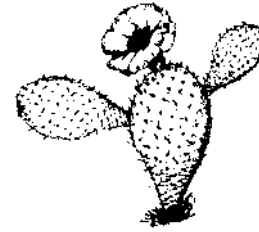




Aeonium
Photo by Linda Cooley

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 9 **May 2006** Number 5

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

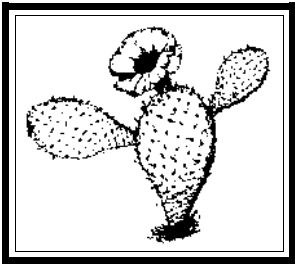
This Month's Program
**A LITTLE POTTED, OR
SMALL PLANTS FOR
SMALL POTS**
CSSA Side Show

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, May 9

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

**Bring a
plant for the
Plant
Exchange**



The Cactus Patch

Volume 9 Number 5

May 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

2006 Chairpersons

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

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

To the fabulous Cactus Club groupies!!

Yes, Mickey and I will be moving eventually to Ft. Collins Colorado. He has accepted a position in the Northern Plains Area of the USDA as Assistant Area Director over 8 states. He will be moving May 15th. I will follow whenever our house sells! So, I may be here a while, but definitely until the middle of July. I have enjoyed being a part of the club, both as a member and an officer. The camaraderie is ever amazing and so supportive. To see the way you all pull together for activities such as the Show and Sale and the recent Yard Sale is amazing.

Our membership in the club has been the most enjoyable part of living in Bakersfield. (And our yard is a living testament to that). It represents the different factions from which we've learned so much. The beautiful blooms that surprise us weekly add to that pleasure. We will miss you all and hope you will consider stopping by whenever you go Northeast. They tell me it is ski country.



I just wanted to send a picture of my *Opuntia*.
Second season and 50+ buds!! It is so fun.

Sincerely,

Vonne Zdenek & Mickey McGuire



With President Vonne busy with her moving plans V.P. Steve Crippen presided over the meeting. And he started by mentioning that Mickey & Vonne would be leaving soon. The upcoming Yard Sale was discussed as was the Garden Festival. Maynard mentioned that we should all get out to the Garden at Cal State now that it is spring (We will be having our June meeting there). He says that the garden was quite popular during the F.A.C.T. open house.

Our program was presented by former president and charter member Rob Skillin. He took us through the succulent riches of



South Africa and Southern Namibia with his presentation of slides from his trip to the Succulent Karoo. The succulent Karoo ranges from south-western Namibia (Richtersveld) south through western South Africa (Namaqualand) and then a little east Little Karoo). We were treated to pictures of plants ranging from the giant *Aloe dichotoma* to diminutive *Conophytum*. We saw *Tylecodon*, *Crassula*, *Haworthia*, and an assortment of mesembs including *Glottiphyllum*, *Fennestraria*, and *Lithops*. South Africa may be the most succulent-rich area in the world.

The meeting ended with the raffle and the new Plant Exchange.



MAY'S PROGRAM

A LITTLE POTTED, OR SMALL PLANTS FOR SMALL POTS CSSA Slide Show

This program is about a neophyte' experiences, failures, and triumphs.

Plant of the Month

SEDUM

by L. M. Moe

The “Plant” of the month for January, 2004 was the family Crassulaceae. In February, 2004 the plant of the month was *Crassula*, the largest genus in the family. The next largest genus in the family is *Sedum* (Stonecrops).

There have been about 280 *Sedum* species described that are perennial herbs to small shrubs (*S. dendroideum* in Mexico), most of which are succulent and are found in north temperate to tropical mountains. There are about 16 species in California, one in Kern County. Sedums hybridize quite easily with *Echeveria*, causing some confusion with names. The leaves of sedums are mostly tightly whorled and can be light silvery gray, bright green, dark green, bluish or even red. This can vary depending on the amount of sun or the coolness of the temperatures. Sedums have small flowers with 5-pointed petals that vary from white to bright yellow or occasionally red or pink.

Some stonecrops are trailing and grow well in hanging baskets (e.g., *S. morganianum*), others grow well in rock gardens (e.g., *S. brevifolium*) and some make nice ground cover plants (e.g., *S. album*). A nice sedum from California (*S. spathulifolium*) with blue-green leaves with reddish margins is quite drought tolerant and grows well in Bakersfield rock gardens.

Sedums are very easy to propagate as almost any tiny leaf or piece of stem that touches the ground will root. Some types become rather invasive but are easy to control since the roots are never very deep. To grow most of these in Bakersfield, they must be protected in winters and summers.

Sedum: Cultivated Stonecrops By Ray Stephenson, Timber Press 1994 is a good book on cultivated Sedums (It may be in our library, but I haven't checked). A good internet site for photos is the Sedum Society at <http://www.cactus-mall.com/sedum/>.



Cactus Data Plants Will be having their annual Spring, Draw-Your-Discount Sale on May 13th, 9am to 5pm. If you didn't go out for the Potter's Sale last month this would be a great, informal field trip.

