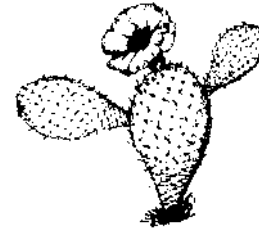




*Opuntia basilaris* blooming at CALM  
photo by Stephen Cooley

# The Cactus Patch



*Opuntia basilaris* var. *treleasei*

Volume 6    **May 2003**    Number 5

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

## Diversity and Density in the Northern Chihuahu Desert

Presented by Gary Duke

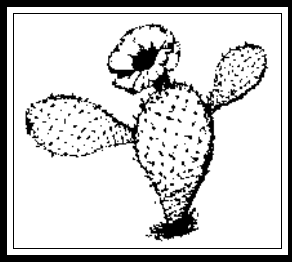
### Monthly Meeting

**Tuesday, May 13**  
Olive Drive Church  
5500 Olive dr. @ 6:30 PM

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

## **Come Early to Socialize!**

**Meeting to start  
promptly at 7**



# The Cactus Patch

Volume 6      Number 5  
May 2003

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

## 2003 Officers

**President - Bonnie East**  
**Vice-President - Terry Skillin**  
**Treasurer - Maynard Moe**  
**Secretary - Lynn McDonald**  
**Editors - Stephen Cooley**  
**Linda Cooley**

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**CSSA Representative - Bobby Williams**  
**Past President - Rob Skillin**

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**Hospitality - Bill McDonald**  
**Historian - Bobby Williams**  
**Librarian - Bobby Williams**

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## From The President...

Greetings. I have a lot to share with you this month. Let me start with my trip to Anza Borrego State Park during the first half of spring break. Botanically speaking it was magnificent and I'll get back to that a little later. One tends to forget how close to major metropolitan areas this desert is, but all in all my friend Julie Fudge and myself had a great adventure. We backpacked in four miles to

the entrance to Sheep Canyon (in northern Anza Borrego) and set up our base camp there. This was a primitive campground and at first Julie and I were a little concerned about the 20 plus boyscouts present making our first evening a little hellish. Were we ever wrong! The boyscouts were a great group of kids and the adults with them were nice too. One of the father's came over to help us set up our tent. We appreciated the total act of kindness.

There were other groups camped there also, folks who had made their way in, not by foot like the boys scouts and Julie and I, but by four-wheel drive vehicles. It isn't easy to access this area by automotive means so I guess some of these folks were the hardiest of the hardy. Seeing as how the moon was almost full, the desert night air was comfortable and one is out in the middle of no-where; hey, why not crank up the stereo two hours after everyone has fallen asleep. Let me just say that the younger gentlemen were a little taken aback that some middle aged woman could come out of a dead sleep and snap their heads off (with words) as quickly as I did. The music went off and they retired to their tents.



*Echinocereus engelmannii* (left) &  
*Ferocactus cylindraceus*

I'll end this part of the story by saying that the next morning, Julie said something about... thankful that our bodies would not be found somewhere in the desert. I said it was a gut reaction to being blasted awake to the sounds of modern reggae in the middle of the night.... Truly, with the exception of Julie's migraine headache the next day (I had to explore Sheep Canyon by myself), there were no other people problems for the rest of the trip. As a matter of fact, there were many groups of backpackers coming in to this area. I almost felt like I was on

The wildflowers this year in desert were great, magnificent, and stunning at times. I tend to love looking at and for plants in desert washes because that's where extra water is and more plants. However, these palm oasis canyons with native California fan palms, sycamore trees, many species of annual wildflowers, perennials, shrubs, and water, make you practically forget you are in a harsh desert environment.

At one point, I saw a tall shrub, in the mint family, in flower, and the words, *Hyptis emoryi* came to me. It is called desert lavender and it is the only species found in the U.S.. Related species of this mint are found in South America. A few other wonderful plants I happened upon were a salvia that looks like white sage (*Salvia apiana*) but is actually *Salvia vaseyi*, two species of *Dudleya* (about to bloom), and chollas, barrel cactus, and beavertail that were all in bloom. This is the first time I've seen all of these cacti in bloom at the same time like this before.



