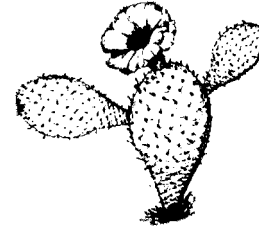


The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society  
% Stephen Cooley, editor  
thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com



*Echinocactus grusonii*  
at the Cal State Cactus Garden  
photo by Stephen Cooley

# The Cactus Patch



*Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei*

Volume 5    **July 2002**    Number 7

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

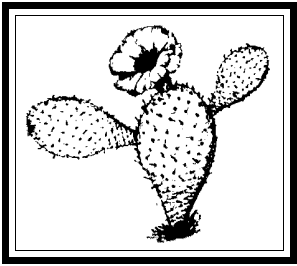
This Month's Program

## **Dinner Meeting At Cactus Valley**

### Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, July 9  
at  
Cactus Valley  
4215 Rosedale Hwy  
6:30 PM

**Time to Start  
Preparing  
for the  
Show & Sale**



# The Cactus Patch

Volume 5    Number 7  
July 2002

The Cactus Patch is the official publication of the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society (BCSS) of Bakersfield, California. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the times and places noted within.  
GUEST ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

## 2002 Officers

**President - Rob Skillin**  
**Vice-President - Lynn McDonald**  
**Treasurer - Maynard Moe**  
**Secretary - Bonnie East**  
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**Linda Cooley**

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**Past President - Bruce Hargreaves**

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**Refreshments - Bill McDonald**  
**Historian - Bobby Williams**  
**Librarian - Bobby Williams**  
**Field Trips - Dan French**

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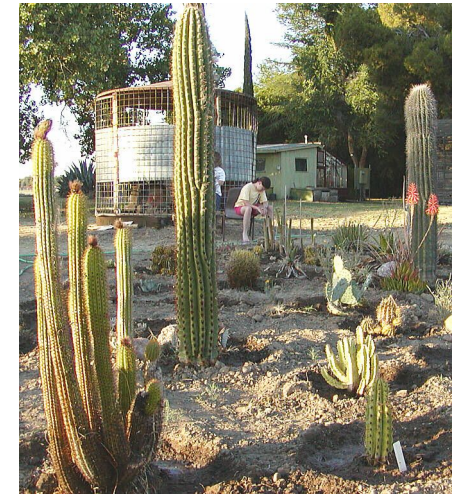
## **BCSS General Meeting: June 11, 2002**

The club met at "our" garden at CSUB in the Environmental Studies area. Lots of members showed up to picnic and tour the site. We had a short business meeting and a raffle. Some of the highlights of the meeting were: Paul Skillin was introduced as our Show and Sale chairperson. He got right to work, soliciting members for the committee. A meeting was arranged for the following Thursday. Members were reminded about the Pottery workshop to be held at BC on the weekend. The garden was discussed a little. The committee has not gotten together yet. Our next meeting will be held at the Cactus Valley Restaurant on Rosedale highway at 6:30.

## **BCSS Executive Board Meeting: June 18, 2002**

The executive meeting was held at Lynn and Bill's house one week early, due to travel plans by several members. Attending this meeting were: Rob, Lynn, Maynard, and Linda.

Lynn reported that the ceramics workshop was a fun activity and that many pots were created. There is leftover clay and we will be able to have another day of creative expression in the fall. Lynn also reported that she has engaged Kelly Griffin from the San Diego club to speak at our November meeting. She will attempt to have Inge Hoffmann speak in October, completing her program on Brazil. The Show and Sale committee met and has set up sub-committees. The S&S chairman was not available due Boy Scouts. The July meeting will be at Cactus Valley at 6:30. This will be a dinner meeting and there will be no program! The next executive meeting will be Aug. 1st (a Thursday) at Rob and Terry's home.



The Cal State Cactus Garden



Members enjoying a picnic at the Cal State Environmental Studies Area

## PROGRAM NOTES

# IMPORTANT!

**This month's meeting will  
be held at the  
Cactus Valley Restaurant  
4215 Rosedale Highway**

**Meeting Time: 6:30 pm**

## Forest or Jungle Cacti

by Deborah Wisniewska-Jones  
from The Cactus Factus - Toronto, November 1999

PART TWO  
(continued from last month)

### Care of Epiphyllums

SOIL: (From Rainbow Gardens)

A commercially packaged indoor plant mix, but it must be coarse and fast draining, this can be improved by adding some perlite, fine bark, pumice, or even small gravel. Avoid African Violet mix, as it has too much peat moss. For a home mix use: 1 part leaf mold, 1 part coarsely ground bark, 1 part 1/4"-1/2" redwood or fir bark, 1 part perlite (or horticultural pumice) you can also add 1/2 part horticultural charcoal. A commercially packaged camellia-azalea mix is a satisfactory substitute for leaf mold, as long as the mix is three parts organic matter and 1 part perlite or pumice. Rainbow Gardens does not use peat moss or vermiculite. For each cubic foot of mix add 1/2 cub bone meal.