THE SUCCULENT GARDEN AT CAL STATE

I haven't been out to check on the garden for awhile, so I guess it must be time to weed! Let's have a work morning on **Sunday, May 7 at 8 am**. I think we will need to weed (as always) and could also install more railroad ties. There will probably be cactus and aloes blooming if you are interested in photography.

We should probably work out there one more time before the June meeting, so let's plan on **Sunday, June 11** being a work day as well. Hope to see some of you there!

Linda Cooley



Lampranthus at the Cal State Succulent Garden
Photo by Lynn McDonald



Back to Busy-ness A Letter From Bruce

After a month of relative quiet, we have been hit with one thing after another. Things started quietly with the Commonwealth Games taking over TV on the 18th of March. By the time they ended on the 26th, Botswana had a silver and a bronze medal. The human rights film festival which has been accompanying the Maitisong one decided to run the week before so as not to compete and we watched some on the 24th and 30th.

Then the Festival began in earnest on the 31st with a production of "The Little Prince" which was brought in from Malawi. Good acting and costumes, but I never did like the story. We alternated choir rehearsals and shows for a week (even managing to squeeze in the museum opening of Artists in Botswana) and ended with a grand finale on the 8th of April. Our choir joined another plus the Johannesburg Symphony Orchestra to accompany Sibongile Khumalo, the South African diva. We did John Rutter's "Feel the Spirit", an unusual arrangement of American spirituals done in an English manner. There were also numbers performed by local singers and instrumentalists. The evening was a sellout.

Polly's sister Martha arrived an hour late from Fresno (via Prague and Rome) on the 9th. Fortunately, the Cook boys who had been helping with staging the Maitisong Festival vacated our spare room that morning. Unfortunately, the German President Horst Kohler and his wife Eva arrived that same day and chose to visit the museum. We abandoned Martha (to rest from travel) and did our hostly duty to higher guests.

Polly took Martha to the Thrift shop and shopping on the 10th and 11th. On the 12th we went out to the Kapong Hills to check on the endemic gladiolus (seedpods not yet ripe) followed by a visit to Rob Patterson, an Australian who runs a nursery with the best succulents in the country. We had tea at his new house (not yet finished), which will have a garden on the roof and a water storage area underneath. Then we went out to Mokolodi Nature Reserve for a brief game drive followed by a video of Alexander

McCall Smith at Mokolodi which features in his latest book in the "Lady Detective" series, "Blue Shoes & Happiness". We had hoped he might be there in person, but at least the manager of Mokolodi, Neil Whitson who features in the book was.

Polly took Martha to her friend Maggie's for coffee on the 13th and we set off to the north on Good Friday. We stopped near Shoshong to look at the strange euphorbia there. It was in bud, but plants on the hill had flowers so I tried to climb the fence. Unfortunately, the metal fence post collapsed under me leaving me flat on my back with my foot twisted in the wire. Eventually Polly and Martha rescued me. I limped up the hill and got a piece of the blooming euphorbia, which looks like plain old *Euphorbia cooperi*. I now suspect the one by the road is a hybrid with *Euphorbia ingens*, which appears along the road much further north. We then had one minor incident when the Land Rover started making a horrible racket. Fortunately, a Botswana Defense Force mechanic stopped and rescued us by disconnecting the belt for the air conditioner (which we weren't using anyway). Finally, we arrived at the Khama Rhino Sanctuary and were given a room



Horst and Eva Kohler with Phillip Seqodika, head of art.

at the Educational Center.

Next morning we went on an organized game drive and saw a lot of antelope and zebra. Just at the end, we found one male giraffe. Back at our room we watched nesting Meyer's parrots being mobbed by glossy starlings. After a long nap we set off in the Land Rover and found two rhinos dripping wet next to a pan. Just as they walked away, four giraffe came and drank. On Easter, we went for one last drive and saw two more (or the same?) rhinos twice. We had planned to stop on the way back, but there was no room at the inn (whoops- what holiday was this?) so we ended up at home.

After a day's rest, Polly and Martha have gone off to Pretoria and I'll report on that adventure next time.

The biggest excitement plant-wise was a *Ceropegia* I collected a year ago at the Rhino Sanctuary. It is a puzzle in that when it finally flowered, it had the double bulbed and straight flower tube of *Ceropegia nilotica* but the top of the flower and the



Rhinos with red-billed oxpeckers.

leaves with tiny points look more like *Ceropegia lugardiae*. Both are recorded for Botswana.

Finally, I have been reading an interesting collection of essays on South Africa's Environmental History (Dovers, Edgecombe & Guest eds., 2003, Ohio U. Press). I thereby learned that I pioneered yet another field. The book credits Carolyn Merchant with pioneering the field with an environmental history of New England in 1989. I published "A History of Man's Response to the Misuku Hills Ecosystem" in 1980, but no one reads Dziko, the Geographical Magazine of the University of Malawi.

