

CREW *Views*

Volume 7 • April 2011

CREW—National Overview



Piketberg

CREW visited Piketberg Mountain during 2008 and 2009 and their visits prompted a group of us to start looking at a number of endangered species we have in our immediate vicinity.

This started an interest in finding out more of the flora on our mountain. Our first outing was in February 2009 with four people. We now walk the second Saturday of every month and we sometimes number more than 20 with an average of about 12 regulars. Our outings, at this stage, are more of a 'nature ramble' as we lack members with a professional botanical background to help us identify and explain some of the things we see. When it comes to flowers, our limited diagnostic skills have sometimes convinced us that we have found lots of new species as we can't locate pictures of them in our books! We have a strong emphasis on the social aspect of the ramble and insist that we have a stop for snacks and a chat. We try and visit a different farm every month and we've been amazed at the different microclimates within such a small area. This year outings have included visits



Figure 1.—The magnificent flowers of *Gladiolus insolens*.

to a yellowwood forest and rock paintings. One of our biggest questions this year was why *Erica piketbergensis* flowers in June and October. We now suspect these might be two different *Erica* species that are very similar and grow in the same areas.

Exciting finds which we have had diagnosed with the help of outsiders are *Gladiolus insolens* and *Pelargonium longicaule* var. *angustipetalum* which, apparently, has the largest flower in the Geraniaceae. Our other flower photographs will have to be identified when Ismail and Vathiswa come and visit with their superb diagnostic skills.

Angela Langton



Figure 2.—Large flowering *Pelargonium longicaule* var. *angustipetalum*.