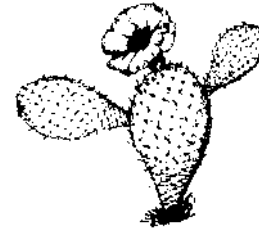




Antegibbaeum fissoides
photo by Stephen Cooley

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 7 **March 2004** Number 3

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

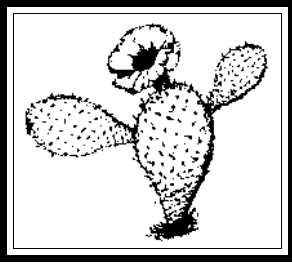
This Month's Program
Cacti & Conquistadores
Presented by Rob Skillin

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, Mar 9
Olive Drive Church,
5500 Olive drive
at **6:30 PM**

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

**Dues
Are
Due!**



The Cactus Patch

Volume 7 Number 3
March 2004

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

2004 Officers

President – Matt Ekegren
Vice-President – Vonne Zdneck
Treasurer - Maynard Moe
Secretary – Les Oxford
Editors - Stephen Cooley
Linda Cooley

2004 Directors

CSSA Representative - open
Past President – Bonnie East

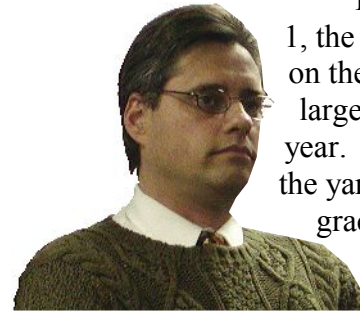
2004 Chairpersons

Hospitality - Bill McDonald
Librarian – James Parker
Field Trips – Lynn McDonald
Cal State Garden – Bonnie East
Historian – open
Show & Sale - open

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MESSAGE FROM EL PRESIDENTE

Wow! On behalf of the BCSS, I want to thank Woody Minnich again for driving down from his nursery to tell us about his fantastic trip to Brazil. Whatever Woody shows us, it is always interesting and it is always certain to get the travel bug moving in us. We have more great presentations planned in the months to come, so don't miss out. Also, I am pleased to announce the tentative location of our June meeting will be the CSUB Cactus Garden. The same garden our very own cactus garden committee, with the help of members at large, has been working on diligently this year. This will be a great chance for all the membership to see what's been done and see our plans for the future of the garden.



Lastly, please mark your calendars for May 1, the date of our Annual Yard Sale. We count on the revenue from the yard sale to pay for a large portion of our programs throughout the year. So, if you have anything at all to donate for the yard sale, it will be greatly appreciated and graciously accepted. See you at the Meeting!!

Matt Ekegren

MARCH'S PROGRAM

Cacti & Conquistadores

Presented by Rob Skillin

A romp through the cactus rich Mexican countryside with former BCSS president Rob Skillin. Certain to please one and all! Don't miss this once in a lifetime event (Okay, so I've already seen it once, but I could still die before the meeting).

BCSS Meeting February 10, 2004



Matt Ekegren opened the meeting honoring several of our club members with Birthdays and we all sang "Happy Birthday"

Woody (Our Presenter for tonight) announced a 4th annual Potters sale at his nursery. (Sorry, did not get the date)

Lynn McDonald presented two up-and-coming field trips:

Desert Images in Ojai. Rancho Camulos Pirce. Sat., May 15th.

Spring Trip to Palm Springs. No date set (could be a 3 day trip)

Bonnie announced a planning meeting at her home to discuss the upcoming CSUB Garden Design on February 14th @9:00am to 12:00pm.

Bring your shovels, tools, and water to prepare the grounds.

Woody gave an excellent slide presentation on a previous trip to Brazil. The slides and narration were GREAT! Thank You Woody!

There will be a board meeting at Bonnie East's home on February 26th.



