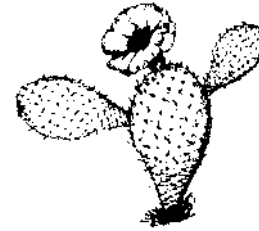




Echinocereus coccineus
in bloom this month at Cal State
Photo by Linda Cooley

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 10 **April 2007** Number 4

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

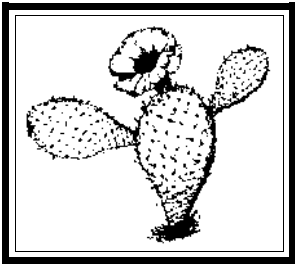
Meteorites

Presented by **Jack Kelley**

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, Apr 10
Olive Drive Church,
5500 Olive drive
at **6:30 PM**
(West of 99 freeway
on corner of Olive drive &
Victor street)

**Plant-of-the-
Month:
Trichodiadema
bulbosum**



The Cactus Patch

Volume 10 Number 4

April 2007

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

2007 Officers

President – Ed Colley
Vice-President – Jerry Garrison
Treasurer - Maynard Moe
Secretary – Anne Lee
Editors - Stephen Cooley
Linda Cooley

2007 Directors

CSSA Representative – Maynard Moe
Past President – Vonne Zdenek

2007 Chairpersons

Hospitality - Bill McDonald
Librarian – Rose Mary Maguire
Field Trips – Lynn McDonald
Historian – Stephen Cooley
Show & Sale – Maynard Moe
Garden Czar – Linda Cooley

Material in The Cactus Patch may be reprinted by non-profit organizations (unless such permission is expressly denied in a note accompanying the material) provided that the proper credit is given to the BCSS & the author and that one copy of the publication containing the reprinted material is sent to the editor. Reproduction in whole or part by any other organization without the permission of the BCSS editor is prohibited. Contact thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com



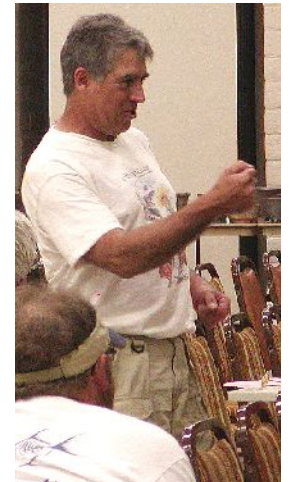
Anna Villalobos, a teacher at the Regional Occupation Center, which teaches vocational classes to high school students, came by to talk about her class that gets students involved in a small business through horticulture. They propagate succulents for sale. She brought along some plants as well.

Sydney talked about the upcoming yard sale and mentioned that there are some agaves that needed to be moved so they could be sold.

Frank Melvin and Sydney told us about Cuija (*Opuntia brasiliensis*) the Plant-of-the-Month. A good pot subject that gets tall (as high as 66 feet in the wild). A small specimen was available to look at.

A bit more discussion was had about the recent freeze, with Aloes and Jade taking the biggest hits it seems.

Mark Muradian from the Fresno club then gave us a talk on Northern Argentine. Not only did we see great pictures of cacti like *Gymnocalycium*, *Rebutia*, *Trichocereus*, and *Cintia*, and fantastic geologic formations, we were also treated to samples of Cactus lumber and license plates. As usual it was a well like presentation and Mark brought a whole table full of his pots to sell.



APRIL'S PROGRAM

Meteorites

by Jack Kelley

Jack is a member of the Kern County Mineral Society and has done extensive research on meteorites. Jack will have his meteorite collection on display.

Questions are welcome.



Also, you are welcome to bring any rocks that you think might be a meteorite for discussion. If you have any cacti or succulents that have been hit by meteorites, bring them, too.

Plant of the Month

Trichodiadema bulbosum

Trichodiadema is a group of mesembs comprised of 34 species, mainly with tuberous roots. They are native to a wide area of southern Africa. *Trichodiadema bulbosum* has the best roots and is often used as a bonsai subject by raising the roots above the surface. All the *Trichodiadema*



Picture by Sydney Kelley

are fairly easy to grow and do not have a critical dormant period like some mesembs. The flowers of the group range from yellow, cream, to pink and can be quite showy. The leaves are tipped with a cluster of bristles which is a good key to identifying the genus.

THE SUCCULENT GARDEN AT CAL STATE

April 1, 2007

Good News:

Plants we thought might be dead due to the freeze are sprouting!

The saguaro has buds on it--for the first time!

Lynn picked up several more native plants to add to the cactus section of the garden.

Many of the plants are blooming now and many more will be blooming in the next couple of weeks. The weather continues to be dry--so that means fewer weeds!

