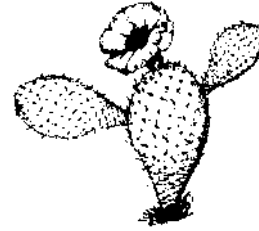


The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society
% Stephen Cooley, editor
thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com



A Euphorbia polygona survived four nights below 30°F. Now, can it survive El Niño? Photo by Stephen Cooley

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 8 **January 2005** Number 1

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

Insects on Cacti and Succulents

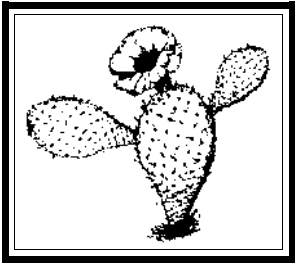
Presented by Mickey McGuire

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, Jan 11
Olive Drive Church,
5500 Olive drive
at **6:30 PM**

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

**It's Time to
Pay Your
Dues!**



The Cactus Patch

Volume 8 Number 1
January 2005

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

2005 Officers

President – Vonne Zdenek
Vice-President – Bonnie East
Treasurer - Maynard Moe
Secretary – Les Oxford
Editors - Stephen Cooley
Linda Cooley

2005 Directors

CSSA Representative - open
Past President – Matt Ekegren

2005 Chairpersons

Hospitality - Bill McDonald
Librarian – James Parker
Field Trips – Lynn McDonald
Historian – open
Show & Sale - open

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▲ Note From Your New President

Thank you all for confirming me as your new president. I have thoroughly enjoyed all the interaction and education I have experienced since joining the BCSS.

I have always had a green thumb and kept many houseplants and various outdoor gardens, BUT moving to the desert of Bakersfield, has demanded a whole new mind-set for gardening. I was told we could not bring any plants into California, so I just brought one houseplant. Obviously, I had to start over with a collection of plants. Because of your wonderful "Show and Sale" I discovered the Bakersfield Cactus and Succulent Society. Now nearly 100 plants (most being cacti and succulents) fill my windowsills, patio and garden.

I am hoping my "educator" background can help facilitate the Club's goal of educating the public on Cactus and Succulents. With everyone's continued participation, meaningful meetings and fun gatherings will continue into 2005.

Ours is a fabulous group and I am very pleased to be an integral part.

Vonne Zdenek



December's Silent Auction

December 10, 2004



ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK AND SILENT AUCTION

About 30 festive members arrived laden with food for the party. We enjoyed some early bidding on the auction items and then settled into eating and talking. After dinner, we elected next year's officers: (See Les' Board Meeting notes on page 5 for the complete list). We say a big Thank You to these brave members for taking on these responsibilities. Then it was back to the auction! Lots of members went home happy, and a few even voiced a desire to have another auction again, soon! We did not have our members raffle, due to the plants being left behind; we will still have it, maybe at the next meeting.

Anne Lee was given special recognition for her dedication in always being available to open and lock the doors for our meetings. Without her, we would not be able to have our meetings at our present location.

We hope to see all members in the New Year!



Anne Lee
photo by Les Oxford

BCSS BOARD MEETING: DECEMBER 30TH 2004

Vonne Zdenek, Maynard Moe and Les Oxford attended the board meeting.

The officers for 2005 are:

President – Vonne Zdenek	Past President – Matt Ekegren
Vice-President – Bonnie East	Hospitality – Bill McDonald
Treasurer – Maynard Moe	Librarian – James Parker
Secretary – Les Oxford	Field Trips – Lynn McDonald
Editors – Stephen & Linda Cooley	Historian – Open
CSSA Representative – Open	Show & Sale – Open

The following speakers for January, February and March are as follows:

JANUARY: Mickey McGuire "INSECT PESTS"
 FEBRUARY: Mark Muradian "SOCOTRA"
 MARCH: Rob Skillin "CHILE"

Maynard Moe went over 2004 financial report. Our club made about \$180.00 over the last year with a balance about \$2000.00.

TIME FOR DUES!!!\$15.00 for family, \$10.00 for individual.