Dudleya

I relished seeing delphinium (larkspur) in bloom in a desert canyon, California poppies, various phacelia's, gilia's, composites (sunflower family), the list just goes on. If these plant names do not mean anything to you, I want to invite you to come along on some hikes to see the desert canyons or mountains in bloom. Kern County has plenty of its own great places to go see such beautiful things. Whenever I go to a place such as the Anza Borrego Desert I am awed by the beauty and design(?) that ultimately was not put there by human hands.

Be sure to check out the photo album I brought of my trip and sign up or inquire about future outings with BCSS. Let's get out there and enjoy our natural surroundings. Until we meet again.

*Bonnie*



We had another great turnout for our April meeting, including several visitors (many of which became members)!

President Bonnie started the meeting by having the new members and visitors introduce themselves. Also, we were all happy to see Dan French has made it back to one of our meetings after a long absence. She then brought up the proposal that **future meetings start at 6:30** so that we can get our socializing out of the way and have the meeting end a little earlier in the evening. This seemed to have general acceptance among the members, so come early! We were reminded that the Yard Sale will be coming up May 17-18.

The annual roster of member's names and contact information was put out for those present to pick-up. Maynard the treasurer reports that the club has about \$2,400. He also reminded us that the BCSS (Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society) is now a member of the BCSS (British Cactus & Succulent Society) and showed us the British C&SS Journal that we just received.

Lynn McDonald told us about the dedication of the garden at the continuation school in honor of Marilyn Cowie that will be held Friday. A bronze plaque has been purchased by the club to be placed in the garden. She went over the many field trips that have been planned for this year (see last month's Cactus Patch for a list) and corrected the date of the Morning Cloak Ranch trip to June 7th. She also said that we would need to let Morning Cloak know how many cars and people to expect -- so we need to be a little more organized with this than one of our usual outings. Come prepared to let Lynn know whether you will be going at the next meeting.

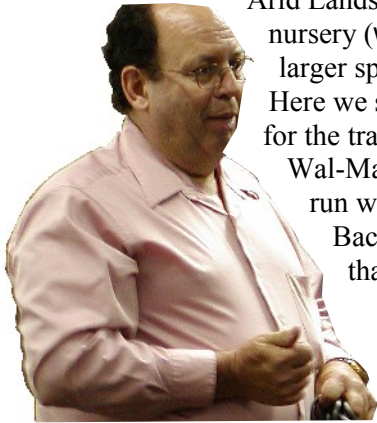
The presentation for the night "Organpipe Cactus National Monument and Tucson Nurseries" was brought to us by Jerry Krulik. Jerry showed us many wonderful photos of Organpipe -- which is located in the extreme southern part of Arizona. We were taken on a tour of Saguaro (*Carnegie gigantea*), Organpipe Cactus (*Stenocereus thurberi*), Senita (*Lophocereus schottii*), and Hedgehog Cactus



(*Echinocereus engelmannii*). We also saw a chain cholla (*Opuntia fulgida*) the size of a small tree as well as many great shots of the wonderful landscape. We were shown many Saguaro which had holes in them made by woodpeckers and later occupied by various other animals (apartment saguaros). Several crested saguaros were presented including the largest one in the world that was absolutely fabulous. Definitely a place to visit!

He then took us inside two Tucson nurseries: Arid Lands and Bach's.

Arid Lands is a well known and respected mail order nursery ([www.aridlands.com](http://www.aridlands.com)) and Bach's provides larger specimens mainly for landscaping and show. Here we saw vast quantities of succulents propagated for the trade -- and these were not your run of the mill Wal-Mart varieties. Arid Lands was seemingly over run with species that were rare or hard to find and Bach's had a "Show" greenhouse with specimens that made you drool. More places to visit!



## EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING NOTES

The Executive Board met at the Skillin residence Tuesday evening, April 29th. Bonnie & Terry provided delicious treats. And, fresh from a trip to Italy, Terry served Campari socials.

First on the agenda was the potential upcoming trip to Sand Ridge. Bonnie agreed to check to see if the cacti are blooming.

We also discussed the upcoming yard sale May 17 & 18. The need for a library book inventory & temporary librarian was mentioned. The possibility of reinstating the practice of book review, using a prepared form was also suggested.

A date for a trip to CALM for cactus identification was set. Also, there is a birthday celebration at CALM this weekend. I suggested the possible need for a phone tree, to reach those members who do not have e-mail addresses. No further action on our new T-shirts has been take.