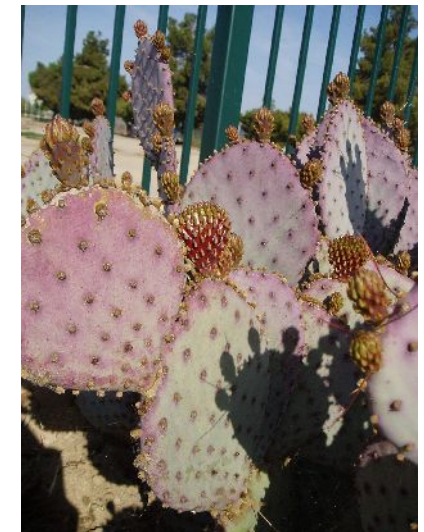
Bad News :

The section of walkway we did last time didn't work. It is all crumbly and cracked. We will have to remove it and do it over....or come up with another idea altogether.

The weather continues to be dry...so that means more watering to do!

The next workday will be May 6--let's meet earlier, because it will be warmer! How about 8 am instead of 9? Hope to see you there.

Linda



How Fast Can A Saguaro Reach Maturity?

By Mark A. Dimmitt

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum

Reprinted from the Cactus and Succulent Journal,
May-June 1997 (Vol. 69 No.3)

The giant saguaro (*Carnegie gigantea*) is one of the most conspicuous plants of the desert Southwest. It is a familiar sight in many a Western movie and almost every cartoon depicting a desert theme, though its natural distribution is almost completely confined to southern Arizona and western Sonora, Mexico. This is one of the few species in the Cactaceae that have been extensively studied, and its basic ecology is now well understood.

Much of the fundamental research was published in a trilogy of articles by Steenbergh and Lowe that describe, among many other things, growth rates, maturity, and longevity. Growth rate is controlled mainly by the water storage capacity (i.e., size) of the plant and the amount of water available in the environment. The latter factor is governed by rainfall and soil texture. Saguaros, regardless of age, mature (flower for the first time) when they are about eight feet (2.4 m) tall.

Because a tiny cactus can store little water, a seedling can continue growing for a very limited time after the soil dries out. The larger it is, the more water it contains and thus the longer into the dry periods it can continue to grow. So an average saguaro in the wild takes almost a decade to attain its first inch (2.5 cm) in height, and after 30 years it is only two feet (0.6 m) tall. But the next two feet take only another 10 years, and plants six feet (1.8 m) tall are growing a relatively impressive four inches (10 cm) a year.

In the driest of Steenbergh and Lowe's study sites (Organpipe Cactus National Monument, average annual rainfall 9 inches or 228 mm), saguaros take an average of 75 years to attain maturity from seed. In the wettest site (Rincon Mountains east of Tucson, Arizona, 16 inches/400 mm rainfall), they reach maturity in only 40 years. In the Tucson Mountains on the west side of Tucson (12 inches/300 mm) maturity is reached in 55 years.

Saguaros respond to supplemental water and fertilizer with even faster growth than in nature. Nurseries can produce six-inch-tall (15.2 cm) seedlings under greenhouse conditions in three years. I obtained a batch of such seedlings in 1979 and planted them in "sandy soil on the west side of Tucson, where they should take about 55 years to flower on their own. They were irrigated twice weekly from April through October

and fertilized about once a month. The first plant flowered 17 years after planting, or 20 years from seed.

The saguaro is neither the fastest- nor slowest- growing of the giant columnar cacti. Cardon (*Pachycereus pringlei*) and hecho (*P. pecten-aboriginum*) can grow nearly two feet (0.6 m) a year but cannot mature in Tucson because they are extremely frost-tender. *Trichocereus terscheckii* may be the champion of the hardy species. After growing fairly slowly to three feet (0.9 m) tall, plants are capable of adding 18 inches (46 cm) a year. After 17 years in the ground from six-inch seedlings, my largest is 11 feet (3.4 m) tall and has several branches from one to six feet long. It flowered when it was seven feet (2.1 m) tall after 14 years in the ground. At the slow end of the scale are two *Trichocereus tarijensis* var. *poco* that are only five and seven feet (1.5 and 2.1 m) tall at 17 years from six-inch seedlings; they have not yet flowered. Organpipe cacti (*Stenocereus thurberi*) and senita (*Lophocereus schottii*) are intermediate between these extremes in growth rate, though neither flowers until quite large.

[Our Saguaro reached 8 feet tall sometime last year,
and now has flower buds - editor]



Gcwihaba at Last!