Discussed library and encourage any suggestion on other books

The following is a list of dates for up and coming board meetings:

January 25th, at Maynard Moe's Home.
 February 22nd at Vonne Zdenek Home
 March 29th at Les Oxford's Home
 April 26th (Unknown)
 May 31st (Unknown)
 June 28th (Unknown)

Les Oxford, Secretary



BE SURE TO CHECK US OUT

ON THE WEB AT:

www.BakersfieldCactus.org

JANUARY'S PROGRAM

Insects on Cacti and Succulents

How to recognize and control damaging pests

presented by **Mickey McGuire**

There are more than 800,000 species of insects yet only a few cause damage. This month's presentation will focus on a few common



Cochineal on *Opuntia*

insect pests that may be affecting your collection and ways to control the pests. Feel free to bring plants that have insects but be sure to keep them separate at the meeting from auction plants and plants that others bring. I will bring some tools to look at the pests and perhaps offer some suggestions for cleaning them up.

Mickey McGuire



FIELD TRIPS

MARCH 19-21

Living Desert Museum & Botanic Gardens, Palm Canyon, Moorten Botanic Garden -- Palm Springs, Desert Hot Springs, Laguna Canyon Nursery -- en route

APRIL date TBA

Windwolves Preserve

Lynn McDonald

Gone to Seed

by Stephen Cooley

PART ONE: Why Seeds?

It seems that everyone who has been infected with the 'Cactus & Succulent' bug eventually displays the most common symptom: an irresistible urge to acquire more plants. The first indications of this difficulty usually occur when you visit your first Show and Sale. Surely your companions noticed the warning signs, but alas, they too were infected. These symptoms can continue for quite some time but at some point we try to increase our collection without opening our pocket books. Who hasn't tried sticking a Beavertail pad or a Jade Plant stem into a pot or pulling off a 'pup' from an *Echinopsis*? These are good ways to satisfy your need, but, there is another that can provide even more satisfaction – seeds.

I am always a bit surprised at the lack of enthusiasm for growing succulents from seed. I have to remind myself that our hobby is not the same as one that grows vegetables our cottage gardens. Those hobbies typically require a knowledge of seed rearing in order to acquire the plants you need, ours does not. In our hobby, the seed is primarily grown by nurseries as well as by those 'guys' that seem to know more about succulents than any earthly person should (I'm convinced that some of them are not from this world). However, this does not mean that you can't try it yourself. It's not always as easy as sticking a Hens-and-Chicks offset into a pot, but it is often more rewarding.

Vegetative propagation (not using seeds) certainly has its value.

Cuttings, offsets, and even grafting are commonly done at home (another vegetative method is tissue culture, but this is usually not feasible for the amateur, though it is possible). These methods are good if you want to increase your numbers of a certain species or variety. If you have a hybrid *Echinopsis* that everyone adores, you can root offsets and spread it around (be careful of patented plants,



11 week old *Didymaotus lapidiformis* seedlings

they're kind of like copying your favorite music; no one notices if you keep it to yourself, but when you start to make money from it you can get in trouble). One thing that vegetative propagation can't do is produce new varieties, this is the realm of sexual propagation – seeds.



Mammillaria perez-delarosa

Seeds are generally inexpensive, easy to grow, quick to germinate, and, believe it or not, readily available. Growing seeds does not require much space or even a lot of sophisticated equipment. It does require more attentiveness than you ordinarily give your mature plants, but then, they're just babies. With seeds you can grow species that are not readily available at shows. Some succulents, like *Astrophytum*, do not readily produce offsets or do not branch. This means that seeds are the way to go. Seeds can be an inexpensive way to start a large number of a desirable variety. If you collect and grow your own seed, you can fiddle with cross pollination and produce your own wonderful hybrids. There is always a bit of variation in your seedlings, which allows you to pick out the best colored or patterned *Lithops* from the group without fighting over it at the Show and Sale tables.