[Added note: In the "Cactus and Succulent Society of America's" Cactus and Succulent Journal Vol. 70 No. 1 January-February, 1998 there is a very extensive list of "Soil mixes for Epiphytic Cacti" on page 12]

WATER: (From Rainbow Gardens)

Never let the mix of an established Epiphyllum dry out completely. Water thoroughly so that the water flows freely from the drain holes. Then allow the top 1/3 of the mix to dry before watering again. Clay pots dry out more quickly, plastic pots don't. Overwatering is more of a danger, so if you tend to overwater stick with a clay pot. Their natural growth cycle is in the spring and again in the fall and of course need more water at this time. Plants usually rest after flowering and again during the winter months. If the plant looks a little wilted from the stress of producing flowers do not increase the water. This is a natural phenomenon and the plants will usually recover their plump look by fall. In winter give just enough water to keep moist.

LIGHT: (Rainbow Gardens)

Filtered sunlight or a few hours of morning or afternoon sun, but never direct noonday sun. They may be grown under a lath, a fully leafed tree, or near a window where they will get morning or afternoon sun. Plants can be put outdoors until the cold weather arrives, when they are brought back into the house put in an evenly cool, but not freezing room

where lights are not turned on after sundown. They can be grown under fluorescent grow-lights. The distance from plant to light should be at least 10 inches. The amount of light should be 500 to 1000 foot candles. The length of time to which the plants are exposed to artificial light should correspond with the actual hours of daylight during each season of the year. This is essential for bud development. Yellowish or sunburned growth indicates the light is too strong. Weak spindly growth with no evidence of a strong mid-rib indicates the plants are not getting enough light.

#### TEMPERATURE AND HUMIDITY (Rainbow Gardens)

They are very adaptable plants, but prefer temperatures between 45-70 degrees Fahrenheit. They will tolerate extreme heat if they are well shaded and the humidity is kept up. They will tolerate temps. less than 32 degrees Fahrenheit for a few hours, but will freeze if exposed to freezing temps. for any length of time. They are susceptible to cold damage when the temps. drop below 40 degrees F. In the house they like an evenly cool location 45-50 degrees F. with no artificial light after sundown. Cool temp. and long nights are essential for bud formation.

They like 50% humidity, but will tolerate less, a gentle misting is beneficial during the dry summer months to keep the humidity up. They like free air movement, but not gusting hot or cold winds.

#### FERTILIZING: (Rainbow Gardens)

They need a balanced fertilizer such as 6-6-6 or 8-8-8 or 10-10-10 at least once a month starting in spring and ending in fall. Do not use a fertilizer too high in nitrogen (over 10%).

In order to promote blooms and harden off tender young growth for winter, fertilizer with a low nitrogen or no nitrogen, such as 0-10-10 or 2-10-10. This is used once at the end of February and again in early November. Plants receive no fertilizer in Dec. and Jan.

#### PESTS: (Rainbow Gardens)

Scale and mealybug, control with insecticide soap or spray them with 1/2 rubbing alcohol and 1/2 water. Snails and slugs love epiphyllums and can do a lot of damage, snail bait should be put out on a regular basis.

#### BLOOMS: (Rainbow Gardens)

Takes 2-3 years to raise a blooming size plant from a rooted cutting. Day bloomers start blooming in late April, peaks in May and ends in June. Night bloomers are in late summer and early fall.

#### REPOTTING: (Rainbow Gardens)

Wait until about a month after blooming season to repot the plant, unless there is suspect rot or root pests. Loosen the root ball slightly and shake off some of the old mix, repot using fresh mix, don't water for one week after repotting, water lightly for a month or so then put the plant back on a regular schedule.