A Letter From Bruce

Unlike last year when it dumped rain, February was fairly dry. We set out on the 20th across the Transkalahari Highway and reached Ghanzi at dusk. Polly & I (traveling in our own LandRover) checked into a chalet at the Kalahari Arms while the rest of the Millennium Seed Bank bunch camped out back. (Polly & I did our camping there back in 1969.)

Next day while government vehicles got themselves organized, Polly & I plus the MSB vehicle went out to the little Tsau Hill on the edge of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve but failed to find the *Adenium boehmianum* which grows there. We finally all joined up at Sehitwa, but Polly & I headed north to the nearest gas station at Gomare. The rest went straight on to Gcwihaba and camped in the dark. Polly & I stopped and slept on top of the Rover when it got dark, joining the others and setting up our tent in the morning.

Gcwihaba was a real sight. BeBeers has sponsored an



exploration effort to uncover more caves and had set up a real tent city with contingents from Xaixai (also spelled Caecae etc.) Village, the Museum and the BDF (Army). They even had a dish and generator so they could watch TV! Although most of the excavated sand had been carted away,

there was still a mound by the main cave entrance.

After setting up the tent, we joined the rest of the MSB group at the cave entrance for lunch. We toured the cave and Polly finally got to see the fig tree roots going down into the entrance (the roughest part of the tour as the trail goes down a steep jumble of rocks). We then looked at cave formations which have a break in them from a time when there was an earthquake. Although the tourist route now avoids the main bat roosts, we did see quite a number of them as well as cockroaches and other insects which feed on the thick layer of bat dung. Fortunately the cave is dry, so this is not a real problem.



We looked at plants across the valley from the cave and found an orchid! Actually it was Puna Makati from Veld Products Research & Development who found it. She asked me what it was

and I off-handedly said (judging by the long narrow succulent leaves) "It's probably another *Albuca* species". Puna insisted on knowing which one, so I dug it up to grow and see. Much to my surprise it had tubers in a chain which is typical of some *Eulophia* species. "It's an orchid", I said and Puna asked "How do you know?" To this I replied, "The tubers look like testicles (Orchis in Greek). Puna then said, "I wouldn't know about that!"

We next stopped at a beautiful stand of *Aloe littoralis* on a rock cliff next to the cave, but our work was interrupted by lightning, wind rain and hail - the only storm of the whole trip.



When we got back to camp we found two of the lightweight tents were flattened. Our tent was standing, but half of a leadwood tree was leaning on it! (Fortunately our two camp chairs blocked the fall so there was no damage.)

While dinner was underway I walked around the camp site

and found many plants of *Aloe littoralis* had been toppled in a recent fire. One of them had ten heads! (In a species described as having one!) I also found a large *Raphionacme*, but was unable to dig it up as the large tuber was wedged between rocks. It looks like one I collected north of Francistown two years ago, but which has not bloomed. It is probably *Raphionacme grandiflora*. (This is not in the latest checklist for Botswana, but Peter Bruyns says he collected it here.)

Next day we drove west and found a few interesting plants - *Euphorbia monteiroi*, another *Eulophia* (not as succulent), an *Orbea* (probably *lugardii*) and a shrub with orange fruits that taste like (and are related to) Persimmons. We collected bags of this last fruit!) We proceeded through Xaixai to the new Aha Hills road. We climbed the hills, but found nothing interesting. Polly

rested under a mongongo Nut tree (a succulent barked tree in the Spurge family) and managed to dig up a bulb of *Pancretium* (a hallucinogenic relative of *Amaryllis*) without even leaving her sleeping mat!

We then turned back to Xaixai and went west to the Namibian border. We followed a rough border track north back through the Aha Hills and found some wild sweet potatoes dug up by wild pigs. We spent the night at the Police camp at the border post of Dobe. Showers and drinking water were available next door at the army camp. Quite a change from the old San (Bushman) village recorded here in years gone by.

Next morning we proceeded east to Qangwa and collected a rare yellow snapdragon. The rest of the group went back to Dobe and then north to the northwest corner of Botswana. It was rough going in deep sand, they had flats and were exhausted, but they eventually made it back. Polly & I headed east and found a tall bright yellow *Albuca*. While I dug up the bulb, Polly tried to put the plant in the herbarium press and found the juice very irritating.

To be continued

Bruce J. Hargreaves



FIELD TRIPS

WIND WOLVES PRESERVE

Work party dates: Apr 14, May 12, June 9.

