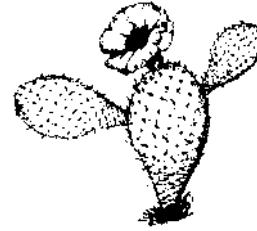


The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society
% Stephen Cooley, editor
4820 Mecca place Bakersfield, Ca. 93308-6430



Dudleya lanceolata
Feb. 11, on Cow Flat Rd in the Kern Canyon
Photo by Bonnie East

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 9 **April 2006** Number 4

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

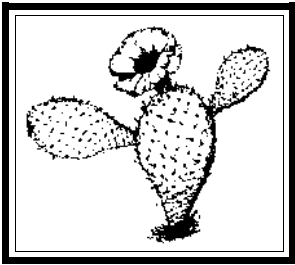
This Month's Program
**Succulents of
South Africa**
Presented by Rob Skillin

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, Apr 11

Olive Drive Church,
5500 Olive drive
at 6:30 PM
(West of 99 freeway
on corner of Olive drive &
Victor street)

**Check out the
Plant Exchange
And the
Garden Festival
Inside!**



The Cactus Patch

Volume 9 Number 4
April 2006

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

2006 Officers

President – Vonne Zdenek
Vice-President – Steve Crippen
Treasurer - Maynard Moe
Secretary – Anne Lee
Editors - Stephen Cooley
Linda Cooley

2006 Directors

CSSA Representative - open
Past President – Matt Ekegren

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

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March 14, 2006



We started our March meeting by welcoming our guests. We talked about the rock collecting field trip coming up as well as a trip to Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Gardens with Bonnie in May. The Mid-States ‘Stick-Together’ in Oklahoma City was brought up for anyone that might be headed that way this June.

It was mentioned that the Central Coast C&SS has a plant exchange during it’s meetings and it was decided that we might like to try that as well. Bonnie will get it up and running (see page 11).

The slide show “The Hybrid Epiphytic Cacti,” narrated from the script by Maynard, was a marvelous look at all the wonderful flowers that these ‘Orchid’ cacti can produce. There was a bit mentioned in passing about culture and natural history as well.

A short talk about Aloes was given by those who brought in the Plant-of-the-Month.



BCSS EXECUTIVE MEETING

On March 28 the BCSS board met at Vonne's. Vonne, Steve, Maynard and Anne met to discuss future plans for the group. After a tour of Vonne's plants, we were served brownies, mixed nuts and drinks and began the meeting. Vonne began by announcing that she and Mickey will be moving to Colorado due to Mickey being transferred. That will leave the club without a President. Vonne will continue for a few months, but we will need to be working on finding a replacement.

Programs were discussed:

April will be Rob in South Africa - plant of the month to be euphorbias.

May will be arranged by Vonne - possibly a guest speaker.

June will be the annual picnic at the Cal State succulent garden
July will be decided later - possibly a sharing of everyone's pictures, slides, etc. like we've done in the past.

August - annual dinner at Cactus Valley restaurant

September will be gearing up for the plant show and sale

A possible yard tour was suggested. We would need volunteers to show their yards. Coming dates in addition to meetings are the yard sale on April 29 and 30 (preparations on the 28th) at Sydney's. Volunteers will be needed. The dates for the Show and Sale are to be October 13 (preparation), 14 and 15. The next board meeting will be at Anne's house on April 25 at 6:30. All members interested in helping with planning for the group are welcome

Anne Lee, Secretary



Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens

I have set a date for the day trip to the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens in Claremont, CA. - May 20th (Sat.). Please visit their website to see if venturing to this California native garden is of

interest to you (www.rsabg.org) . This is not an official Club trip (I have spoken to Lynn about it) but if enough people e-mail with interest in going I will look into a guided tour for the Club or if those who want to attend prefer to do their own thing that is fine too. E-mail me if there is a chance or interest in going (bonnie_east@sbcglobal.net). Also note I'll be car-pooling with my family to that area on May 20th so if a ride down is an issue, perhaps others interested in going may want to carpool and share the gas expenses - and company.