Les Oxford

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING NOTES

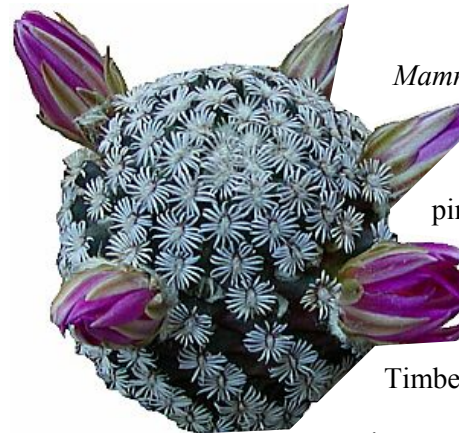
February 24, 2004

The meeting was called to order at 7:15ish at Casa Cooley-Moe. President, Vice-President, and Treasurer were present. After a heated debate... well at least the coffee was heated, *Mammillaria* was chosen as the plant of the month. Then, Treasurer Maynard Moe jumped into action, using his keen intellect, boyish charm, and rocket fire phone skills to persuade the Skillin family to host our fair club's Yard Sale one more time. It will be May 1 (unless we change the date). Organization will begin in earnest in April. The March Program was confirmed: Collector and adventurer extraordinaire Rob Skillin will present his program, "Cacti & Conquistadores." We think the Ojai Loop Field Trip will be on May 15, Lynn will let us know for sure at the meeting. After the Treasurer's report, there was only one thing to say, "I hope the yard sale brings in lots o' dough!!" The board agreed that we need to make sure to remind everyone to pay their dues and remind everyone that the Yard Sales is a very important event, if we want to overcome the negative cash flow we are experiencing right now. The board discussed having the June meeting at the CSUB Cactus Garden, which will include a potluck and a show-and-tell in the garden. Whew hoo!! The next board meeting will be at the downright austere home of Matt & Silvia Ekegren, bring your own chair...seriously!! Meeting adjourned, 9:00pm.

Matt Ekegren

Plant of the Month *Mammillaria*

By L. M. Moe



Mammillaria is one of the largest and most popular genera of cacti. They are known by many vernacular names such as nipple cactus, fishhook cactus, pincushion, and others. Because of their popularity, several hundred species have been described. A recent, fairly conservative classification by E. F. Anderson (2001. The Cactus Family. Timber Press) lists 171

species, most of which are native to Mexico, with

some from Southwestern US and a few from South America and islands of the Caribbean. The name *Mammillaria* comes from the Latin word *mamma*, referring to the tubercles covering the plant body, and which, for a number of species, contain milky sap.

The first cacti to be grown in European gardens were brought back from the Americas by Columbus and other great explorers. Among the earliest to be grown were mammillarias and melocactuses. However, when Linnaeus published his plant classification, *Species Plantarum* in 1753, he placed all known cacti (then only 22) in the genus *Cactus*. Thus, the first Latin name for a mammillaria was *Cactus mammillaris*. Subsequently, following further exploration and the discovery of many more cacti in the Americas, the genus *Mammillaria* was created in 1812 by Adrian Haworth.



Mammillaria longimamma
Photo by Stephen Cooley

Mammillarias are small or medium sized plants, solitary or clumping with globose or short cylindrical or clumps of short cylindrical bodies. The Tubercles are set in spirals (mammillarias never have vertical ribs like most other cacti) and can be angled or cylindrical, longish and smooth. Spines are on the top of the tubercles (areole) and can be long or short, numerous or absent, hooked or straight, hair-like, bristle-like, and wool may be present or absent in the axils at the base of the tubercle.

The flowers are small or medium sized and set in rings around the top of the plant in the previous year's growth. Form and color are usually red, yellow, white, pinkish white, or pink with dark midveins. They usually open during the day and are born from a flowering areole set in the axils of the tubercles. The fruits are mostly bright red (sometimes yellow or white) and usually elongated or club-shaped.

In general, mammillarias are easy to grow. They do fine in a standard cactus soil mixture, strong light and moderate watering, especially during winter months.

A great internet site for pictures and information about mammillarias is: www.mammillarias.net/index.php

PANNED OUT A Letter From Bruce



[I was unable to run Bruce's Letter last month, so here are two for this month! – ed.]

Christmas was very quiet. On the 21st of Dec. *Huernia levyi* from Mpandamatenga finally bloomed. This confirms that we finally have the right species. This is especially nice as this species features on the present T-shirt of the International Asclepiad Society.

On the 22nd it rained and cooled things off. Since then we have been having rain about once a week, alternating with hot, dry days. On the 24th just at closing I was given a letter stating I will be offered a contract for another three years. We hope to be in California for a brief break in April/May.