All that said, I don't want this to sound too easy. There are some details to which you must pay attention. Seedlings are much more easily damaged by drought or over-watering. In addition, other perils like attacks from snails and birds don't just disfigure your plants, it annihilates them. A dropped pot may be a temporary setback for an adult, but it often means death to many seedlings. Seedlings take time to grow up. Unlike a blooming adult you buy at the show, your seedling could take several years to reach blooming size (there are exceptions, some Mesembs will bloom in a year or less from seed). Though they don't require much space when they're young, as seedlings grow, they require much more space, which leads to the hardest thing of all – culling.

Culling is the removal of unwanted plants, though I shouldn't say 'unwanted.' They are the undesirable, the less pretty, the not-quite-as-good-as-the-rest. Mostly they are the ones you just can't find any

more room for. You are forced to pick out some and throw them away (many will be too young to give away). Fortunately this usually happens when they are still very small and you haven't had time to become too attached.

The attachment you feel towards the plants you have raised is where the real rewards are. A plant that you have watched come out of the seed, grow into a recognizable plant, and then bloom gives you a great sense of accomplishment.

Next month I will write about where you can obtain some seed and how you should plant it once you have it in PART TWO: What Do I Do Now?



Pachypodium fruit and seeds

If you have any questions about this article feel free to contact me. Also, when you feel like you're ready to try some seeds let me know and I'll let you have some of mine. Email me at thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com or talk to me at the meeting.



Millennium Madness

A Letter From Bruce

On the 20th of Nov., we went shopping in Mafeking and visited the museum there. Among the items in the gift shop was a piece of tamboti wood (*Spirostachys africana* of the Euphorbiaceae) which had been used as a roof beam in Baden-Powell's HQ (Minchin's Law Office) during the Boer War. Interestingly, we found the same wood in the roof beams of the old building being restored (at long last) in our botanic garden. It has a highly poisonous latex and is therefore immune to insect attack.

On the 22nd, the Hoodia from Bokspits bloomed. It is *Hoodia gordonii*, the very species that is being developed for weight loss in South Africa. The flower is just at the bottom end of the range for the species. We are still looking for *H. officinalis* that grows on the South African side of the border.

On the 25th, there was a launching of a new book "Voices of the San" (le Roux & White eds., 2004, Kwela Books, Cape Town) which is a collection of interviews throughout the region. There was quite a show of song, dance and artwork. We were also well fed, which was a good thing, as this constituted our Thanksgiving "feast".

On the 27th our choir joined with three other choirs at the "President's Concert". Mogae was there, but it was not as good nor as well attended as previous years.

On the 30th, we again went to Good Hope and Polly did quilting using newly repaired machines while I led the first part of yet another Millennium Seed Bank trip. That day we stopped at Hildavale and collected seed from *Senecio oxyriifolus* (with cute round leaves) and *Mestoklema tuberosa* (with both purple and orange flowers) as well as digging up a disk-like tuber of *Ceropegia pachystelma*? -- no flowers yet.



Daniel Mofokate, our herbarium technician with *Cyphostemma humile*

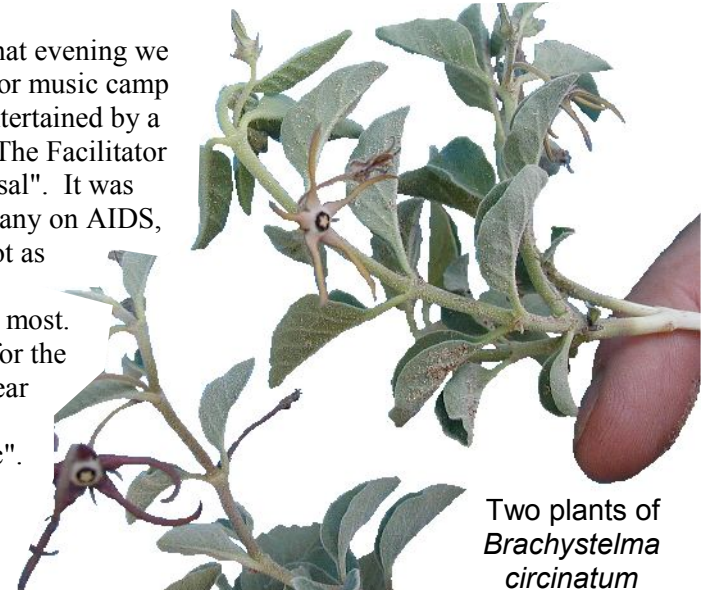
Next day we drove south through the village of Hebron and found a *Cyphostemma* which is new to Botswana. It might be *Cyphostemma humile* which is known from South Africa and Zimbabwe. It has furry succulent leaves and was blooming. On the 2nd of Dec. we visited Kgoro Pan near Good Hope and found another *Cyphostemma*, probably *Cyphostemma hereroensis* which has been previously collected in Botswana. It has hairless succulent leaves and had clusters of green "grapes". Both were described at Good Hope as medicinal, but it is wise to be careful as they may have a high oxalic acid content, as does dumb cane (*Dieffenbachia*). (Polly is a witness to this -she lost her voice from eating "grapes" I recommended in Northern Botswana in 1969.)