RANCHO SANTA ANA BOTANICAL GARDEN

Well, we did not get to RSABG early enough to buy much there. The members were there clamoring for the 0900 sale @ 0800. For the items we did not get, we can consider their autumn sale which is 4x as large, in early Nov. We did go to Theo. Payne first and got Pat 3 plants, *Lessingia*, low growing ground covers that can live at 8000 ft. But, alas, it is an annual we just discovered!

We did purchase: *Keckiella*, red *Calliandra*, *Hyptis*, *Eriogonum fasciculatum*, *Ornithostaphylos*, *Galvezia*.

There was only one *Dudleya* -- *hassei*, so I got one small one, (opposed

to \$22.50) in case it was not desired/liked.

Also bought a tiny plant recommended by the nursery woman - *Sidalcea stipularis*.

Most disappointed I was not able to find the apricot mallow, one of my personal favorites!

Lynn McDonald

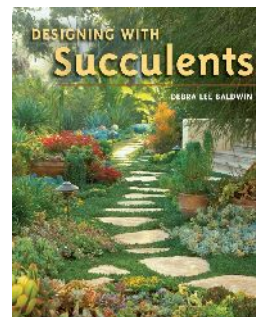


Our Library

Librarian Rose Mary Maguire would like to encourage everyone to check out the library. She is anxious to have you discover the great books that the club has. For more info, contact her

Received This Month

[I received 3 emails this last month that might be of interest to our members – Editor]



Designing With Succulents

I'm pleased to announce that my book, *Designing with Succulents*, is being released by Timber Press this week, two weeks earlier than scheduled. Copies will be available to retailers, readers and reviewers by April 1.

Designing with Succulents includes 310 photos and the kind of detailed, informative text that has positioned Timber Press as the top publisher of horticultural books.

The release is the culmination of a two-year process that involved a year of intensive research, writing and photography, followed by a year of editing and production. The result is the only book

drought-tolerant plants in container gardens and landscape applications. It's visual, with a strong emphasis on design; a whole chapter, for example, is dedicated to colorful foliage.

For more information about the book, please visit Timber's website or mine, or simply Google *Designing with Succulents*.

Very best regards,
Debra Lee Baldwin
Garden & Design Writer
Author, *Designing with Succulents*
www.debraleebaldwin.com
www.timberpress.com

Specialty Pots

I came across your name while researching cactus and succulent growers and clubs and am seeking to advertise my unique planting containers in The Cactus Patch Newsletter. I would also be interested in attending any shows you may have coming up. If you could please check out my web site and let me know if you think we could be a good fit with your organization, I would very much like to hear back from you. The prices on my web site are retail prices but if we were able to advertise in your magazine or if I could come to Bakersfield and attend any shows you may have, I would give special pricing for your club.

Please let me know if this is of interest to you.

Sincerely,
Marjorie Cosgrove
www.neustoneproducts.com
Neustone Products /Rock Art Gardens

Another 'Complete' Cacti Book

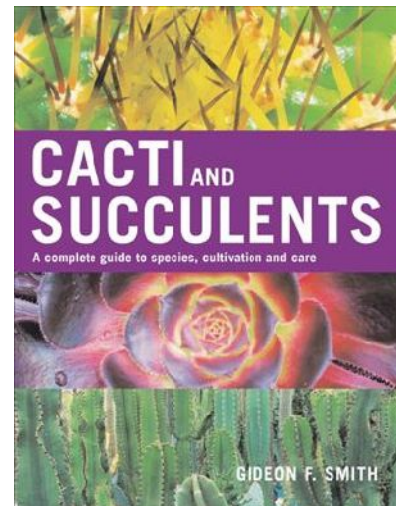
Cacti and Succulents:
A Complete Guide to Species, Cultivation and Care

Captivate with Cacti and Succulents!

Batavia, IL – March 14, 2007 – From apartment dwellers to vast

land owners, cacti and succulents offer a mesmerizing landscape of possibility. They are simply too dramatic not to be noticed and admired.

Cacti and Succulents will familiarize readers with the fascinating world of cacti and succulents, and introduce a selection of easy-to-grow species suitable for beginners, as well as some of the more difficult and desirable species that make up this fascinating group of plants. Featuring over 50 species of cacti and more than 10 families of succulents, including their ideal locations, natural habitats, and care and feeding needs, *Cacti and Succulents* helps readers find the best plants for their interior and outdoor decorating needs. Complete descriptions, including color photographs, will help readers identify their plants and detailed care instructions will help them make sure that their plants thrive. Gideon Smith highlights plants from six garden collections the world over, from Zurich to Phoenix. This is a great addition to any gardener's library.