Bonnie

APRIL'S PROGRAM

Succulents of South Africa

Presented by Rob Skillin

Though Rob said at the last meeting that he could do a program on Mexico, it turns out that his slides have been loaned out and he won't have them back in time for our meeting. So, he is going to give us a talk on South Africa, which many of you know is a treasure trove of succulent plants (no cactus, of course).

Plant of the Month

Euphorbia

by L. M. Moe

As many members know, one of the largest and most diverse categories in our annual Show and Sale is *Euphorbia*. Because there are stem succulent euphorbias and caudiciform euphorbias, we generally run out of room to display all of the plants. Because these are mostly found in South Africa, this group of plants is appropriate for this month's "Plant of the Month."

The genus *Euphorbia* is one of the largest and most complex genera of flowering plants with over 1500 species (only

Astragalus, a legume related to Lupines, is larger) Of these, around 870 are regarded as succulent. Euphorbias are primarily found in the tropical regions of Africa and the Americas, but also in temperate zones. Succulent species are mostly found in Africa and Madagascar.

Euphorbia is the major genus in the Euphorbiaceae (spurge family) that includes plants such as the poinsettia, castor bean, and cassava (from which we get tapioca). Euphorbias exude a sticky white sap (latex) from any cut or wound. This latex may produce a severe dermatitis on susceptible individuals, much like poison oak. The latex of some species has been used for arrow poisons and to stupefy fish for capture. Because the latex can be so toxic, it is good practice to never touch your eyes while working with the plants.

The name "Euphorbia" comes from Euphorbus, a Greek physician of King Juba II (about 50 BC to 19 AD) of Numidia (present day Algeria). King Juba II was the first person to find a succulent-type euphorbia, and he named it after his physician who supposedly used the milky latex of these plants in his medicinal potions.

Euphorbias range from small trees, shrubs, vines, to herbaceous plants. A significant percentage of these plants are succulent, some of which resemble cacti. Most euphorbias are monoecious, meaning that the male and female flowers are on separate plants. The "flowers" are actually large bunches of colored leaves (modified bracts); the flowers themselves are in the center of each leaf bunch and are small and inconspicuous.

Euphorbias are generally easy to grow in Bakersfield. They need to grow in a place that is bright, although not necessarily full midday sun. In habitat many euphorbias survive in full sun, but the roots are usually relatively cool, often under rocks. Thus, it is a good idea to place your plants in a location that gets afternoon shade in the summer, but sunshine in the winter. The soil should be well-drained and it is best to water heavily, let the soil drain, moderately dry out, then water again.

A good site for more information and photos is the International Euphorbia Society:

<http://www.euphorbia-international.org/>

Garden Festival at B.C.

A chance for the public to meet our club!

Lin Ono, the Environmental Horticulture instructor at Bakersfield College contacted me last week and invited the Bakersfield Cactus Club to participate in a 'Garden Festival' that will be happening April 22 (Earth Day) at the Bakersfield College Hort Lab. He is inviting all the local gardening clubs (Rose, Green Thumb, African Violet, Orchid, Cactus) as well as the local Koi club.

There are several events scheduled, the ones I remember are; installing a koi pond, laying sod, making a succulent wreath, using bedding plants, using trees. The local Radio Gardening Show will be broadcast from the event from 7am-9am and we are welcome to come talk about our club. Mr. Ono says there will be plenty of advertising leading up to the event and he is going to email me the flyer.

There is no cost for our group to join in this and we can sale plants if we want. He would like to know if we will come so he can reserve a spot for us. The Garden Festival will be open from 8am to 1pm on Saturday, April 22.

If there is interest in this, let me know.

Stephen



Peter Trujillo took this picture of Joshua Trees and snow
"Somewhere in the Mojave Desert" March 2006.



More Caves A Letter From Bruce

After the eight cavers gave their presentation at the museum, we all went for a game drive at Mokolodi Nature Reserve. This was followed by a farewell dinner at the restaurant there. They finally got the meal they had been looking for -- crocodile, ostrich, impala and kudu. As reported, six of them left the next day, 23 Feb.

On the 24th we discovered a white-browed scrub robin had built a nest by a pillar of our front porch. The nest was almost at ground level and had three small white eggs with brown speckles. Too bad Peri, an amateur ornithologist, had left. Rolf, the entomologist, looked at the museum insect collection.