We will plan a workday soon @ our CSUB/FACT garden. Rob is still trying to reach a person at the Huntington Museum gardens for our desired July field trip there. The next board meeting will be held at Bonnie East's home on May 27, 7 PM.

Lynn McDonald  
Secretary

## PROGRAM NOTES

### Diversity and Density in the Northern Chihauhau Desert

Presented by Gary Duke

Diversity and Density in the Northern Chihauhau Desert is an accumulation of slides from several trips to this amazing area. Most recently from about 2 weeks ago. The presentation includes slides of over 20 species of cactus and succulents at White Sands National Monument, Jarilla Mountains and Culp Canyon areas around Alamagordo, New Mexico. I will show closeups of plants, many in bloom, as well as area shots with density of species marked with flags (up to 20-22 plants within a 10" x 10' area). The Jarilla Mountains contain natural hybrids of several *Echinocereus* species that don't occur anywhere else in the world. A few wild flowers are also included.

Gary Duke

### Yard Sale Time!

The Bakersfield Cactus and Succulent Society's annual yard sale will be held Saturday and Sunday, May 17th and 18th. We will be pre-pricing items Friday the 16th, starting at 4:00p.m. at the Skillin house. (We'll order pizza for those helping, and I'll lock my dog in his kennel so he won't be wandering off this year!) Everyone is welcome to bring their yard sale treasures to the Skillin house at anytime between now and the sale. We already have a few good items stored in my garage. Remember, your junk may be someone else's treasure, so bring it ALL! If you have down-sized your plant collection, be sure to bring your cuttings and /or plants, too. We've had people interested in all types of plants, and in all conditions. Saturday we will start the yard sale at 7:00am. We will need volunteers to help cart tables and items out to the front of the house, to help with security, to help be cashier, and just to help answer questions. We are usually done for the day between noon and 1:00pm. and will need helpers to drag the tables back into the garage. Sunday will be the same routine. There will be a sign-up sheet for volunteer shifts at our next meeting. This is a real big fund raiser for our club, so be sure to help in as many ways as you can!

Terry

# Plant of the Month

## Notes on *Echinocereus*

By L. M. Moe

The plant of the month for May is *Echinocereus*, a large genus which contains some of the most popular smaller North American cacti. The first *Echinocereus* was described by George Engelmann in 1848. He derived the name from "echinos", Greek for hedgehog or sea urchin, and "cereus", Latin for candle. The Cactus Family (2001), by E. A. Anderson, lists about 60 species from the southern U.S. and Mexico. There are two species in the Mojave Desert of California - *E. engelmannii* (California Hedgehog Cactus) and *E. triglochidiatus* (Mojave Claret Cup Cactus).

These beautiful *Echinocereus* cacti come in a wide range of shapes and colors. Some species form round, spiny mounds (thus the common name "Hedgehog"), while others develop thin, rambling stems. The flower buds of these succulents form inside the stems, bursting out near the stem tips in late spring and early summer. The large flowers open completely in full sun and come in an array of colors such as yellow, orange, red, pink, purple and white.

These cacti are suitable for growing in containers in a greenhouse, on a patio or as landscape plants in regions where the minimum temperature does not fall much below freezing. Though they flower best if kept at a temperature of about 50° F in the winter, some species (e.g., *E. engelmannii*) can survive light frost.

A good website for more information and photographs is:

[www.desert-tropicals.com/Plants/Cactaceae/Echinocereus.html](http://www.desert-tropicals.com/Plants/Cactaceae/Echinocereus.html)



**Echinocereus engelmannii**

photo by Stephen Cooley

## THE FESTIVAL THAT ALMOST WASN'T A Letter From Bruce



In January we were told that the Maitisong Festival was probably not happening this year since the major backer had dropped out & no replacement found. This would have been a disaster as this would be the 17<sup>th</sup> year for it. At the last minute the Dept. of Culture stepped in and the Festival went on. It began on 4<sup>th</sup> April with Sibongile Khumalo, described as a South African "diva". We had heard her years ago at the Anglican Cathedral here. She can still belt out the songs!

On the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> our Gaborone Singers performed as part of the free outdoor shows (something we had never done before). Ironically, our "outdoor" performance was in Game City, Botswana's first indoor mall! Other highlights of the week were "Mukta" a French jazz group with sitar sponsored by Alliance Francaise and "Eita! Botswana", a local talent show sponsored by the German Embassy.