#### PROPAGATION: (South Bay Epiphyllum Society)

Dip cutting in a rooting compound, let the cutting set in a cool shaded place for a week or more so the cut end will callus. Plant the cutting an inch or more into the potting mix so that an areole on each side is below the soil line. It is from these areoles that new growth will start. The potting mix should be loose with enough coarse material to keep it from compacting and provide good drainage. After the cutting is potted up, do not water, until roots have formed, it cannot take up water without roots and it will rot. Withhold water for a week or two then mist or sprinkle lightly. Begin to water gradually when you are sure that roots have formed, do not let it dry out completely. If the cutting starts to rot, cut off the rotted area and start over again.

#### Care of other Epiphytic Cacti: (Rainbow Gardens)

Culture, mix and blooming period of the "less spiny" epiphytic cacti, *Rhipsalis* ( blooms on 1-2 year old plants), *Chiapora*, *Cryptocereus*, *Disocactus*. *Nopalxochia* is the same as for epiphyllums. The "spinier" epiphytic cacti *Heliocereus*, *Hylocereus*, *Selenicereus* bloom during the spring and on up into early summer on 2-3 year old plants. They prefer a well drained soil and a little stronger light than epiphyllums.

*Aporocactus* - Their care is generally the same as epiphyllums, but the soil needs to be more porous. It can tolerate strong sunlight. It blooms in the spring, on 1-2 year old plants, or the same as epiphyllums.

Thanksgiving (by U.S. date) and Christmas cacti and Easter cacti - these thrive on a temp. of 50-70 degrees F. strong but indirect sunlight. They will do well outside in the summer hung in a tree but must be brought in before the temp. starts to drop in the fall. They will freeze if temps. drop below 32 degrees F. Thanksgiving and Christmas cacti bloom between these holidays and the Easter cacti blooms around Easter.

LIGHT: In habitat they grow at an altitude between 3000 and 5000 ft. they root in plant debris among the branches on decaying humus or on the ground in stony, shady places. They need bright but filtered light. If grown in the house keep away from a blast of a forced air furnace and

away from the fireplace and cold drafts.

SOIL: A mix of 40% perlite and 50% peat moss (PH 5.0 to 6.0) is best.

WATER: In habitat, rainfall varies from 17 inches per month from Dec. to March, to 3 inches a month in the dry season. They require moisture at all times. Let them dry out slightly between watering, but never let them go completely dry.

FERTILIZER: Once a month with 10-10-5. Christmas or Thanksgiving stop fertilizing (September) 1-2 months before the short day period (or light span less than 12 hours). Start again after blooming is over. Easter cacti feed all year long except during blooming period.

INDUCING BLOOMS: For Christmas or Thanksgiving cacti only, Easter cacti do not require this kind of treatment. Temp. method: Keep nighttime temps. around 55-60 degrees F. Anything above or below will result in only growth. Photoperiod method: Short night period (less than 12 hours) at temp. above 60 degrees F. will initiate flower buds. This should take 3-4 weeks. Using either method, once flower buds appear, resume normal growing habits. Cooler or higher temp. during any stage of bud formation will delay flowering an additional two to four weeks.

[Additional note from cacti\_etc.: When new flower buds start to form, don't move the plant until the buds are near opening. If you move it when the buds are too small, they are likely to fall off]

Additional Info. Flowers that are white, yellow and pink will show color variations in their blooms if temp. drop below 50 degrees F. during any stage of the bud formation. Does not apply to Easter cacti.

Pests: Effected by snails or caterpillars. Do not use Diazinon, will cause stunting and distortion. For fungus rot use a good fungicide. Root mealy bug, submerge plant in Malathion until no more air bubbles are seen. Spotted branches or holes in branches is not uncommon, it is caused by uneven temps. Can only be prevented by growing in a perfectly controlled environment. It does not effect blooms.

Propagation: From stem cuttings may be done at anytime, but if done in winter it may require bottom heat 70 degrees F. Fert. after rooting has started 2-3 wks later. Pinch back in May or June to increase branching.

## WHAT'S NEW @ NATURAL HISTORY A Letter From Bruce



On 25<sup>th</sup> May we opened the Natural History exhibit on "What's New". Among the exhibits are: the mouse which comes from deep in Gcwihaba Cave, new pathways and a bridge across our Okavango section, three potentially new species of spurge, plants being eradicated as foreign invaders, seven elephant jaws, potentially endangered species, and plants listed for Botswana but not known to us. This latter category includes *Pachypodium lealii* of Namibia which I have from Patterson's succulent nursery. Unfortunately it bloomed the week after the opening. The *Moringa ovalifolia* of Namibia which is in the garden came into bloom before the opening. (It is in the same category.) That same morning we had two school groups working in the garden. One worked on paths and the other planted trees. Afterward they watched an animal video.

