particularly where these relate to rangeland ecology, rangeland management and animal production from veld and planted pastures.

The articles may range from a short scientific paper, reporting on the results of research conducted on a specific topic; discussion or opinion articles; announcements of relevant events such as congresses or farmer's days; reports of those events; news of interest to the GSSA (e.g. policy changes in agriculture or the environment).

Style

The *Grassroots* is published in English (South African English should be used throughout). The style of a piece will depend on the nature of the article, but should be easily readable by people on their tea break. In other words, a chatty and informal style (without degenerating into slang or street English) would be appropriate for many types of articles.

Reports of events should, however, be informative and attempt to summarise some of the key findings or points that were discussed. Reports on scientific research should be written in a similar style to a short communication to the *African Journal of Range and Forage Science (AJRFS)*, although *Grassroots* allows for a more informal approach than the journal, and a lively and engaging style (with information supported by data) is preferable to a dry discussion of the facts. Use of highly specialised terminology should be avoided, and articles should be easily understood and enjoyed by a wider audience.

Length

There are no fixed rules governing the length of any submission, although submissions should be as brief as possible. The editor may shorten lengthy submissions with the consent of the author. As a general rule, submissions should be limited to 3000.

Species names

All species must be named by their taxonomic (Latin) name, at least at first mention. The format should be: name which will be used throughout the article, followed by the alternative name in parentheses. For example: *Themeda triandra* (rooigras or redgrass) if *Themeda* will be used throughout the article, or cowpeas (*Vigna unguiculata*) if cowpeas will be referred to throughout the article.

Units

SI units must be used throughout, using the *AJRFS* conventions, with one modification: the slash (/) or the word per will be used to denote "per", rather than a negative superscript (i.e. 24kg/ha, rather than 24kg.ha⁻¹) or simply 24 kg per hectare.

References

References will follow the *AJRFS* format:

Goqwana, WM 2004. The development of a method of assessing veld condition in the communal grazing areas of the north Eastern Cape province of South Africa. MSc Agric. Thesis, University Fort Hare, Alice.

Venter J, Liggitt B, Taunton NM & Clarke GPY 1989. The influence of different land-use practices on soil erosion, herbage production and on grass species richness and diversity. *Journal of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa* 6: 89-98.

Tables and Figures

Tables and figures should generally follow the layout and caption rules used in the *AJRFS*, particularly for more scientific articles. However, this is not a hard-and-fast rule. Graphs should be simple, in black and white and 2-D. Bars in bar-graphs may contain patterns (e.g. dots or lines) but not grey shades. Excel 3-D graphs are inappropriate and should not be used.

Authors should submit their figures and tables to the editor in their original Word, Excel or other format if possible, so that the Editor can modify their layout without having to ask the author to reformat the images. Tables and figures will appear either 5.5 or 12 cm wide in the publication.

Advertising Specifications

The *Grassroots* regularly carries both display and text advertisements for promotion of products, services or job opportunities. Display advertisements should range between a quarter, half, and full page, should appear throughout the issue in attractive enclosed boxes, and may include company crests, monograms, and other such symbols. Text advertisements appear in the Opportunities and Resource section of the *Grassroots* and are limited to brief descriptions. Descriptions may be divided into no more than three paragraphs. The company's name and the shortest possible form of the position, product, or service title will be highlighted. Please contact the Editorial Committee for advertising rates.

Updated February 2013