Earlier, on 22<sup>nd</sup> March there was a day-long celebration of water at Game City in honor of World Water Week -- very important in a country where even the currency is Pula (rain). At the same time Botsalo Books opened a new store there and featured a book signing by Alexander McCall Smith. If you haven't read his "#1 Ladies Detective Agency" series you should rush out and buy all four volumes. They are published by Polygon, Edinburgh [also an American edition but I forget who]. The first (title as above) is 1999, the 2<sup>nd</sup> [Tears of the Giraffe] 2000, the 3<sup>rd</sup> [Morality for Beautiful Girls] 2001 and the 4<sup>th</sup> [The Kalahari Typing School for Men] in 2002. A fifth is promised for later this year. They all take place right here in Gaborone and, although fiction, are true to life (as well as hilarious). Unfortunately they don't mention succulents, but what can you expect from an expert in medical law (as well as author of excellent children's books).

I appeared on local television news on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March. I went to a panel discussion at the University on a shopping mall being built in the floodplain of the Segoditshane River which bisects Gaborone. They showed the contractor who seemed to think it was all right to build there, but ignored the other panellists. Instead they made me appear as his opposition (I was only an audience member asking pertinent questions -- like why no Environmental Impact Assessment has been sent to us at the museum as required under the Monuments and Relics Act.)

On the 25<sup>th</sup> I was back at the University for a workshop for "end



users" of herbaria and botanic gardens. I presented slides of gardens of the world followed by a slide history of our garden here and then we all went over to the garden for a tour, carefully avoiding the rapid construction.



The weather has cooled down a bit, but the drought continues. It won't hit Botswana as badly as neighboring countries, but it still looks like a long hard winter ahead.

Among the interesting books I've read recently is War Game by Anthony Price (1979, Macdonald & Co.,

London). It concerns a re-enactment of the English Civil War led by Oliver Cromwell. Although it took place a long time ago, I thought one quote interesting: "Then shall men say -'Your storm - your shame; our fall -- our fame'. Depart, thou accursed!"

Did you know that Oliver Cromwell outlawed the use of "Jesuit powder" (otherwise known as Cinchona bark from which quinine is derived)? He later died of ague (malaria) for which quinine is still used!

Unlike the American Revolutionary War re-enactment (see The Revenge of the Wrought Iron Flamingos) there were no succulents in this book. The British Isles in general are botanically impoverished as a result of the last ice age. I learned this when I asked why African monarch butterflies (like American but smaller) fail to survive when blown across the English Channel. After all, they feed on any of the milkweeds! The answer is there are no members of this family (or subfamily) in England.

We have plenty of milkweeds here. One of them, *Stapelia gigantea*, was blooming in the botanic garden when our geologist, Gabadirwe, saw it and commented that he used to eat the flowers as a kid, even with their smell of rotten meat. We noted that monarch caterpillars also were eating the flowers! (I have seen them eat stems before, but not the flowers.) We also had *Orbea rogersii* and *Huernia verekeri* in bloom, but not eaten. I was glad of the latter as this was the first time I'd seen a Botswana specimen bloom.

*Bruce J. Hargreaves*

## Dedication of the Marilyn Cowie Succulent Garden

The weather was beautiful for the dedication of the Community Learning Center's Succulent Garden in memory of Marilyn Cowie, on April 11<sup>th</sup>. The garden is very impressive. It's a long strip of about 20 feet by 450 feet. Being along the fence on a sloped area, sets off the plants to their best advantage. Many of the plants were in bud.

The gathering was large for the dedication. Charles Cowie and his son Laurence were present. Besides the student body and faculty from the Community Learning Center, Olga Scott and Helen Maas from the Bakersfield Garden Club attended. Several other people were there, also. Gordon Sanford, Maynard Moe, Lynn McDonald, and Jack and represented our club.

The idea for the garden began when the



former Mueller's Cactus Garden on Rosedale donated succulents to the Center. Marilyn took the students under her wing and together they created this interesting garden. During the dedication it was mentioned several times how much the students enjoyed planting the garden under Marilyn's

directions.

The temporary plaque worked well for the ceremony. The permanent granite boulder and plaque will be installed soon.

Take a drive by at Community Learning Center, 222 34<sup>th</sup> Street. It's just west of Union on 34<sup>th</sup> Street. Marilyn did a wonderful job of instructing the students. The garden is beautiful.

