

# Social Impact Arts Prize '22

# DOREEN GOWANS NEEDLE GARDEN POLLINATOR PATHWAY

Pollinator Pathways draws attention to the precarious network that exists between pollinator species, indigenous plant-life and food security. Through the planting of a carefully curated living artwork on the grounds of the Rupert Museum, Doreen Gowans aims to stimulate a pre-existing biodiverse corridor for the safe passage of pollinators across the Cape region. Designed as a prototype, the planted garden cultivates knowledge and understanding, while also serving as a space for reflection and play. The garden adds a living connection to nature for the year-round workshops presented at the Rupert Museum's adjacent MakerStudio.

In her selection of plants and garden design, Gowans collaborated with Cherise Viljoen, a specialist in indigenous flora and botanical gardens, with a focus on sustainability and the environment. Pollinator Pathways finds a practical and research base in the Ingungcu Sunbird Restoration project, an organisation that is working towards establishing the 'Sunbird Stepping-stone Corridor', which extends from the Cape Flats, linking the Muizenberg Mountains to the Boland Mountains above Stellenbosch. Bordering on the Eerste River, the Rupert Museum is ideally positioned to contribute to this pathway. In conceptualising her project, Gowans has also drawn inspiration from the artist Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg. Ginsberg has developed an online tool to enable anyone to design a garden that prioritises pollinators over the needs or aesthetic concerns of humans. Though Ginsberg's algorithm is based on the requirements of pollinators endemic to the UK, it presents an engaging channel through which to rethink our position as part of a complex and interconnected ecosystem. Gowans' team has developed a digital tool for prospective pollinator gardeners to plan their own gardens in the Western Cape.

Birds, bees, moths, butterflies and other pollinators continue to be threatened by urbanisation, pesticides, invasive species and environmental change. The breakdown of the symbiotic relationship between pollinators and indigenous flowering plant-life effects the reproduction of plants, which has devastating implications for our own food supply as humans. Pollinator Pathways seeks to address our disassociation from the creatures, organisms and plant-life whose survival is inextricably linked to our own.

In addition to human paths and a water feature, Gowans' landscaping incorporates a colour palette of flowering plants ideally suited to attracting pollinators, while remaining sensitive to the existing conditions at the site. By offering food, shelter and a resting place for pollinators on the Rupert Museum site, the project hopes to forge a closer connection between pollinators and visitors.

## POLLINATOR PATHWAY PLANTS Fynbos and Renosterveld

**Fynbos**  
Agathosma capensis  
Chasmanthe aethiopica  
Erica mammosa  
Felecia aethiopica  
Leonotis leonurus Orange  
Pelargonium cucullatum  
Polygala fruticosa  
Protea cynaroides  
Protea scolymocephala  
Scabiosa columbaria  
Watsonia borbonica

## Fynbos Wetland, Seep, Riverine

Aristea capitata  
Erica verticillata  
Kniphofia uvaria/ linearifolia  
Lobelia anceps  
Monopsis lutea  
Orphium frutescence  
Psoralea pinnata  
Struthiola dodecandra  
Wachendorfia thyrsiflora  
Zantedeschia aethiopica

## Renosterveld

Arctotis orange  
Chasmanthe aethiopica  
Euphorbia mauritanica  
Falkia repens  
Felecia filifolia  
Gazania krebsiana  
Helichrysum cymosum  
Hermannia flammea  
Melianthus major  
Ornithogalum thyrsoides  
Phylica ericoides

## Renosterveld Trad Use

Agathosma ciliaris  
Bulbine frutescens  
Carpobrotus edulis/ deliciosus  
Erioccephalus africanus  
Gomphocarpus physocarpus/ fruticosus  
Lessertia frutescens  
Oxalis pes-caprae  
Pelargonium capitatum  
Salvia chamelaeagnea  
Stachys aethiopica





