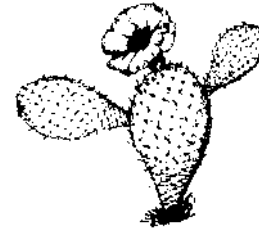




Conophytum in bloom.
Photo by Stephen Cooley

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 10 **December 2007** Number 12

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

thecactuspatch@bak.rr.com

This Month's Program

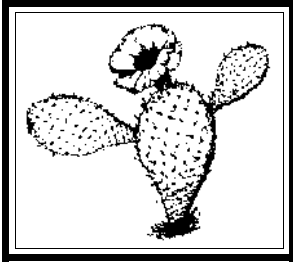
Annual December Potluck

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, Dec. 11
Olive Drive Church,
5500 Olive drive
at 6:00 PM

(Building 6, Room 604)

**Please note the
change of time
and room for
the meeting!**



The Cactus Patch

Volume 10 Number 12
December 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

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President Ed Colley started out the meeting by telling us that we will be meeting in a NEW ROOM starting in DECEMBER. Our new meeting place will be in BUILDING 6, ROOM 604. We will try to have people and signs out to help guide everyone to the proper place for our annual December potluck and silent auction.

Treasurer Maynard thanked everyone who helped out with our 8th Show & Sale and asks that if you have any suggestions on how to make next year's show better let him know. We made about \$600 from the sale (the Spring Yard Sale makes us the most money).

Sydney presented certificates of the 'People's Choice Awards' from the show:

Jerry Garrison – Ugliest Plant in Show (kind of a compliment, really)
Nick Wilkerson – Most Out-of-this-World and Best-in-Show
Sidney Kelley – Fuzziest
Nathaniel Cooley – Most Dangerous Looking

The members were then asked to help give the club some advice and ideas on what programs we should present in the future. Some of the suggestions were to have Joe Wujick come back and give a talk as well as have Rob Skillin give his Utah presentation again. If you have something you would like to see at a meeting, let an officer know.

Jerry then gave us an informal presentation on preparing our plants for the winter. Many good ideas were discussed, such as: bring your tender plants inside or up on the porch, covering your plants, and putting small pots inside bigger pots that are then insulated with styrofoam peanuts. Copies of Linda Cooley's article "Cold Enough to Freeze Your Bud Off" from the February 2007 Cactus Patch were

available to those at the meeting as well.

Jack Reynolds then talked about the Plant-of-the-Month he brought in, a wonderful specimen of *Euphorbia viguieri*.

Ann Lee came forward with a great idea. Each month we should have a “Brag Table.” You can bring in any plant that you think is doing especially well or is somehow special and tell the club about it. More about this in the next Cactus Patch.

Bruce gave us a more extended talk on his finding Samphire in Plymouth, England (for those of you that missed the meeting, some of what he told us is included in this month’s letter on page 7).

The meeting ended as usual with a spirited raffle of some great plants.



DECEMBER'S PROGRAM

We will be starting a little earlier this year with our Potluck and Auction, with set- up at 6:00pm. The rules for the potluck are simple: there are no rules. Bring any kind of dish you want to share, and don't forget something sweet to eat. You may want to bring your own forks, knives and good plates, the Club will furnish plastic forks and knives and paper plates. The Club will supply sodas and cups. The whole family is invited!

We will also have our Silent Auction, where members bid on special plants. If you have a special item you would like to donate to be auctioned off, please bring it and add it to the auction tables.

Ed, President, 2007

[Remember, we will be meeting at a new place – Building 6, room 604!]

Plant of the Month

Bring anything that is made from cactus to eat at our Potluck!