Despite an overcast and sometimes rainy day on Saturday, we had lunch at Sanitas, a plant nursery with an outdoor restaurant. That evening Rolf went back and collected insects in the bush near there. I found a lot of the small carrion flower, *Duvalia polita* as well as an unusual *Kalanchoe rotundifolia* with three-lobed leaves.

On the 26th we drove around the Gaborone Game Reserve and saw lots of animals, including two large monitor lizards. That evening Rolf flew off to the Transvaal Museum in South Africa to check out their insects.

The 27th was a restful day in Gaborone, but on the 28th we drove to the "Cradle of Humankind" world heritage site west of Jo'burg. It was a bit of a drive, but we managed to get there in time to tour both Sterkfontein Cave and Wonder Cave. The former is the site of a large number of early relatives of modern man. We could only peer through a gate at the place where they are still digging out "Little Foot", the most complete Australopithecus skeleton so far discovered. The second cave has more of the formations visitors like to see in caves. It also has an elevator, although both caves had too many steps.

The area around Wonder Cave is a game reserve so we went back



Cactus Hats – one size fits all!

the next morning and drove around. The lions were sleeping against the fence and the wild dogs and cheetahs were invisible, but we did get a good look at rhinos, crested cranes, ground hornbills, etc. We made it back to Gaborone in time for Polly's book club that evening.

On the 2nd of March we went to the opening of "Art" at Capital Players. It is a well-written play about three people's reaction to an all-white painting. On the 4th we again had lunch at Sanitas and on the 4th we went back to Mokolodi. On the 5th we joined the bird club on a walk in the Kopong Hill. The birds were interesting, but the best find of the day was a rocky hill slope of the endemic *Gladiolus rubellus* in full bloom. (Endemic means found only in Botswana and there are less than 20 such plants.)

That evening we saw John off to California and things have settled down to "normal".

For those interested in more information about the "Cradle of

Humankind" there is a terrific book by Brett Hilton-Barber and Dr. Lee R. Berger ([The official Field Guide to the Cradle of Mankind](#), 2002, Struik, Cape Town). Much of the book is devoted to what is known of human ancestors and relatives. There is also a bit on recent history and geology as well as illustrated lists of plants and animals. The illustrations on these last two are not up to the quality of the rest of the book and the plant list is rather short. *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* is listed, but I saw *Kalanchoe paniculata* in bloom and it is not listed. They also miss *Euphorbia rhombifolia* which is important here as it is far from its normal



John at the surface digs at Sterkfontein.

distribution further south. The small aloe which is found there is listed as *Aloe davyi*, but this is more properly known as *Aloe greatheadii* var. *davyi*. But these are minor faults compared to the overall quality of the book.

Bruce J. Hargreaves

THE SUCCULENT GARDEN AT CAL STATE



Picture by Linda Cooley

We had a very successful field trip to get rocks! Many, many thanks to Sidney and Jack for getting the dumping trailer. It worked great! We had a huge turnout for the trip: Jack and Sidney, Gwen and Steve C, Vonne and Mickey, Lynn and Bill, Andy and Sasha, Steve H and Linda (who did I leave out??? Sorry if I left anyone out...) After getting the rocks to Cal State, a few extra dedicated members stayed around and pulled weeds! The following weekend, a few of us met at the garden and weeded and moved railroad ties and rocks around. The garden is really looking good now. There are Aloes in bloom and it looks like a few of the cactus are getting ready to burst into flower. On the Bad News front, we lost a couple of heads of the large Golden Barrel cluster, for unknown reasons. We removed the two heads that had rotted and hope that the rot doesn't spread. We will have to wait and see. We have camouflaged the missing two heads with a large

attractive rock. Also one of the *Opuntias* has dropped many stems, but the remaining stems look good, so no worries there. *Opuntias* are pretty good at spreading, so soon we won't even miss the parts that fell off.

