

YOUNG SCIENCE

Communicators Competition

VIDEO CATEGORY

WINNER

IMAGINE SOUTH AFRICA WITHOUT TREES

Darryl Herron

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Darryl's key message in his video is awareness that plants get sick and they do die. South Africa is surrounded by various pests that threaten the trees we build industries on, such as agriculture, forestry, tourism, etc. South Africans need to know that without well funded science, we could end up with a South Africa without trees.

About Darryl



Darryl is a tree doctor. He is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Pretoria where he also manages the Plant Diagnostic Clinic of the Tree Protection Cooperative Programme/Centre of Excellence in Tree Health Biotechnology. His research is conducted at the Forestry and Agricultural Biotechnology Institute (FABI), where he focuses on a group of important plant disease causing fungi, Fusarium, and the diseases they cause in commercial forestry. Throughout his career, Darryl has used his love of storytelling, comics and blogs to share some of his work with a broader audience.

Trees and plants aren't going to be here forever, not unless we do something to protect them. Many people who don't work with plants everyday are unaware of the threats that face our plant-based industries: forestry, agriculture, tourism, etc. The arrival of two devastating pests in South Africa, namely the fall army worm and the polyphagous shot hole borer, has highlighted South Africa's inability to effectively predict, limit and deal with accidental introductions of these pests.

"The government and the people of South Africa need to work together so that we don't wake up to a South Africa without any trees. We need to know that all of our livelihoods depend on keeping our plants healthy and, right now, we are battling to do that."



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