

## VISIT OF A FRENCH EXCHANGE STUDENT TO FABI

Prepared by Stephanie Debout with additions by Natalie van Zuydam



Stephanie Debout is an exchange student from the Engineering School of Microbiology and Food Safety at the University of Western Brittany (UBC) in Brest, France. She has completed a three-month internship at FABI from June to the end of August 2008.

To quote Stephanie, “I chose South Africa because it is the rainbow country. During my internship here, I learnt a lot of things for my studies but also for the life. In the lab, I work on PCR, DNA extraction, DNA precipitation, cleaning PCR products and I helped the culture collection and the plant room, transfer culture, search fusarium in seeds.”

“I went on a field trip with Izette, Matsepo and Natalie to Kwabonambi, Kwa Zulu-Natal. We were looking for some leaves and ill pines.”

Natalie added her comments: “We looked for *Kirramyces*, a pathogen to Eucalyptus trees. We also collected many insects including *Gonipterus* and *Thaumastocoris*. We visited various sites including the nurseries and met many members of the staff on the Kwabonambi estate. We visited a plantation of 50 year old eucalyptus trees that were magnificent. We were lucky to visit an indigenous forest where we were able to observe the local flora and fauna and we also visited the beach at Richard’s bay.”

Stephanie continued: “Every day, I learnt the different way of life. The golden word here is be careful so you are not really free, but it’s very beneficial. It opens your mind on the different ways of life, the difference between the cultures.”

“I was very lucky because I saw a lot of places. I went to the Pilansberg, Sun City, Soweto, the Blyde River Canyon, the Kruger National Park, Golden Gate, Lesotho and Cape Town. Every place is very beautiful and has something you have to see. People in South Africa are very kind to tourists and are ready each time to help you. In the villages, people are very poor but often also ready to help you.”

“I don’t regret having come here at all because for me it was my first travel and I really learnt a lot of things, and I would like to come here again soon !! “