That afternoon we went to Diabo Hill, one of three known localities for Lithops in Botswana. There was a new road, gravel mining and a house on top of the hill! We are working on creating a National Monument to save what is left. There were few Lithops but we did manage to collect fruit. We also found a healthy population of *Anacampseros subnuda* and some plants of *Brachystelma circinatum*. One of the *Brachystelmas* had small yellow flowers and another large purple flowers, a phenomenon which occurs in other species of the tribe Ceropegieae (e.g. *Orbea lutea*).

The rest of the crew went on to Bokspits where they found the new Hoodia as well as a new locality for *Sarcocaulon* (or should it be *Monsonia*? I should support my fellow lumpers). Polly & I returned to Gaborone and a brief rest. On the 5th, we went on a Bird Club walk and had breakfast with the McColaugh's who feasted us to celebrate their birthdays.

That evening we registered for music camp and were entertained by a local play "The Facilitator in Rehearsal". It was another of many on AIDS, but was not as outright "preachy" as most. The theme for the camp this year was "Mad About Music".

Polly did choral singing again with



Two plants of *Brachystelma circinatum*

Charles Lesia and I tried to learn Segaba (a one-stringed violin) with the Captain (Sight Mongweotsile, retired from the BDF). The food was good and we had a great week, but it was nice to be able to go home at night.

On Thursday the 9th, we all went out to Matsieng, a National Monument with "footprints" of a giant in the rock. There were frothy egg masses from the giant grey tree frog hanging above the rock pools. (The tadpoles drop down into the water when they hatch out.) That evening Polly and I sang a duet "Baby it's cold outside" as part of the student entertainment. Next evening we saw a play that had been banned in Zimbabwe. "Super Patriots & Morons" portrays a "mythical" mad dictator, but it takes little imagination to see him as Mugabe. (It reminded us of the 60's when the films in Botswana were advertised as "banned in South Africa".)

Finally, on Saturday we put on a free show outdoors at the central mall in the morning and a paid (first time) show in the evening. Costs have skyrocketed and the enrolment was down to 70 from the usual 100 even though campers were only charged a third of the actual cost.

It rained during music camp, which kept things cool, but we are still asked to conserve water, as the dam is low. We are hoping for a lot more rain in the next two months.

Polly is working at the re-opened thrift shop, but it is in crowded quarters and is not its old booming self. We have been banned from the local cinema (for asking to see all the credits!) so we will have to catch up on current films when they come out in video in the States. At least we still have the film club for "oldies". Right now, we are enjoying a "Finnish Festival", although they drag a bit.

When I wrote about "Water Babies" last month, Polly surmised that the book did not include it in the bibliography because "Almost Like a Whale" was British and it would be assumed common knowledge



Polly and I singing
"Baby It's Cold Outside"
(on a hot Dec. night)

there. I countered that it had been made into a Disney cartoon so even Americans should know it. (Admittedly, though, it has not been shown in a very long time.) Polly kindly looked up information on the Internet to get the date inserted in last month's letter. At any rate, to my surprise, it appeared again, this time in an American book, "Dinosaurs in a Haystack" by Stephen Jay Gould (1995, Harmony Books, New York). There, Charles Kingsley is described as a great liberal theologian and a good friend of Huxley, which explains why he appears in books on evolution.