The book stems from an Environmental History Workshop at the Univ. of Natal, South Africa in July 1996. To quote Jane Carruthers in chapter one, "It was a memorable few days. Very atypically, for a country of generally mild climate, there was snow in South Africa that week - the heaviest fall ever recorded. Together with the exceptional storms, this harsh weather played havoc with carefully planned travel schedules. The province of Kwazulu-Natal was isolated, even the main highways were closed to traffic. The landscape around Pietermeritzburg was littered with fallen trees and broken branches, indigenous and exotic plants alike unable to bear the weight of the snow. A shallow-rooted, tree-sized succulent *Euphorbia*, vulnerable to high wind, collapsed, destroying one participant's motor vehicle."

The book has a whole chapter on prickly pears by Lance van Sittert. It points out that the wealthy have fought to eradicate this "invader", but the poor have fought to keep it as they depend on it for food and profit.

Incidentally, the last recorded snow in Botswana was in the reign of Khama III over a hundred years ago. We have had unusual rain this year as I reported earlier and it has continued into April, although not with as great a strength.

Bruce J. Hargreaves

YARD SALE

By L.M. Moe

The yard sale went well. We made a little less than last year. Thanks especially to Sidney & Jack for all their work and the use of their back yard (including ducks), perfect for a yard sale. A special thanks also to Ed for providing the all important tables and for bringing so many plants, most of which were sold. Bonnie, Mickey & Vonne, Bill, and Lena helped a lot with selling, and Frank was a great help with moving tables. Thanks also to everyone who brought "stuff" to sell.

1st Annual Bakersfield Garden Festival

By Stephen Cooley

The first (of what is hoped to be many) Bakersfield Garden Festival was held at the Bakersfield College Horticultural Unit Saturday, April 22. Our club had a table under the trees along with the Green Thumb Club, Rose, Orchid, and African Violet Societies, Pottery sellers and others. Steve Crippen, Gwen and myself manned the table for the five hours of the festival. Donna



and Les brought a flat of small potted succulents and some larger ones to sell. I brought a bag full of cuttings and rooted pieces to give away and some flyers with club info, a few books, and an album of pictures of what our club has done (Cal State Garden, Meetings, Show & Sale). We managed to sell and give away most of the plants and made \$20 in the process. We didn't treat this as a fund raiser but rather as a way to get the word out about our club. The festival was set up to make people aware of all the things available



The Green Thumb gardening Club

for all kinds of gardening in the city. "How to" demonstrations on koi ponds, tree planting, turf, and bedding plants were presented as well as an on-location broadcast of the local Radio Garden Show. The turn out was fair, though I got the impression that most of the people wandering around were members of the other clubs. A lot showed their enthusiasm for succulents and a few inquired for more info. The Garden Festival is an easy way to get gardening-types aware of our club. We are provided with table(s), and chairs, and it takes just a few people to man the station for a short time. There is plenty of room for us to expand our presence if we wanted to do more.



Donna and Friends

Helping Save Prickly Victims of Development

Steve Crippen sends this link to an article in the New York Times about the Cactus Rescue Crew in Arizona. "Since they began six years ago, the Cactus Rescue Crew has rescued over 27,000 cacti and other native plants from road widening, subdivisions, golf courses and shopping malls in Arizona."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/14/us/14cactus.html>

(Free nytimes.com registration login required)



PLANT EXCHANGE!

We will be having another plant exchange at the next meeting. Feel free to bring ANY plant you wish (last meeting the Lavender that Bonnie brought was popular).

HAS IT BEEN A CENTURY ALREADY?

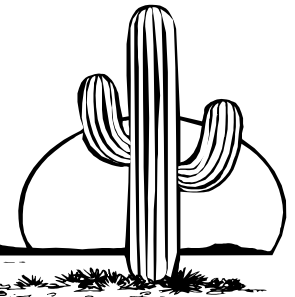
The century plant (*Agave americanus*) on the corner of Pryor and Olive, across the street from the church where we meet is getting ready to bloom. It is sending up its shoot rapidly, about 3 feet in one day! This is in the yard of Alice Hargreaves and is the descendent of the plant her father had bloom in his yard 56 years ago in Stockton. That one was a descendent of one Alice's grandfather had years before that. Come watch it grow.

Anne

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

- May 7 BCSS Garden Work Day – Cal State ESA (FACT) 8am
- May 9 BCSS Meeting 6:30 pm Olive Dr. Church, 5500 Olive Dr.
PROGRAM: "A Little Potted, or Small Pots for Small Plants."
SPEAKER: CSSA Slide Show
- June 11 BCSS Garden Work Day – Cal State ESA (FACT) 8am
- June 13 BCSS Meeting 6pm? Cal State ESA (FACT)
PROGRAM: Annual Potluck Picnic in the Garden
- Oct 14-15 BCSS SHOW & SALE. East Hills Mall

OTHER CACTUS AND SUCCULENT EVENTS

- 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.
- June 2-3 Stockton C&SS Show & Sale, Sherwood Mall, 5308 Pacific Ave, Stockton
- June 17-18 San Francisco C&SS Show & Sale, S.F. County Fair Bldg., golden Gate Park, 9th & Lincoln way. Hours 9-5

contact the editors for more information
Stephen Cooley **Linda Cooley**
thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com