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FIELD GUIDE TO FYNBOS BY JOHN MANNING

For every lover of fynbos, this book is a must have. The book features a wide cross-section of the plants that characterize fynbos plant communities of the southwestern Cape. For the first time non-botanists have a chance of identifying a significant proportion of the bewildering diversity of fynbos species from the region. Over 1 150 species of wild flower are illustrated and described, with distribution maps, comparisons with similar species where applicable, and notes on traditional uses. A simple to use system, developed especially for this book, aids identification at all levels. The book contains an easy to use section on how to find the right group to which the plant belongs to, as well as clear descriptions of the different fynbos families, and easy to use photo's to aid the identification. The book also contains an index to both scientific and common names. From amongst the estimated 7 000 species of true Cape fynbos, the most common and conspicuous have been selected to showcase its diversity and flowers. A few representatives of the Cape reeds (restios) are also included. Two-thirds of the fynbos plants are found nowhere else of earth and the Cape floristic region has been identified as one of the approximate 30 critical biological hotspots on earth. Cape fynbos plant communities cover over 41 000km², or a little under half of the total area of the Cape floristic region, but are estimated to contribute 70-80 percent of the region's flora, making fynbos easily the most diverse vegetation type in this part of the world. The greatest threat to the plants of the southwestern Cape is the transformation of habitat for urban development and agriculture. The responsibility for conservation rests with the individual and everyone can make a difference. With so many species surviving precariously on tiny fragments, fynbos needs all the help it can get to survive.

Source: Field guide to Fynbos by John Manning, Random House Struik (R280,00)

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<http://www.gansbaai.com/pearly-beach-conservancy/en/home/>

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