As usual I got lots of books for Christmas. Our tree this year is a wire baobab hung with little silver balls. Back at work on the 29th a few of us zipped down South to Pitsane and Kgoro Pans. The former was dry and overgrazed and we found a lot of *Bulbine narcissifolia* uprooted and lying in rows. (Upon enquiry we learned it is medicinal.) The latter was much better and had *Plectranthus tettensis* in bloom. That evening Isaac Lusunzi & family came for dinner as they were visiting from Pretoria.



The elephants below the World View Conference Center. They wouldn't let Polly get out & pet them which would have made a better picture.

As the New Year arrived, we watched fireworks from our front yard. On the 3rd Lilian Turton treated us to lunch at Sanitas, a Plant Nursery cum Garden Restaurant. On the 4th we saw our first film of the year - the new version of Peter Pan. Despite all the innovations, it brought back memories of my freshman year at BHS when I flew on piano wire as baby Michael. (I was the littlest kid in school at 4ft 7 inch.) On the 6th eight of us set out on the 2nd Millenium Seed Bank trip. Our first stop was at the village of Artesia not far North. There we found *Adenium oleifolium* in flower, so there was no seed. We spent the night at Moremi Village on the north side of the Tswapong Hills. Nearby Moremi Gorge is a National Monument with ferns, figs and other plants which contrast with much of Botswana. We spent the next morning with Mr Seabi, a traditional healer who showed us many useful plants (including the largest bloom. (We

managed to collect seed of the latter.) In the afternoon we continued West to the village of Thamashanga and found *Euphorbia espinosa*, *Orbea caudata*, *Huernia verekeri*, a twisted stem *Stapelia gigantea* and many more. The *Orbea* and *Huernia* were in full bloom.

Next day we drove west from Francistown to Nata the long way - along the east side of Soa Pan. We collected seed of *Sesamothamnus lugardii* but I missed a shot of a huge monitor lizard lounging on one of them (I had to go back for a camera, & meanwhile he woke up and left.) At the Junior Secondary School where we stayed in Nata there were lots of tubers of *Jatropha seineri* with leaves, flowers and fruit.

On the 11th we drove to Maun via Gweta Pan, Ntwetwe Pan, Khudiakam Pan and Nxai Pan. At the latter we saw a pair of cheetahs. This is the first time I have seen some in the wild. We collected grass seed, but there was not much in the way of succulents. Next day we drove out to Okavango Ceramics where a purple-flowered *Orbea* was reported.

Unfortunately it had no flowers so I'll have to wait to find out what it is. We found shiny green beetles eating one plant and caterpillars of the African Monarch butterfly eating another. A neighboring plant of *Stapelia kwebensis* (in flower) was being eaten by green caterpillar with white spots. It has pupated, so I may be able to identify it when it emerges. We also visited the botanist Dr Naidu Kurugundla at Water Affairs.



On the 13th two of the three vehicles were in for repair, so we checked specimens at the Peter Smith Herbarium and met with wildlife. (It is a definite fault of government bureaucracy when vehicles are sent out which are not fit for the trip.)

On the 14th we drove to Orapa (Botswana's leading diamond mine) by way of Mopipi Pan at the bottom of the Magadikgadi System. We saw *Hoodia* and collected *Orbea rogersii*. At Orapa we were given dorm rooms and driven around the game park by Kay Soopu, head conservationist. We saw lots of galumphing Gnus and sad *Salvadora australis* (a large shrub with somewhat succulent leaves.)

Next day we went east to Mosu which has healthier ones (even a

red fruit - but not enough to collect.) Back at the dorms we were treated to a huge BBQ. (Years ago at Jwaneng, another Diamond mine, we had lobster tails.)

Finally, on the 16th we drove back to Gaborone via Shoshong where the hills have 5 species in the Sesame family (Pedaliaceae). The only perennial was *Pterodiscus ngamicus*.

I am exhausted, but will set off on a different adventure next week. Look for "The Eyes Have It" next month.

Bruce J. Hargreaves

THE EYES HAVE IT Another Letter From Bruce



On the 25th of January we drove 400 km (250 miles) east to Pretoria where we stayed with Isaac Lusunzi (former student in Lesotho), his wife Maureen and 1 year old son John. The last 100 km (63 mi.) stretch from Rustenburg onward was new to us. The road parallels the Magaliesberg, running just North of the hills. At the Pretoria end there was a lovely dense stand of huge *Euphorbia ingens*. (Incidentally, *ingens* means huge.) They do have a cereus problem - several cacti were poking up between Euphorbias.