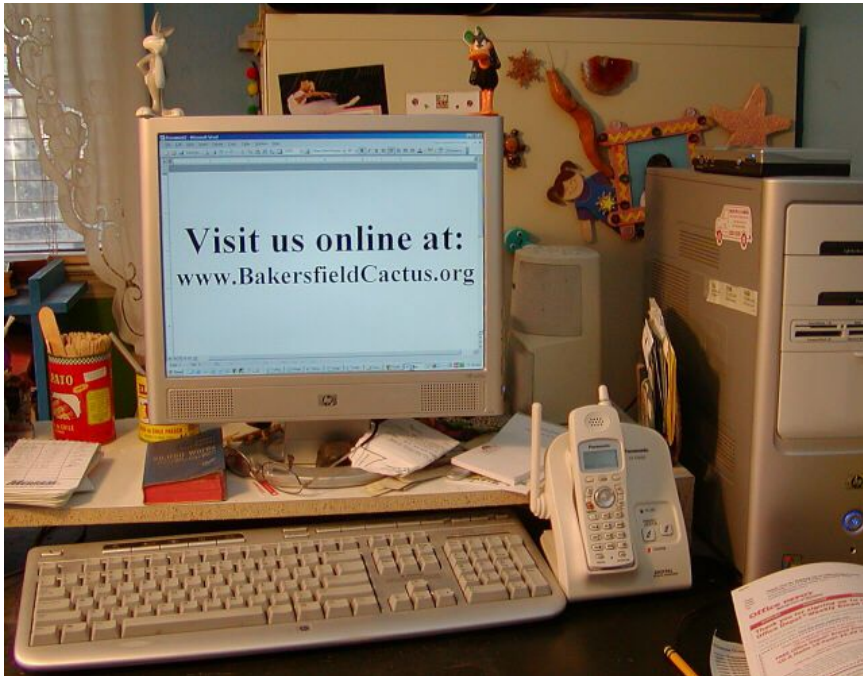
Gideon Smith is Chief Director: Research and Scientific Services at the South African National Biodiversity Institute, and holds the John Acocks professorial chair at the University of Pretoria. As a past president of the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study, and chairman of the World Flora Project, he also holds various positions on the steering committees of international botanical initiatives. His work on succulents has been widely recognized and his is the

recipient of the prestigious Cactus d'Or (Monaco/IOS), a Fellowship from the American Cactus and Succulent Society and the Allen Dyer Medal (South African Succulent Society). He has published numerous books, scientific and popular papers on succulent plants.

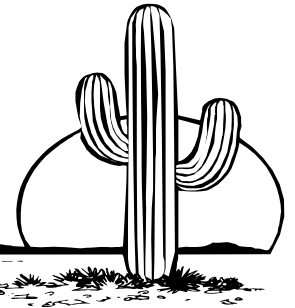
Book Details:

Title: *Cacti and Succulents, A Complete Guide to Species,*

Cultivation and Care
 Author: Gideon F. Smith
 Publisher: Ball Publishing, Distributed by Independent Publishers Group
 Publication: April 2007, \$29.95 (CAN \$37.95), Hardcover, ISBN: 978-1-883052-55-3
 Gardening, 160 pages, 8½ x 11, hardcover, color photographs
 Available at bookstores everywhere and through Ball Publishing, 335 N. River St., Batavia, IL 60510. Toll-free number for orders only 1-888-888-0013. Visit us online at www.ballpublishing.com



UPCOMING EVENTS



Bakersfield Cactus and Succulent Society Events

- Apr 10 BCSS Meeting 6:30pm Olive Drive Church
 Speaker: Jack Kelley Program: Meteorites
- Apr 14-15 Annual BCSS Yard Sale at Sydney & Jack's house
- May 5 Garden Work day – Cal State
- May 8 BCSS Meeting 6:30pm Olive Drive Church
- Jun 2 Garden Work day – Cal State
- Jun 12 BCSS Meeting 6:30pm at Cal State Garden?

Other Cactus and Succulent Events

- Apr 7-8 South Coast C&S Show & Sale. 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes.
- Apr 21-22 Fullerton Arboretum Green Scene Plant Sale
- Apr 22 South Bay Epiphyllum Show and Sale South Coast Botanical Gardens.
- May 5-6 Sunset Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale 4117 Overland Ave. Culver City, CA
- May 20 Huntington Botanical Garden Plant Sale 1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, CA
- May 20 Epiphyllum Society S&S LA County Arboretum
- Jun 2-3 San Diego CSS Show & Sale Balboa Park, Room 101

Membership in the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society costs \$10 per year for an individual and only \$15 a year for a family. To become a member contact:

Maynard Moe, treasurer
Lithops44@bak.rr.com

contact the editors for more information

Stephen Cooley
thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com

Linda Cooley