This is winter, but the garden has been filmed twice. First by Botswana TV on 4<sup>th</sup> June and then by BBC on 14<sup>th</sup> June. Fortunately most of the aloes and some of the spurges are winter blooming, so there was something to see. Due to cold weather, we are not doing too much field work, though I did check on the aloes at Molepolole (60 km W of Gaborone) when Polly had to go out there to deliver quilts from her quilting club to AIDS orphans.

The Voice, a new newspaper here came out with the headline "Killer Plant" on 31<sup>st</sup> May and had a picture of a spotted aloe. A "botanist" at Blooms (a plant nursery) identified the plant as *Aloe davyana* (which is more correctly *Aloe greatheadii* subsp. *davyana*) but it is probably *A. zebrina* since the incident was near Francistown. To make matters worse, though, the plant shown to me by forensics was spotless! (probably the Zimbabwe



species *A. cameronii*). Also, the aloe was administered as part of a mixture and was probably not the cause of death. Fortunately, the paper did not quote me.

On 15<sup>th</sup> June we celebrated our 38<sup>th</sup> Wedding anniversary (actually on the 19<sup>th</sup>) by dinner and a show at Capitol Players called "In the Mood". This might put some blood into a moribund outfit - the singers were professionals and the show was expensive (tho we didn't pay). One of the singers (Kay Wier) sang in productions with us before she went professional. We even had a bottle of champagne for our table to celebrate with.

An interesting book showed up at the Lion's Club

used book table on the central mall. It is "Jewels of the Plains" by Claude A. Barr (1983, Univ Minn. Press, Minneapolis) which describes the wild flowers of the Great Plains of the U.S. I had seen it years ago at the Botswana Book Centre and wondered who would buy it here in Botswana. Obviously whoever did decided not to keep it so I got it cheap. It was well worth the price. It has a section on cacti which includes two of the unwanted invaders we have in the garden here: the imbricate cactus (*Opuntia imbricata*) and the common prickly pear (*Opuntia humifusa*). It also includes succulents such as *Talinum* (which has relatives here) and the bitter-root, *Lewisia* (which does not). It is more of a gardening book than a scientific flora (for that I have "Spring Wildflowers of Missouri" which my late father-in-law H.T. Hale helped illustrate.) The colour pictures are mostly small, but it is still a worthwhile book.

Next: a musical and a plant use forum.

*Bruce J. Hargreaves*

## ***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

### **ROSTER CORRECTION!**

Rosaling Mills

***BE SURE TO VISIT US AT***

**[www.BakersfieldCactus.org](http://www.BakersfieldCactus.org)**

**To have your article printed in  
The Cactus Patch get in touch with:**

Stephen Cooley, editor  
**[thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com](mailto:thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com)**

Linda Cooley, editor

# CALENDAR

July 6-7 CSSA Show & Sale, Huntington Botanical Gardens

**July 9 BCSS meeting: Dinner meeting**

**Cactus Valley restaurant 6:30 pm.**

**Aug 1 BCSS Executive meeting; at Rob & Terry's**

**Aug 13 BCSS meeting; 7:00 pm Olive Drive Church**

Aug 24-25 17th Annual Intercity Cactus and Succulent Show & Sale.

Los Angeles County Arboretum 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia.

Info:

[www.lacss.com/2002/](http://www.lacss.com/2002/) or Tom Glavich or Gene Oster

**Sep 10 BCSS meeting; 7:00 pm Olive Drive Church**

**Oct 5-6 3rd Annual BCSS Show & Sale at the East Hills Mall**

**Oct 8 BCSS meeting; 7:00 pm Olive Drive Church**

**Nov 12 BCSS meeting; 7:00 pm Olive Drive Church**

**speaker: Kelly Griffin from the San Diego club**

For more information concerning calendar events, contact the editor

Membership in the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society cost \$10 per year for an individual and only \$15 a year for a family. This extraordinarily reasonable price not only includes twelve issues of The Cactus Patch but entitles you to participate in club field trips to far-off (out-of-town) and exotic places (more exotic than Bakersfield). You will also receive a nifty name tag that will be your ticket to the members only plant raffle held every meeting featuring the best plant from the raffle table! All this is in addition to the wonderful programs and people at the meetings. To become a member contact:

Maynard Moe, treasurer

**[Lithops44@bak.rr.com](mailto:Lithops44@bak.rr.com)**