

2. The Award Committee will comprise the following:

- The chair of the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust
 - A trustee of the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust, elected by the trustees
 - The chair of the Friends of the Durban Botanic Gardens
 - The Director (or nominee) of the eThekweni Parks Department
 - The curator of the Durban Botanic Gardens
 - A KwaZulu-Natal representative of the Botanical Society of Southern Africa.
3. Only one medal will be awarded annually.
 4. The Award Committee has the right to decide not to award the medal in a particular year.
 5. Nominations for the award must be made in writing to the curator of the Durban Botanic Gardens. A call for nominations will be made annually at regional and national level. International nominations are also acceptable.
 6. The medal may not be awarded posthumously, nor may it be awarded twice to the same individual.
 7. The medal bears the profile of John Medley Wood. The name of the winner will be engraved on the medal.
 8. A board listing the winners and the year of the award shall be displayed in the Visitors' Centre of the Durban Botanic Gardens.
 9. No financial payment shall accompany the medal, but an appropriate function will be held by the Trust at which the medal will be awarded. The winner shall become a life member of the Friends of the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust.

A nomination form is available from the Acting Curator, Durban Botanic Gardens, St Thomas's Road, Durban, 4001

(e-mail: clementm@durban.gov.za / Telephone 031-322 4014).

Nominations must be received by 15 November 2010.



The John Medley Wood Medal



The John Medley Wood Medal

The **Durban Botanic Gardens** were founded in 1849. As such they are the city's oldest public institution, even older than the municipality itself.

Originally located on the south bank of the Umgeni River, the present site was occupied by the gardens when Mark McKen was curator in 1851. Though a 'classic' botanic gardens, the Durban Botanic Gardens has over the decades given outstanding service to Durban and the province. At one time it served as the agricultural research station for the region. It was also the hub of scientific botanical research into the indigenous flora of south-east Africa. And last, but not least, the gardens offers all the people of Durban an attractive



Cotyledon woodii

place to walk and picnic, which delights the eye and the aesthetic senses, satisfies idle curiosity and excites wonderment, but which also serves the educational purpose of illustrating rare plants, many of them indigenous to the region.



In its pioneering period the most outstanding person associated with the Durban Botanic Gardens was **Dr John Medley Wood** (1827-1915), curator and director from 1882 to 1913.

Medley Wood not only transformed the land into a show piece botanic gardens, complete with palm avenue, conservatory and aquatic plant pond, but also built up an herbarium of some 46 000 specimens. His most remarkable achievement was in collecting an enormous number of indigenous plants which were new to science. Most of these were scientifically described at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in England, but Medley Wood himself described many plants for scientific journals. It is little wonder that a genus of *Asclepiadaceae* (now *Apocynaceae*) and 60 species from 35 families are named in Medley Wood's honour. His most famous discovery was a unique cycad from Ongoya forest in Zululand, which was named *Encephalartos woodii*. His most famous publication was the six-volume **Natal Plants** (1899-1912) which was the first published flora of the region.

In recognition of the memory of John Medley Wood and to honour those who have contributed to the Durban Botanic Gardens and/or the advancement of horticulture, botany and/or flora in KZN, the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust is to award annually a special medal.



Details of this award are as follows:

1. The John Medley Wood Medal will be awarded by the Durban Botanic Gardens Trust on an annual basis to someone who has made an exceptional contribution to one of the following:
 - **The Durban Botanic Gardens**
 - **Horticulture in the eThekweni Municipality**
 - **The Botany and/or Flora of KwaZulu-Natal**