Hope you can join us for a future work day!
Linda Cooley

Plant Exchange A New Club Activity

I recently read an article in the March issue of *Cottage Living Magazine* a publication I have a subscription to even though I don't live in a cottage style home but nonetheless a publication I embrace because the theme of the magazine *Simplicity, Comfort, Style* is something I'm trying to absorb and put into action in my humble abode. But I digress, the article on page 47 basically described a "seed swap". After reading it I thought, I would love to do that and invite folks over some Saturday morning, serve coffee and coffeecake and just see what happens, get some cool seeds or plants, you never know.

Well, at the BCSS March meeting our beloved treasurer, Maynard Moe just happened to mention that a new Cactus Society that has been formed on the Central Coast by past members - Rob and Terry Skillin were holding Plant Exchanges at their monthly meetings and that it seemed like a neat or whatever thing to do. I agree. While I admit I hadn't taken my thoughts about this process to include it as a club activity, I was just going to invite folks over.

So without further ado, BCSS is going to embark on a new activity beginning with the April meeting. We are going to hold a Plant Exchange. It is the Club's hope that this activity will evolve into something **Fun and Educational**, as well as a way of adding plants to our collections. Here are a few guidelines for the new *Activity*:

Bring bags, baggies, waterproof pens or pencils, labels (tape or plastic?), carrying containers and **potted plants, cuttings, or seeds** of cactus and succulents to trade. It is as simple as that . If

you feel you do not have much to offer, please don't feel that way, you never know what folks may like or be looking for. I personally would like to see members and meeting attendees e-mail each other with inquiries as to what each has to trade and get some real *horse swapping* going on. Also, I'm not leaving out the idea of a seed exchange sometime in the fall at my house which would also include vegetable and flower seeds as well as bulbs etc.. and most likely coffee and coffeecake.

Until we meet again,

Bonnie

CSSA Promotional Article No. 1 - 2006

In this article I'd like to focus on the **Cactus and Succulent Journal**. Under the able leadership of our current editor Russell Wagner, the journal has a new look, elegantly formatted and lavishly illustrated entirely in color. **Volume 77 (2005)** contains something of interest for every lover of succulent plants. Space limitation allows me to mention only a few of the highlights.

The **January-February issue** features an article on lesser-known and under-appreciated **succulent members** of the **Portulaca Family**, including the genus *Avonia*. Another article of interest concerns the **hybridization** of **Turbinicarpus** and **Gymnocactus**, which includes useful cultural information. As usual, the **March-April issue** contains the 2005 offering of **the International Succulent Introductions**. There were some real goodies here that I certainly wouldn't have wanted to miss out on. This issue also features three articles of interest for lovers of melocacti with many photos of plants in habitat, especially the one covering **The Melocacti of Chapada Grande, Brazil**, but also those covering **The Succulents of Venezuela's Rio Chama Canyon** and **Trekking for Cuban Cacti**. In the **May-June issue** we find a lengthy article discussing field observations on *Backebergia* and other cacti of **The Balsas Basin** in western Mexico.

The **July-August issue** presents *Pachypodium mikea*, a new arborescent species from **Madagascar**. The features of this plant are carefully compared with its well-known close relatives *P. geayi* and *P. lamerei* and also with *P. ambongense* and the recently described *P. menabeum*. Also of interest in this issue is an article on the **Interdependence of the Galapagos Islands Cacti and Fauna**. Two

travelogues in the **September-October issue** focus on the cacti and succulents of the **Superstition Mountains** near Phoenix and **Gasterias** in habitat in **South Africa**. Articles on epiphytic cacti don't often appear in our journal, but there is one in the September-October issue on **Schlumbergera hybrids** with spectacular flower photos and good cultural information. Finally Part 3 of a three-part series entitled "**Succulents for most Gardens**," appears in this issue (Parts 1 and 2 appear in the previous two issues). Featured in these articles are the genera *Phedimus*, *Hylotelephium* and *Rhodiola*, which I had never heard of, but they turn out to be splits from the genus *Sedum*. Most of the plants discussed are native to various parts of Eurasia and should be of interest to cool-climate gardeners (they should be good for zones 1-6, according to the articles). Not particularly heat tolerant, these plants will be of less interest to those of us living in warmer climates, but we have many other choices of cacti and succulents for growing outdoors. In the final issue of the year, one can learn about *Thelocactus* in habitat and in cultivation, succulent and xeromorphic **Bromeliads of Brazil** (*Dyckia marnier-lapostollei*, in particular) and also the changing face of **cactus fruit growing**. Also in this issue is a special conservation report exploring the threat posed by invasive weeds and wildfires to our **North American deserts**. Sequels to both this conservation report and the article on Brazilian succulent bromeliads are promised for the coming year.

