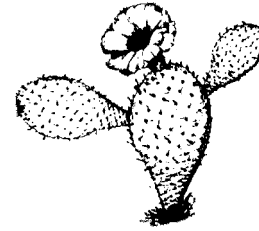




Astrophytum hybrid
photo by Stephen Cooley

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 5 **September 2002** Number 9

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

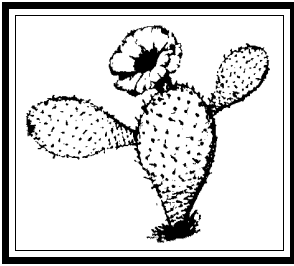
Potting Workshop

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, Sept. 10
Olive Drive Church
5500 Olive drive at 7 PM

(West of 99 freeway on corner
of Olive drive & Victor street)

Get Ready For The Fair!



The Cactus Patch

Volume 5 Number 9
September 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
Editors - Stephen Cooley
Linda Cooley

2002 Directors

CSSA Representative - Bobby Williams
Past President - Bruce Hargreaves

2002 Chairpersons

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

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BCSS General Meeting: August 13, 2002

Our meeting started off with a little confusion! When we arrived at our meeting place, the electricity was off! We had almost decided to adjourn to Cactus Valley to meet, when the lights (and the AC) came on. The meeting began with our guest speaker, Larry Grammar. Larry spoke to us about staging plants. He brought many wonderful plants that he had already staged and two plants which he staged while we watched. He pointed out some strategies for successful staging as he worked. For instance, the color of the plant and the pot can be matched, or the textures of plant and pot can match. He also advocated the use of interesting rocks as part of the staging. Of course, it helps to have good lighting, and there was momentary confusion as the lights went out once again. Luckily, it was a very short outage. As usual, we all enjoyed his presentation very much and all of us learned a lot from his expertise.

We then moved to the Business meeting. Bonnie will be leading the Fair committee this year. Interested members will be meeting on Sept. 5 at 6:30; the location will be announced later. The theme is "It's all about you in 2002". children are encouraged to help out. We welcomed 3 new members! Mary, John and Queta. We heard the sad news that Marilyn Cowie has had another stroke and also that Leslie Moe was just that day involved in an accident with her horse and was at the emergency room being attended to. We hope that everyone recovers and resumes good health.

Paul spoke about the Show and Sale: subcommittees have been formed and the next meeting will be August 15 at Barnes and Noble at 7:00 pm.

Our September meeting will be a workshop. Everyone is encouraged to bring plants that need to be repotted or staged. Potting soil and top dressing, as well as plastic pots will be provided. The Plant of the Month is Show-ready Plants. The Cal State cactus garden has been doing well, even flowering in the heat! Rob and Maynard have been watering it this summer. Rob reminded us that CALM has some plants we need to help identify. Maynard let us know that the club has \$1300-ish in the

bank. Bobbie reported that we now have "Dumpling and His Wife" in our library. The next executive meeting will be Wed. the 28th instead of the 27th.

After the business meeting we took a look at the Aloes that had been brought in and had the raffle.

BCSS SHOW & SALE COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

During our last Show and Sale committee meeting, we saw that everything was going to come together, talked about various problems, and on when the Club members would need to sign up for Show and Sale (which will be the next meeting). **Be ready for October 5th-6th!** Be ready to donate/sell plants at the Show, if you are going to! Our next committee meeting will be decided at the next general BCSS meeting, if you have questions after this month's meeting. *Remember:* the S&S will be on the weekend of October 5th, and 6th. Be thinking about keeping those show days free, so you can help out.

Thank you,
Paul Skillin
Show & Sale chairperson

The Show and Sale committee has decided to make this year's Show a judged event. **DON'T PANIC!** It was discussed as to the variety of ways we can do this, to make the event fun for everyone. Rather than dividing into multiple categories it was decided that we would have three separate types of friendly competition.

The first competition would be the 'People's choice' awards. Linda has made a ballot that will be handed out to all visitors to our show (this includes members). The categories are pure fun, and everyone will get a laugh over the results! Ever see a 'masculine' cactus?!

Next would be member recognition awards. This event would give four chosen club members the opportunity to place ribbons onto 3 plants that they are truly attracted to, no rhyme or reason needed. Of course, they would not be able to select their own plant(s), and there would be only one ribbon awarded to any one plant.