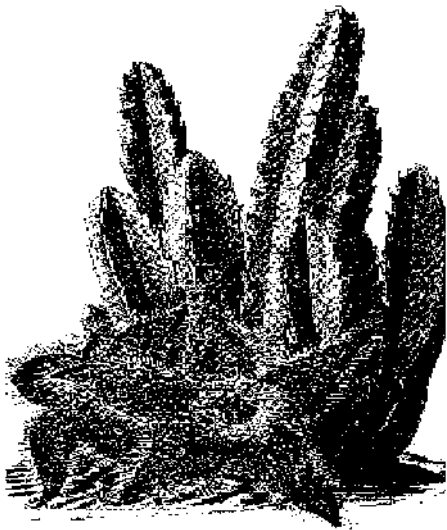
*Sydney Kelley*

**5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL  
LOS ANGELES  
CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY  
SHOW AND SALE**

**JUNE 21 & 22, 2003**

**SEPULVEDA GARDEN CENTER  
16633 MAGNOLIA BLVD., ENCINO**

**FRIDAY SET-UP 12:00PM TO 8:00PM  
SATURDAY 9:00AM TO 5:00PM  
SUNDAY 9:00AM TO 4:00PM**



*ASCLEPIADACEAE (Milkweeds, Hoyas)*

Bar-B-Que and Auction at 5:00 - June 20 at the Garden Center  
Reservations must be made by June 13

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
KAREN OSTLER (818)881-9601**

***Cactus & Succulent  
Show/Sale***



**JULY 3, 5, & 6**

**SALE: Thursday, Saturday & Sunday  
OPENS: 10:30 AM**

**SHOW: Saturday & Sunday  
OPENS: 10:30 AM**

**CLOSED: Friday, July 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Special Note:  
FREE Day Thursday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>. Visit  
all the wonderful gardens!**



**Huntington Botanical Gardens  
1151 Oxford Rd.  
San Marino, CA 91108  
Tel. (626)405-2160**

**The Cactus and Succulent Society of America**

***BE SURE TO VISIT US AT***  
**[www.BakersfieldCactus.org](http://www.BakersfieldCactus.org)**

# ***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS  
LINDA LIMI, TRACY VAN FOSSEN,  
AND TERI STRICKLIND!

WE WERE ALSO GLAD TO HAVE AS OUR GUEST  
ANNE SATTERLEE – COME BACK SOON!

Our May meeting will begin promptly at 7pm--all socializing will take place prior to this!! (By order of the President!!!) The doors to the meeting room will open at 6:30 for those of you who want to socialize!! We are trying to get the meetings finished at little earlier....

We have been requested to bring back Book Reviews! Forms to review books will be available at the meetings. If you check out a book, please fill out the form and give it to Linda and she will put it into prose and publish your thoughts! It's easy, and it helps other members find books they might be interested in. OR---if you prefer, you may write up a book review without using the form....!

Don't forget the Yard Sale is rapidly approaching. We would like to sell plants as well as our precious "junk". If you have divided plants lately (not just succulents...), why not bring them along to the yard sale and sell them! Last year, we sold bearded iris, cactus and succulent cutting and divisions, agapanthus, etc. We have had requests from the public to sell more plants!

Thanks to Maynard for compiling the activities and presentations summaries that were put in the roster.

**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**

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

**May 17-18 BCSS Spring Yard Sale**

May 18 Epiphyllum Society of America Show and Sale. Ayers Hall, Arboretum of LA County, Arcadia [www.epiphyllum.org](http://www.epiphyllum.org)

**May 27 BCSS Executive Board meeting; 7:00 pm Bonnie's house.**

**June 7 Mourning Cloak Ranch field trip**

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

June 11 - Aug 22 Cactus & Succulent Photo Exhibit.

Missouri Botanical Gardens, St. Louis.

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

**July 5-6 CSSA Show & Sale. Huntington Botanical Gardens.**

**Possibility of a club field trip.**

**Aug 16-18 Annual Intercity Cactus & Succulent S&S. 9am-5pm.**

**LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin Ave, Arcadia**

**Possibility of a club field trip.**

Aug 30 20th Succulent Plant Symposium, Huntington Gardens

**Sept.?? BCSS Field Trip to Nurseries in Vista?**

**Oct.?? BCSS Field Trip to the Santa Barbara Botanical Garden?**

For more information concerning calendar events, contact the editors

Membership in the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society costs \$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)