I hope this brief review of Volume 77 of our journal gives the reader some idea of the breadth of coverage now available. We are trying to include more articles of general interest to the succulent hobbyists than has sometimes been true in the past, and I think we are succeeding in accomplishing this. In addition to the various articles included in each issue, regular features include book reviews, a page of succulents on stamps by Peg Spaete, a buyers' guide and appearing in most issues, a research and conservation report by Donna Woodward.

I know that many affiliate club members are not members of **CSSA** and that although you may have access to the **Cactus and Succulent Journal** in your club's library, you may not have been able to become aware of all that the journal has to offer. By **Joining CSSA** and having regular access to your own copy of the journal, you will be able to increase your understanding and appreciation of the wonderful plants that form the basis of our hobby.

Good Growing,
Bob Barth,
Publicity Chair,
CSSA Board of Directors

A Special Announcement for Cactus and Succulent Enthusiasts

The Sacramento Cactus and Succulent Society will hold their 46th annual Show and Sale, Saturday and Sunday, May 6-7, at Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento, CA.

“Nature’s Wonders ... Succulent and Spiny” is the theme of the annual judged show for 2006. Show times are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. The public is invited and admission is free. A map is included for your convenience.

There will also be a sale both days with vendors from many California areas offering a wide selection of cactus and succulents as well as unique pottery to enhance their display. They can answer questions and make suggestions for using these unusual plants in your garden. Sales open at 9 a.m. Saturday, 10 a.m. Sunday.

We welcome you to our California Capitol City and hope you will enjoy our show. For further information please contact:

Lou Grubaugh
Publicity Chair

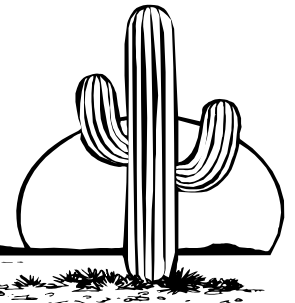
Kathy Hodges
President

(www.sacramentocss.org)

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 a members only plant raffle. 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

UPCOMING EVENTS



BAKERSFIELD CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY EVENTS

- Apr 11 BCSS Meeting 6:30 pm Olive Dr. Church, 5500 Olive Dr.
PROGRAM: Succulents of South Africa
SPEAKER: Rob Skillin
- Apr 25 BCSS Executive meeting at Anne’s house.
- Apr (28) 29-30 Annual BCSS Yard Sale at Jack & Sydney’s house. Set-up will be on the 28th.
- Oct (13)14-15 Annual BCSS Show & Sale at the East Hills Mall.

OTHER CACTUS AND SUCCULENT EVENTS

- Apr 8-9 South Coast C&SS Show & Sale. South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verde. Info: 310-832-2262
- Apr. 15 Cactus Data Plants 6th Annual Potter’s Sale 9am-5pm. 9607 E. Ave. S-12, Littlerock. Ask for Woody
- Apr 22-23 Green Scene Plant Sale, Fullerton Arboretum
- Apr 23 South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show & Sale, South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verde.
- Apr 27-30 Southern California Spring Garden Show, South Coast Plaza, Costa Mesa. Admission free. www.springgardenshow.com
- Apr 29-30 Monterey Bay Area C&SS show & sale, Jardins De San Juan, 115 Third St., San Juan Bautista
- May 6-7 Sacramento C&SS 46th annual Show and Sale, May 6-7, at Shepard Garden and Arts Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd., Sacramento
- May 6-7 Sunset C&SS Show & Sale. Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room. 4117 Overland Ave, Culver City.
- May 20-21 Fresno C&SS Show & Sale. Manchester Center
- May 21 Huntington Plant Sale 10am-5pm. Huntington Gardens
- May 21 Epiphyllum Society Show & Sale. LA Arboretum, Arcadia.

contact the editors for more information

Stephen Cooley

Linda Cooley

thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com