On the 26th I had my eyes re-examined and on the 27th they removed the cataract in my right eye with ultra-sound and put in a new lens. We went shopping and I had a check-up on the 28th and then went back to Botswana.

We repeated the process the next week when they did my left eye which was not so bad (but they no longer insist on waiting for cataracts to develop fully). They also laser-cleaned the capsule on the right eye for good measure.

I now need reading glasses and may have to have prismatic correction, but my vision over all is better than ever. (Incidentally, I could have had the operation in Botswana where it's a little cheaper, but although the surgeon is good, she doesn't have the best equipment.)

We had to change a lot of our Pula into Rand, but we did rather well as the Pula was devalued just after we returned. You never can predict with money.

The end of February has been a bit sad as the Thrift Shop where Polly has been working as a volunteer was forced out by the American Embassy as it is a "security risk". We have boxes of used books in storage at our house and plans are afoot to reopen, but it may take awhile.

population of *Euphorbia venterii* yet discovered). We also saw the large caudiciform *Adenia fruticosa*. In the afternoon we drove up to Francistown, stopping briefly to look for more *E. venterii* but finding instead a huge population of large *Stapelia gigantea* in full bloom.

On the 9th we drove up to Tsamaya (Goaway!) and found both *Pterodiscus aurantiacus* and *Anacampseros (Avonia) rhodesica* in full. It would be a shame to lose such a useful charity unnecessarily.

Speaking of books, we ran into several book sales both in Botswana and in Pretoria. Not being one to turn down a bargain, I now have enough books to keep me reading for the next year. We also found a bookstore in Pretoria which has old (beginning of the 1900s) books at give-away prices. I bought a few of those too. Most of the books have little to do with succulents, but are none-the-less interesting. Botanical Illustration by William Wheller (L'Aventurine, Paris, 2003) was only P95 (\$20). Most of the drawings are of European non-succulents, but there is one plate of *Massonia* (an African bulb) and another of a *Sansevieria*. Life Etched in Stone by Colin MacRae (Geological Soc. of South Africa, Johannesburg, 1999) has quite few plants (including some from Orapa in Botswana) but they are all fossils. It is well illustrated and is the best summary of South African Fossils I've seen.) It was only P144 (\$30) and I've convinced our Geology head to buy one.

We just spent the morning (19th Feb.) at a breakfast at Mokolodi Nature Reserve. They have just opened a conference center on top of a hill which has a magnificent view with Gaborone Dam in the distance. The place was perfect for the topic which was tourism. Botswana was ranked third in the world for this by the Washington Post, behind Greece and the Bahamas. The offer is still open if anyone wants to drop in (with a little notice so we can clean out the spare room.) The elephants were only throwing dirt this time. (We have never seen them mate as they did for "Dubya".) The cheetah barely looked up at us and the rhinos were nowhere to be seen. So be warned. Nothing is guaranteed.

We've had quite a bit of rain recently, and everything is very green; hardly the "desert" which the Kgalagadi is often said to be.

Bruce J. Hargreaves

A Letter From Bob Barth

There have been some changes recently with respect to CSSA publications as a number of you may already be aware. **Russell Wagner** is the new editor of the **CSSA Journal**. **Tom Glavich** has been interim newsletter editor for November/December 2003 and January/February 2004. Our new newsletter editor **Peter Boekenthien** will begin his editorship of *To the Point* with the March/April issue. We are sure that they will continue the high standards set by **Myron Kinnach** and **Carol Clapp**, respectively.

Two CSSA sponsored overseas field trips are scheduled for 2004, a **Madagascar trip** with **John Lavranos** as tour leader in May and a trip to **Chile** to visit *Copiapoas*, etc., in habitat scheduled for October/ November. Being able to participate in these trips is one of the many benefits of CSSA membership. Yet another benefit of membership is access to our **Seed Depot**, which makes available to members seeds of rare succulents at very reasonable prices. This benefit should appeal to all you seed growing aficionados out there. Attendance at our **biennial conventions** is yet another membership benefit and our 2005 convention in **Phoenix** in the heart of cactus country, promises to be one of the best ever. More details will appear in subsequent articles as convention plans develop. The CSSA website will also provide updates. For a complete list of other CSSA services to members, see the listing in any issue of the CSSA newsletter, *To the Point* or go to the CSSA website:

<http://www.cssainc.org>

Membership information is available at both the above-mentioned sites.