The third event would be an informal, yet more traditional judging competition. Woody has very graciously accepted the offer to judge the plants in this more traditional 1st, 2nd and 3rd place

competition. He will, along with a club member, quickly size up the plants that are brought in, select some general categories and do an informal analysis as to the plants presentation, general health and quality of the specimen. Sound too tough? Well, there will be a 'novice' and 'advanced', meaning the grower has shown in three or more shows, and has brought home ribbons for their plants (Translation, you won't be competing against a certain professional competitor...if you were at all worried...).

Anyway, it's gonna be a great experience, fun and we'll all learn more about the plants we own. They do dress up nice, don't they?! Don't forget to be getting your collection together so we'll have lots of plant on display. As you know, the more plants, the more public interested is generated in our hobby. We're counting on you!

If you do have a problem getting your plants to the mall that Saturday morning, please call Paul or myself, or any other club member, so we can help you out.

See you at the next meeting...bring those plants to re-pot...

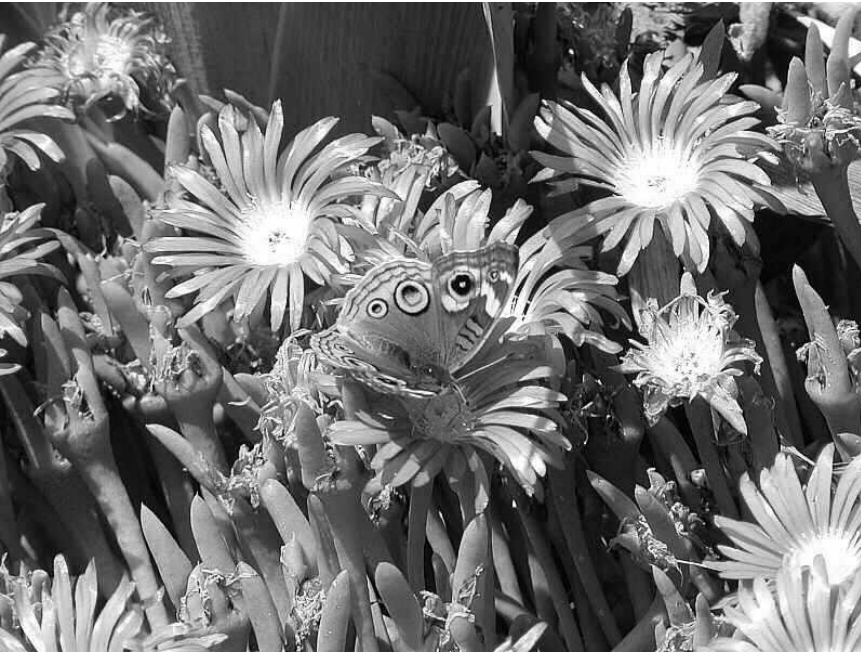
Terry Skillin
competition chairperson
BCSS, Show & Sale 2002

A Letter To The Editor

Dear editor: I really enjoyed our last meeting about plant staging. The presenter was amazing and the results striking. Now I am depressed and withdrawn, can barely get up enough energy to leave my house to water a pot. I look at my pathetic collection and feel hopeless. Maybe it's the air quality. Do you have any advice for me?

Signed, Down in Bakersfield

Dear down in Bakersfield: It IS the air quality -- your collection contains marvelous undiscovered gems that with the right amount of care and attention to detail will be the envy of everyone at the show. Bring in a few to the next meeting and we'll get them dressed up and ready to go!



A Buckeye on a *Disphyma australe*

ON STAGE and AFTER A Letter From Bruce



We finally produced our joint Capitol Players/Music Society production "That's Entertainment" on Thursday 25 July thru Saturday 27 July - only three weeks late! The first half was mostly South Pacific and I appeared in grass skirt and coconuts for "Honey Bun". The second half was mostly Les Miserables and Polly sang some most unlady-like lyrics in "Master of the House". She had her hair done up in extensions for the occasion. A lot of fun, but a lot of work. On Sunday the 4th August we went with the Bird Club to Otse to see the Vulture Colony. It was too early for aloes, etc. and the nestlings were not apparent, but afterward we had brunch at nearby Camphill, an institute for handicapped children (James helped out there as part of his school public service).