Shangri-La A Letter From Bruce

Only a few noteworthy events happened in October. (And I missed out Polly's birthday treat - a performance of "Queen" courtesy of Anne -- at the end of September. I'll get back to that when we get to Toronto.) On 12th Oct. the Beale library had its annual book sale. They sell the most amazing things! I bought (among a lot of others) a book called "A Country Herbal" by Lesley Gordon (1980, Mayflower Books, N.Y.) for a mere \$3. It has a lot of old illustrations as well as information on many common and not so common herbs. Among these is a whole page on Samphire. I learned:

- 1) The name probably derives from St. Peter. [Peter means belonging to the rock.]
- 2) It can be cultivated, but only in soil treated with Kelp (brown seaweed).
- 3) It has a "hot spicy flavour" and may be eaten fresh or pickled.
- 4) Shakespeare mentions it in King Lear –
Half way down
Hangs one who gathers samphire, dreadful trade!

The next day, of course, was the annual BCSS show & sale. I had taken one of the poster displays and redone it (to emphasize that the Karoo is actually drier than the Kgalagadi) and then noted a full page ad in the Californian for a new drug for appetite suppression. The plant used is a Caralluma which is another carrion flower related to Hoodia. Anne helped me find pictures on the internet and I whipped up another poster for the show on "Drugs from Succulents".

Finally, on 25th Oct. Polly, Anne & I went to Tehachapi. The first stop was on Sand Creek Road for red and green rocks. We were startled to see antelope (pronghorn & African) as well as a grizzly bear! For some reason, none of them moved. Next we went back into town for Quilting stores, an antique store and lunch. Then we went out to Mourning Cloak Ranch to see how

the garden is doing. Even taking into account the season, it looks a bit rundown. The fall colors were the best thing there. There was no sign of the Delospermas except for the labels! We returned by the old road and watched a train on the Loop. Anne recalled having actually traveled on a train around it! (I missed my chance in 1961 when they still ran passenger trains because I wanted to sleep in and the bus left later.) Finally, we stopped at Murray Family Farms and bought weird gourds.

But back to our journey home from Botswana: On the 16th of July we took a bus from Plymouth to Newquay in Cornwall. We were met at the bus station by Hazel Meredith who was our mountainside neighbor 30 years ago in Malawi. (She also taught Biology at the University.) Every year she has added a note to her Christmas newsletter inviting us to visit. We finally did so. Her house is delightfully situated overlooking Fistral Beach with a good view of bathers, seagulls and the occasional northern gannet. At sunset we walked up the road with her black Labrador, Pitch. Almost immediately we came to a patch of succulents in flower.



Shangri-La



Stella

The sign on the gate said “Shangri-La” and the living room was filled with Asian artifacts. We met Rose Murphey and Stella M. Turk, a book was brought out showing the Sedum in question, and the garden out back yielded the narrow-leaved form as well as a pink-flowered *S. spurium* and the white flowered *Crassula alba*. Although small, the garden had two sheds squeezed in - one with books and the other with seashells. Our visit ended, of course, with tea.

From Shangri-La we

They turned out to be a variety of the common beet! At the end of the road I found a Sedum in flower. We looked it up in Hazel’s vast library (she monitors plants for the British National Trust) and it keyed out to *Sedum kamtschaticum*. Unfortunately there was no illustration and the book said the plants in Britain had narrow leaves. (The plant I found had broad ones.)

Next morning Hazel took us to the village of Reskadinnick and found a delightful cottage among the brambles on a winding lane.



Rose

visited the sea shore at Godrevy Point. Hazel was admitted free with her National Trust card and we proceeded to a hill slope covered in blooming purple heather. A rock wall there had wall pennyworts with scalloped round succulent leaves. They are in the Portulaca family and are said to be useful for cuts, chilblains, inflammation and "the stone". On the cliff side were succulents of "pink purslane", *Claytonia sibirica*, of the same family. There were also succulent white-flowered sea spurreys of the Carnation family. We had a picnic lunch overlooking the light house which is just off shore on a small island.