The administration of the CSSA continues to be concerned about membership numbers which have been fairly stagnant in recent years. We are far from the only organization facing this problem. We now have a **Membership Committee** whose task it is to address this issue. As I have mentioned before, the more members we have the more benefits we can offer our membership. In the coming months the committee will be kicking around a number of ideas for increasing our membership and we are certainly open to any suggestions that might occur to readers of this article. I would definitely appreciate any feedback on the issue of CSSA membership and ways to increase it. Please feel free to contact me by E-mail (b.barth@mail.utexas.edu) or snail mail (602 Terrace Mountain Drive, Austin, Texas 78746).

Thanking you in advance for any input, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Bob Barth, Publicity Chair
CSSA Board of Directors

BCSS/FACT GARDEN NEWS

Since our last meeting, a few individuals have worked on our garden site each weekend. Most of the soil has been turned, lots of weeds pulled, and some rototilling done. The garden plan is designed. And, serendipitously, last Saturday, Mr. Bob Brown, Cal State Facilities Manager was passing by & we now have some loads of dirt dumped near the garden!! Next on our agenda will be some work days to move plants & dirt & begin building the wall. Lots of muscles will be needed for those tasks. And, by the way, there is a pair of mallards in the pond, so perhaps the resident female duck also will "benefit" from the company.

The Committee



Photos by Matt Ekegren



CACTUS and SUCCULENT SHOW and SALE

SAT. & SUN. APRIL 10 & 11, 2004, 9am to 4pm

SOUTH COAST BOTANICAL GARDENS
26300 CRENSHAW BLVD. PALOS VERDES
PENINSULA

SEE outstanding displays by selected growers!

VOTE for the best!

ASK experts how they grow their plants!

BUY plants from top growers!

For more information contact Dick Hulett at 310-832-2262 (E-mail petplants@sbcglobal.net); Carol Causey at 310-675-5843; Jim Hanna at 562-920-3046 or aloccats1@aol.com.

DIRECTIONS: From I 10, take 405 south to Crenshaw, go south on Crenshaw or take 110 south to Pacific Coast Hwy., go west to Crenshaw and turn left.

A SOUTH COAST CACTUS AND
SUCCULENT SOCIETY PRESENTATION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BABY SHOWER

For Silvia Martinez & Matt Ekegren's baby boy
Saturday, March 20th , 11:00 AM
@ the McDonalds'
RSVP & call for directions, if needed.
Silvia & Matt are registered at BABIES R US

WIND WOLVES PRESERVE will be having two work days this month
-- March 13 & 17. Call if you'd like to help.

Another year has started and this means it is time to pay your dues! Dues are:

Individual \$10

Family \$15

Membership includes our monthly Newsletter, a roster of members, and, of course, good fellowship with other succulent enthusiasts.

Please pay on or before the March meeting

See the treasurer for more information:

Maynard Moe, treasurer

Lithops44@bak.rr.com



CALENDAR



- Mar 9 BCSS meeting.** Olive Drive Church 6:30pm
April South Bay Epiphyllum Society Annual Show & Sale, South Coast Botanical Garden
April 10-11 South Coast C & SS Annual Show & Sale, South Coast Botanical Garden 26390 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes
Apr 13 BCSS meeting. Olive Drive Church 6:30pm
May Epiphyllum Society of America Annual Show LA Arboretum
May San Diego Epiphyllum Society of America Annual Show & Sale Balboa Park
May 1 BCSS Annual Yard Sale
May 1-2 Sunset Succulent Society Annual Show & Sale, Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Rm. 4117 Overland Ave, Culver City
May 3-5 Sonoran V Conference, Tucson.
Info: Dick Wiedhopf
May 15 Ojai Loop Field Trip???
May 16 Huntington Botanical Garden Spring Sale 1151 Oxford Rd, San Marino Info: 626-405-2160
June 8 BCSS meeting. CSUB Cactus Garden
July 1-3 CSSA Show & Sale Huntington Botanical Garden (HBG closed July 4, admission free July 1)
Aug 14-15 Intercity Show & Sale 9am-5pm both days. LA Arboretum
Info: Tom Glavich

For more information concerning calendar events, contact the editors

**To have your article printed in
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Linda Cooley, editor