I'm glad to see the Fair is on again. I'll come and paint a background for the "mere" price of the airfare. Don't let Bonnie put in too many flamingos! (Even if they can be twisted into Us and 2s to fit the theme.) I enjoyed Linda's article on Wales and Cornwall. Some day we plan to get there - check out ancestors from Wales and stay with our former Malawi next-door neighbor in Cornwall. We never saw *Umbilicus rupestris*, but we found *Sedum album* on the castle ruins at Guildford while staying with the head of botany at the British Museum (Natural History) who lived at Burgess Hill (now home of the journal *Asklepios*). (Formerly our friend headed the Herbarium in Malawi.) We also had seen it earlier at Downham in the north of England growing on stonewalls and stone houses. We were there tracing the Hargreaves family which was involved in the nearby Pendle Hill witchcraft trials of the 1620s - on both sides. The sheriff and one of those arrested were Hargreaves. (The family crest is in Lancaster Castle in honor of John Hargreaves, a later sheriff. The woman arrested as a witch was never convicted as she died in prison.) We also saw the elusive Yellow Stonecrop at Downham. The herbarium in Botswana has obtained an interesting book: "Regions of Floristic Endemism in Southern Africa" by Abraham (Braam) van Wyk and Gideon Smith (2000, Umdaus Press, Hatfield, South Africa). The title sounds dull, but the subtitle is "A review with emphasis on succulents!" The first chapter has a lot of deadly dull definitions, but it gets better when it covers specific areas. Unfortunately, Botswana has no areas of endemism. The nearest is to the south in Griqualand West in South Africa. Interestingly two of the "near endemics" listed for there (*Euphorbia bergii* and *E. rectirama*) are found in Botswana. In the Drakensberg Alpine Centre of Endemism I find *Crassula goathambensis* (which I named) listed - but with the disturbing note that it is of uncertain taxonomic status! I wonder what that's all about.

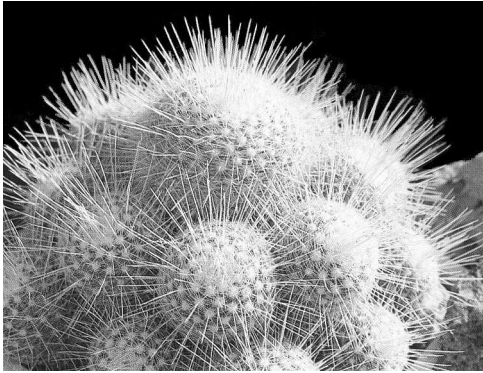
Bruce J. Hargreaves

Instructions for the Pot and Plant matcher:

1. Remove the pages with the pots and plants from the newsletter.
2. Before doing any cutting, you might want to glue the pot strips onto lightweight cardboard.
3. Cut out the strips of pots on the dotted lines. Do not cut out the plants unless you really want lots of little plants all over. They have been aligned so you can use the pot strips without having to cut out the plants.
4. Place the pot you like under the plant of your choice and see how it looks!
5. Pots and plants may be colored with colored pencils to make it even more realistic!
6. Have fun practicing matching plants and pots. Challenge your friends!

Mammillaria Gemnispina

by Mike Navolio
Houston Cactus & Succulent Society



Name: *Mammillaria gemnispina*
of the Mammillaria series
Leucocephalae

First described by Haworth in
1824 from some plants brought
from Mexico by a Mr. Bullock.

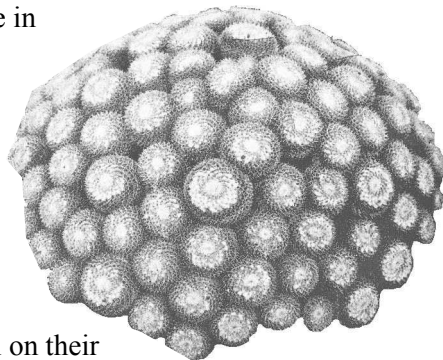
Plant Description: Body –
Clumping (up to 50 heads or
more) to form plants up to 24
inches across. Individual heads up

to 4 inches wide. The axils are white, woolly and bristly. The radial spines are 16 to 20 in number, relatively short (1/3 inches in length), white, bristle-like, and radiating. The central spines number from 2 to 4 and are more or less brown tipped, usually very short (1/4 inches), but up to 2-1/2 inches in length in some varieties (see Varieties and forms below). The tubercles are conical in shape and short (~1/3 inches). If damaged the plant gives forth a milky sap.

