



GONDWANALAND

The east wing of the Curvilinear range is planted with collections from southern hemisphere, arid-zone vegetation types. These are sometimes referred to as ‘Mediterranean’ vegetation.

The southern hemisphere continents of South America, South Africa and Australia support a unique vegetation adapted to low rainfall and poor soils. Leaves are often thick, and filled with volatile oils (you will notice the strong mix of smells in the house) both of which deter insect predation. As well as evolving in parallel, there are some striking links between these now well separated continents, notably in the plant families Proteaceae and Restionaceae. These links reflect a period of history 100 million years ago, when the continents were linked into a super-continent - Gondwanaland.

PROTEACEAE

The family Proteaceae are confined to the southern continents, and 19th century botanists were adamant that land-bridges must once have existed, linking the floras of these land masses. In the 1950s the discovery of continental drift indicated that these continents had indeed once been directly linked, making up the super-continent **Gondwanaland**. At the red circle on the map above, can be seen the following members of the Proteaceae:



Protea cynaroides
SOUTH AFRICA



Banksia serrata
AUSTRALIA



Lomatia ferruginea
SOUTH AMERICA