



# Annual Report for 2023

## Activities, accomplishments, and reflections

### Summary

Early in 2023, SBF provided the University of Hargeisa with work benches for a teaching laboratory. Later in the year, it purchased thanks to a generous donation from Christiana Tegbe of 54Thrones, chairs for the room, but their arrival has been delayed by fighting in the Red Sea. In June, Barkworth took several duplicate specimens from the Biodiversity Museum for study at Utah State University. In December, Faisal Jama Gelle attended a workshop on recording oral histories as part of a research project on climate change in the Horn of Africa. Another major event was the signing of an agreement with the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) for publication of a second edition of Introduction to the *Plants of Central Somaliland*. BRIT is a well-known publisher of high quality botanical books. It will make the books available via its own website and Amazon.

### Highlights

#### Education

Introductory teaching laboratory

The Foundation contracted with City Furniture, a Hargeisa-based company, to build 14 2-person lab benches for use in the introductory teaching laboratory. They were delivered in time for them to be used in 2023 plant taxonomy class. Although simple, and currently lacking electrical outlets, they make it easier for students to examine plant material carefully. In August, thanks to a generous donation from Christiana Tegbe of 54Thrones, we ordered chairs for the room, but their arrival has been delayed by fighting in the Red Sea. The room is also used for teaching other subjects, but the only resources added to it are the benches provided by SBF.

#### Plant taxonomy

Faisal Jame Gelle taught the course on plant taxonomy for the College of Agriculture at the University of Hargeisa to 30 students. The lab tables made it easier for students to study living material collected by Faisal. Unfortunately, unforeseen scheduling problems prevented the inclusion of a field trip.

#### Workshops

No workshops were held in 2023.

## Museum development

### Herbarium

The herbarium now houses 807 specimens, of which 563 have been identified to species. This is an increase of 72 specimens over the previous year. Most were collected by Faisal Jama Gelle in collaboration with other collectors, notable Peter Bruyns.

During Barkworth's visit to Somaliland in June, Faisal and she sorted through the many duplicate specimens housed in the herbarium so she could return with one set to Utah State Herbarium for study there.

Because Barkworth's visit coincided with several official holidays, there was not enough time to work out the steps involved in image processing, nor was there time to visit any other institutions to try and involve them in helping document the Somaliland's biodiversity. Both are on the "to do list" for 2024.

### Research

Ahmed led an investigation of a "different" *Aloe* that had been drawn to his attention by one of his friends, Kayse Ali. After initial field study, Ahmed concluded it represented an undescribed species, so he and Faisal made detailed observations on some plants Ahmed had grown from seed in Hargeysa and prepared a manuscript for publication.

### Personnel development

Helen Pickering arranged for Faisal to participate in a week-long workshop on recording oral histories offered by Dr. Lee Cassanelli of the University of Pennsylvania at the Red Sea Cultural Centre as part of his project on using oral histories to learn about climate change in the Horn of Africa. Because of the interest expressed by both Faisal and Dr. Cassanelli, Helen has provided funding for Faisal to purchase a recorder and to visit a "history tree" they had been shown on a previous field trip and for investigating tree with similar value across the border in Ethiopia.

### Security

Once again, the plants growing outside the museum were vandalized prior to or during graduation. To increase their security, a camera connected to the university's security office was installed outside the museum. Installing a wall around the garden would make it too shady for growing the species located there as well as being ugly.

## Outreach

### Introduction to the Plants of Central Somaliland

Early in 2023, Barkworth signed an agreement with Dr. Barney Lipscomb, Director of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) for publication of a second edition of *Introduction to the Plants of Central Somaliland*. We had hoped to have it published in 2023, but several problems prevented that, primarily the need to revise some of the text. It will be published in 2024.

### LanderProsopis

Mary explored potential collaboration between SBF and Reseed, which is an educational outreach project of LanderProsopis. This led to consideration of a potential funding opportunity, but there was insufficient time to put together a competitive proposal. It may not be feasible, because of differences in the priorities of the two entities.



## Fundraising

Still no activity.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Barkworth, Secretary  
Somaliland Biodiversity Foundation

14 April 2023