

# All that glitters is fynbos



**THE APPRENTICES** Zimasa Gobingca and Ziyanda Metsho (below) attend weekly practical skill workshops in Hermanus in close consultation with Heidi and Ralph Walton.



**CAST IN SILVER** The project is still in its infancy, but aspirations are that the fynbos jewellery will resonate with the many nature-lovers of the Overberg, thus giving the ladies a sustainable income.



**TOOLS OF THE TRADE** The fynbos jewellery project is intended to provide skills for women to better navigate life and business.

Ideas spring eternal at The Grootbos Foundation. The latest innovation is a range of fynbos-inspired jewellery made from pods and seeds cast in sterling silver, only available at the Grootbos Lodge gift shop and Ralph Walton Jewellers. The pods include buchu, vygies, babartia and sedges.

Under the Siyakhula enterprise of The Grootbos Foundation, Zimasa Gobingca and Ziyanda Metsho are training in jewellery design under the guidance of Ralph Walton Jewellers, gaining invaluable experience in the art, utilising Grootbos's horticulture course as a foundation.

Zimasa started as a student at the Green Futures indigenous horticulture course in 2011. Growing up in the Eastern Cape, she was very aware of the plants around her and enjoyed learning more about them.

Ziyanda trained with Growing the Future in 2011, and returned to the foundation in 2014 to learn the jewellery technique. Her aim is to own her own business, something she once thought impossible.

As Ralph and Heidi of Ralph Walton Jewellers enthuse, the fynbos range has presented exciting challenges, not just to Zimasa and Ziyanda, but also to them. "The complexity of the pieces, the details of fynbos, means new techniques - a learning curve for us all."

This endeavour amalgamates skills development and the love of fynbos, with that added income-generating potential so desperately needed by the foundation - and the aspirant jewellers. Ten percent of any sales go directly to Zimasa and Ziyanda, providing them with a small but potentially lucrative kick-back from their labour.

- Aly Verbaar