After lunch we visited nearby Gwithian which has a lichen-covered stone church. The church yard has an old Celtic cross and *Crassula alba* on an old grave. Inside the church the pews were decorated with colorful needlework kneeling cushions. A nearby garden had *Agave americana*! We then had drinks at the village of Cubert where there was more pennywort on the walls. We walked around the nearby dunes (another National Trust) and found the sea spurge, *Euphorbia paralias*, which was being eaten by snails which Hazel says were brought in from the Mediterranean. There were also plants of the smaller Portland spurge, *E. portlandica*. Another plant in bloom was the sea bindweed which has typical convolvulus flowers. Sea holly is not succulent, but the pale bluish green color of this thistle is striking. Plants of ragwort, *Senecio jacobaea*, were being eaten by caterpillars of the cinnabar moth. Despite numerous dogs, there were plenty of rabbits in warrens in the dunes

We reached Hazel's house at 6:46 and the two large suitcases which had followed us from London arrived at 7. I felt sorry for the delivery man who lugged them up the steep steps. One final note is that Hazel's garden had the common orpine (*Sedum telephium*) as well as that ubiquitous weed *Euphorbia peplus*. We did a lot more in Cornwall, but I'll write about that later.

Bruce J. Hargreaves

Did Succulents Save Her Home?

this story was sent to us by Andrew Honig

The water-rich plants at a Rancho Santa Fe residence kept the flames at bay.

By Debra Lee Baldwin
Special to The Times

November 8 2007

SUCCULENTS have soared in popularity recently because they're drought-tolerant, easy-care and just plain cool to look at, and now there's another compelling reason to grow them: They're fire-retardant. During last month's wildfires, succulents -- which by definition store water in plump leaves and stems -- apparently stopped a blaze in its tracks.

"Succulents saved our home!" Suzy and Rob Schaefer wrote in a jubilant e-mail to friends and family after they returned to their fire-ravaged neighborhood in Rancho Santa Fe. The tabloidian statement is out of character for the low-key couple -- he's retired and she's an artist -- but it seems justified.

Their garden of aloes, agaves, euphorbias and more -- created by Suzy with the help of San Diego landscape architect Robert Dean -- encircles the Southwest-style home, which is adjacent to a palm- and eucalyptus-filled canyon. The garden is intact, but many of the canyon's trees are blackened skeletons.

The complete article can be viewed at:
<http://www.latimes.com/features/home/la-hm-succulent8nov08.1.3771479.story>

Visit latimes.com at <http://www.latimes.com>

The Club's Recent Trip To GROW Nursery in Cambria



www.grownursery.com/

CSSA Promotional Article (2007, No. 2)

The major events on the 2007 Calendar for the CSSA are now past, the CSSA biennial convention in Seattle in late May and the annual CSSA Show and Sale at the Huntington Botanical Garden in late June. The convention, though not well attended, was greatly enjoyed by attendees and was clearly a success in many ways. We can't thank the Cascade Society enough for all they did to make the convention successful. The CSSA Show was the most spectacular in many years and the accompanying sale broke all previous records.

However, the CSSA Journal, lavishly illustrated in full color, keeps appearing every other month and according to recent survey results, it is the most valuable asset of membership for most CSSA members. Journal editor Russell Wagner continues to do a superb job with the Journal and I would like to briefly review the contents of Volume 78 (2006) so all you affiliate club members who don't yet belong to CSSA can see what you are missing by not having your own personal copy.

A feature article in the January-February issue is a special conservation report by Jan Emming entitled "The Threat that Invasive Weeds and Wildfires Pose to Our North American Desert Biomes." Part 2 of this series deals with the Saguaros of the Sonoran Desert, the quintessential North American cactus. The same issue also contains two articles on terrestrial bromeliads (a recent interest of mine), *Hechtias* in Mexico and *Dyckias* and other genera in Brazil. These plants fit nicely into any succulent collection.

Much of the March-April issue is devoted to John Lavranos and his legacy of botanical discoveries. A wonderful cartoon of John by Gerhard Marx graces the cover. This issue is traditionally eagerly awaited by subscribers, as it contains the ISI plant offerings for the year.