Flowers – Form in rings of 1/2 inch wide, funnel-form dark pink flowers in the spring. The filaments are white, anthers are yellow, and the style is white below, and red above.

Fruit – Fruits are globular to clavate in shape, carmine-red in color and approximately 4/10 inches in length. The enclosed seeds are brown in color.

Varieties and forms – The very popular, long spined form of *Mammillaria gemnispina* is variety *nobilis*. Beautiful cristate forms are available as grafted plants or grown on their own roots.



Cultivation: These plants prefer a permeable soil and a very bright sunny location. I leave mine outside all year round in a very sunny position on the pool deck. In addition to making nice pot specimens, they make good

landscape plants, when temperatures do not drop below 20 degrees (F) or stay below freezing for more than 24 hours. *Mammillaria gemnispina* is a very fine and hardy species, easily cultivated and grows quickly. Plants are easily propagated by seed or offsets.

Distribution: Hidalgo, San Luis Potasi & Veracruz areas of Central Mexico

Save a Stamp - Save an Eagle

A few months ago I mentioned a program to collect used postage stamps to contribute to a Bald Eagle program in California. My suggestion was met with the club members' usual skepticism and endless questioning. Of course, I had no ready comeback or answers. Whatever has happened to faith?

The following is an excerpt from the Christmas issue of the California Garden Clubs' newsletter, written by Helen Miller.

For several years, California Garden Clubs have saved canceled postage stamps to help preserve the threatened American Bald Eagle. To learn how the program worked, she contacted a district wildlife biologist from the San Bernardino National Forest, who oversees the program.

The funds have helped finance a biologist to:

- 1) identify banded eagles & learn more about their habits
- 2) observe eagles to identify important day use & night roost sites
- 3) work with the public in environmental ed. programs

Stamps are saved by garden clubs throughout the state They are then turned in to the state chairman of the program, who sells them to dealers to generate funds for the program.

Stamps with the highest retail value are the **large commemoratives & foreign stamps which can be worth as much as \$7/pound.**

FOR ANY STAMP TO HAVE VALUE IT MUST BE CUT PROPERLY -- WITH A 1/4" BORDER.

So, **NOW**, if anyone is even remotely interested in collecting or contributing some commemorative stamps (such as those Stephen attaches to our monthly Cactus Patch) please bring them to our meetings and I will give them to our local Green Thumb club.

Lynn

ANNOUNCEMENTS

My goodness, I had not heard from Inge Hoffman after two e-mails. So I just called her. What sad news. She has multiple myeloma & kidney failure. A long time friend from Canada is there with her, for much of the last 3 months. It was a good time to have called, as this nice woman must have needed a time to talk. She is still going to have another chemo, but it does not sound good at all. Lots of pain & nausea. I passed on our good thoughts & prayers for her.

Lynn

Welcome New Members!

Mary Carrisalez

John & Queta Blake

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

Stephen Cooley, editor

Linda Cooley, editor

thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com

BE SURE TO VISIT US AT

www.BakersfieldCactus.org

CALENDAR

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

program: Do-it-yourself potting workshop. The club (actually, Rob) will supply potting soil, plastic pots, and top dressing.

Plants of the month: Show-Ready plants

Sept. 22 Kern County Fair Display set-up

Sept. 25-Oct. 6 Kern County Fair

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

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

Oct 12-13 Orange County Show & Sale, Fullerton Arboretum

Oct 19-20 San Gabriel Valley Winter Show & Sale, LA County Arboretum

Oct 19-20 C&SS of California Show & Sale, Lakeside Garden Center, Lake Merritt, 666 Bellevue Ave, Oakland

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

speaker: Kelly Griffin from the San Diego club

Dec 10 BCSS meeting; 7:00 pm Olive Drive Church

June 14-19 CSSA 30th Biennial Convention, St. Louis

For more information concerning calendar events, contact the editors

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