We finally splurged and bought a replacement for the red Citi Golf. We bought a one year-old blue Hyundai, the newest car we have ever owned. It is a real sawed-off runt, but David Slater, who sold us the Citi Golf, already has dibs on it when we sell it.

Bruce J. Hargreaves

THE SUCCULENT GARDEN AT CAL STATE

bcss garden journal december 18, 2004

a few of us ventured out to move dirt. it has been cold and foggy for days, and the plants had been subjected to very cold weather since our last visit. most of the plants look splendid, however! stephen, nathaniel and linda moved dirt while maunard weeded. the weeds are really enjoying the winter dampness! the garden is looking good, and the new area is coming along nicely. we will try to work again in january, at least twice i hope. we should be ready to plant by march. if the rain keeps up it will be difficult to finish moving the dirt, although most of that is finished.

linda cooley



ANNOUNCEMENTS

2005 MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

Contact the treasurer for more information:

Maynard Moe, treasurer

Lithops44@bak.rr.com

2005 CLUB ROSTER

The club roster for 2005 will be printed and given out at the April meeting. Rosters are given out only to paid members of the club and are not published on the internet. If you would like to change the way your information appears you need to contact me, otherwise, it will remain as printed in last year's roster. New members will have addresses, phone numbers, and emails added to the roster – contact me if you would like to add or delete anything.

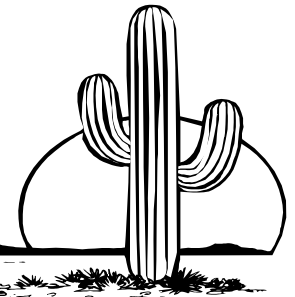
**To have your article printed in
The Cactus Patch get in touch with:**

Stephen Cooley, editor

thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com

Linda Cooley, editor

UPCOMING EVENTS



BAKERSFIELD CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY EVENTS

- Jan 11 BCSS Meeting 6:30 pm Olive Dr. Church, 5500 Olive Dr.
SPEAKER: Mickey McGuire
PROGRAM: Insect Pests
- Jan 25 BCSS Board Meeting -- Maynard's house
- Feb 8 BCSS Meeting 6:30 pm Olive Dr. Church, 5500 Olive Dr.
SPEAKER: Mark Muradian
PROGRAM: Socotra
- Feb 22 BCSS Board Meeting -- Vonne's house
- Mar 8 BCSS Meeting 6:30 pm Olive Dr. Church, 5500 Olive Dr.
SPEAKER: Rob Skillin
PROGRAM: Chile
- Mar 19-21 BCSS Field Trip: Living Desert Museum & Botanic Gardens, Palm Canyon, Moorten Botanic Garden, Palm Springs, Desert Hot Springs, Laguna Canyon Nursery
- Mar 25 BCSS Board Meeting -- Les' house
- Apr BCSS Field Trip: Windwolves Preserve date to be announced
- Apr 12 BCSS Meeting 6:30 pm Olive Dr. Church, 5500 Olive Dr.
- Apr 26 BCSS Board Meeting
- May 10 BCSS Meeting 6:30 pm Olive Dr. Church, 5500 Olive Dr.
- May 31 BCSS Board Meeting
- June 14 BCSS Meeting 6:30 pm Olive Dr. Church, 5500 Olive Dr.
- June 28 BCSS Board Meeting

OTHER CACTUS AND SUCCULENT EVENTS

- July 1-3 CSSA Annual Show & Sale at the Huntington
- Aug 5-11 CSSA Biennial Convention. Scottsdale Plaza Resort, Phoenix.
- Aug 20-21 20th Intercity Show & Sale
Los Angeles Arboretum. 9am-5pm both days.
Contact Tom Glavich
- Sept 3 Huntington Symposium, Huntington Botanical Gardens