The lead article in the May-June issue discusses the succulent riches of the Ankarana Special Reserves in Madagascar. Irwin Lightstone discusses new technologies for close-up photography

of succulents and Brian Kemble shares some stunning photos of *Agave guadalupensis*. The first article in a new series by Elton Roberts entitled "Home Grown: Cactus Tips from a Master Grower" appears in this issue. This well-illustrated series discusses the horticultural requirements of various (mostly cactus) genera, some of which are notoriously difficult to grow successfully in cultivation.

In addition to another article in the "Home Grown" series, the July-August issue features two articles by Root Gorelick on cactus localities in New Mexico, and a description of an extraordinary new species of *Rhytidocaulon* from Somalia whose flowers have strange spider-web-like hairs across the corona.

In the September – October issue we find a delightful South African travelogue by Sue Hakala, winner of a Schwartz travel grant, which allowed her to visit that land of succulent riches for the first time. Another major article in this issue covers the diverse globose cactus community of a site in Argentina's Cordoba Province. The November – December issue is a special issue twice the size of a normal issue devoted to pendent and cliff-dwelling succulents from all over the world, many of which do beautifully in cultivation in hanging baskets.

Features appearing in most issues include the Research and Conservation Report by Donna Woodward, Succulents on Stamps by Peg Spaete, and book reviews by various authors. A number of important succulent publications were reviewed in the Journal in 2006, including *Ferocactus* by John Pilbeam and Derek Bowdery, *Grass Aloes in the South African Veld* by Charles Craib, *Echeveria Cultivars* by Lorraine Schulz and Attila Kapitany, *Stapeliads of Southern Africa and Madagascar* by Peter Bruyns, *Teratopia: the World of Cristate and Variegated Succulents* by Gordon Rowley, and *The New Cactus Lexicon* by David Hunt and others. All of these volumes are valuable additions to anyone's succulent library.

Good growing,

Bob Barth, Publicity Chair, CSSA Board of Directors



We should be thinking about officers for next year.
The positions that you are invited to volunteer for are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer

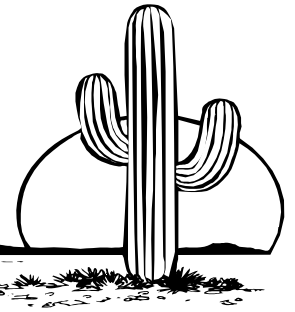
Stephen Cooley, I hope you will continue
Bill McDonald, I hope you will also continue

Membership in the Bakersfield cactus & Succulents Society costs \$10 per year for an individual and \$15 a year for family. Being a member you'll receive 12 issues of the Cactus Patch, also entitles you to go on Club field Trips, to out of town places. You will get a very nice name tag to wear at club meetings and at our Show and Sale, that we have in October every year. Buy tickets for are raffle plants, that is at the plant table, at every club meeting, and win plants for you collections. All this is in addition to the wonderful programs and knowledgeable club members at the meeting, to tell you anything you want to know about your plants, in your collections.

Ed Colley, President, 2007.

Visit us on the web at:
www.BakersfieldCactus.org

UPCOMING EVENTS



BAKERSFIELD CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY EVENTS

- Dec 11 BCSS Meeting 6:30pm Olive Drive Church
program: Holiday Potluck, Silent Raffle, Fun
- Jan 8 BCSS Meeting 6:30pm Olive Drive Church

OTHER CACTUS AND SUCCULENT EVENTS

- Feb 9 Sand Diego Winter Show & sale 9am to 4pm. Room 101 Casa Del Prado, Balboa Park.
- Apr 12-13 South Coast C&SS Show & Sale. South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes
- Apr 19-20 Green Scene Plant Sale at the Fullerton Arboretum. 1900 Associated Rd, Fullerton
- Apr 27 South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show & Sale. South Coast Botanical Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd, Palos Verdes
- May 3-4 Sunset C&SS Show & Sale Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Ave, Culver City

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