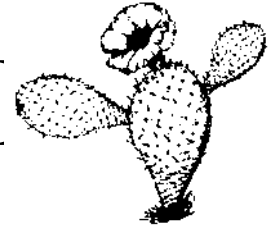


# THE CACTUS PATCH



*Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei*

Volume 18 **March 2015** Number 3

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program  
**The Klein Karoo to the Great Karoo  
and Richtersveld, South Africa**  
Woody Minnich  
@ St Paul's Episcopal Church  
6:30 PM

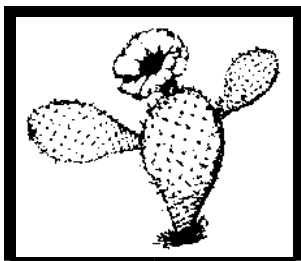
Monthly Meeting  
Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 PM  
Meet the Speaker  
Dinner @ 5:00  
Sizzler  
900 Real Rd.

2015  
Memberships  
Due now  
If you have not paid,  
this is your last  
newsletter

The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society  
% Polly Hargreaves, editor  
polyppearl@hotmail.com



**Mystery Plant**  
On Cozumel  
BJH



# The Cactus Patch

## Volume 18 Number 3

### March 2015

The Cactus Patch is the official publication of the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society of Bakersfield, California



Membership in the Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society costs \$20 per year for an individual and \$25 a year for a family.

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*Visit Us On the Web!*

[www.BakersfieldCactus.org](http://www.BakersfieldCactus.org)

~2~

## **March 10<sup>th</sup> MEETING**

### **SOUTH AFRICA, The Little and Great Karoo Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich**

Nowhere in the world is there a richer floristic region than that of South Africa. The diversity of plants, from the monocots to the dicots, is just fantastic. From the bulbs and grasses to the abundant succulents, never is there a time when flowers aren't present. Besides the great wealth of very specialized and often endemic succulent plants, there is also a wonderful array of curious animals. The lizards, snakes and tortoises are first to grab your attention, while the often secretive mammals range from the small Meercats, to the rambunctious Baboons and numerous large herbivores. None of these are to be missed! There are also very specialized and often numerous populations of insects. These striking creepy-crawlers are like the plants, everywhere! South Africa is a magnificent place of color, form and texture. Life is everywhere and there is never a dull moment. No matter how many trips one makes to these areas, finding something intriguing and beautiful is always easy!

Visiting this kind of succulent rich expanse truly opens one's eyes to the diversity of the plants we love so much. Seeing them in habitat also helps to give us the knowledge needed to better cultivate them



successfully in the greenhouse and garden. Hopefully, for those of you unable to travel to these special places where so many succulents grow, this presentation will allow you gain insight into some of the secrets found while being in South Africa's wild places.

~3~

## Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich 2015

Woody has been in the cactus hobby for some 45 years and is well known for his participation in many of the cactus and succulent clubs. He is an honorary life member of nine clubs as well as a life member of CSSA (Cactus & Succulent Society of America.) He is known for his extensive field work studying primarily the cactus family. He has traveled throughout Africa, Australia, South America, Madagascar, Mexico, New Zealand, Socotra and Yemen. He has extensive knowledge of the cactus family as well as many other succulent groups.



His photography is special and his commentary very entertaining and educational. He is a recognized international speaker and has spoken for plant conventions and organizations all over the world.

His cactus and succulent nursery, Cactus Data Plants was started in 1975. Cactus Data Plants specializes in show specimens and rare cacti and other succulents.

Woody and his wife Kathy live in the beautiful mountains south of Santa Fe New Mexico, in a region called Cedar Grove. He has a small 1,200 sq. ft. greenhouse and a few cold frames where he grows his unique plants. He is a retired high school teacher of 32 years where he taught Graphic Arts, Architecture, Art and Health.

<http://start.cortera.com/company/research/l3n1rvl2m/cactus-data-plants/>

Visit us on the Web!

[www.BakersfieldCactus.org](http://www.BakersfieldCactus.org)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/BakersfieldCactus>

~4~

## February 10, 2015



We all gained an appreciation for FOG when Paul described the habitats that are defined by and dependent upon it; on three continents, no less.

South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society  
**43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Show & Sale**  
April 11-12, 2015 9 am-4 pm  
South Coast Botanic Garden  
26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula

Show included with paid  
Garden admission: Adult \$9;  
senior/student w/ID \$6;  
child 5-12 \$4; under 5 free;  
Garden members free.

*Aloe 'kelly blue'*

~5~



## President's Corner

Well here we are charging into March. A sixth of the year is already gone. We had a good meeting February 10<sup>th</sup>. Turn out was good but I would always like to see more members participate.

Paul Klassen, from England, gave an interesting presentation about the effects of fog in the deserts of Baja, Chili and Namibia. So far we have had presenters from California to England in just two months. Not bad for our small group.

February 15<sup>th</sup> we attacked the weeds at our garden at CSUB. The weather was much better, the turn out was great and with Stephen Cooley guiding us I think we can whip the garden into shape.

February 21<sup>st</sup> we got to play in the cement mud at Sidney Kelley's home in a "hypertufa workshop". The turn out was great, we all got to regress to our inner child and play in the mud. What more could you ask for. Sidney did her normal great job of co-ordinating and facilitating the workshop. We all got to enjoy Sidney's back yard.

The Special Events Committee will be working on other events and activities.

Paulette and I found an interesting dealer in Ventura a couple of weeks ago.

It is Ventura Cactus and Succulent 1166 N. Ventura Ave., Ventura. Phone 818-300-3590. It is a small home and yard converted to a cactus and succulent nursery. The owner Parvin Niv is very helpful and their prices are very reasonable. I would not drive over just for this one location but it is well worthwhile to drop in if you are in the area. Note: Closed Sunday and Monday.

Well that is it for now. Hope to see you March 10<sup>th</sup>.

*Frank Drake*



Fairy Garden Pots. I have three broken/cracked pots that would make nice Fairy Gardens. The sizes are 15", 10", and 6". If you're interested, give me a call...831-8488. Sidney

~6~

## Pot Workshop!

### That's a *HYPERTUFA POT* workshop!

March 21, Saturday, from 1pm to 3pm



This workshop will be the normal pot making, not the draped type, as we did last time. It will be at the Kelley's home. All supplies will be furnished by the club. If you have a certain container to use as a mold, talk with Sidney before the

workshop.

*Sidney Kelley*

## Brag Table

Richard Amaya brought a plant labeled *Albuca namaquensis*. Some put *Albuca* in with *Ornithogalum* and the plant looked identical to the species I have as *spiralis*. It was just coming into bloom.

Anne brought an *Aloe variegata* (or *Tulista variegata* according to recent naming) which was in full bloom. The pot also had California poppies which were only in leaf.

I brought a *Coryphantha* which I found at my brother Robert's house. (And which contradicts my earlier statement that he was not a succulent enthusiast – it only takes one!)

Polly brought a book with pictures of the titan arum which we had seen at the Huntington. Incidentally, did you know that the weight reducer Lipozene is made from the related (but smaller) species *Amorphophallus conjac*?

Paul Bowles brought an orchid, *Eulophia callichroma*, which has a pseudobulb and is therefore a succulent. It was in full bloom, but I have never seen a *Eulophia* with such tiny flowers.



~7~

# The Succulent Garden at Cal State

## Non-Succulents in the Garden

Though the garden our club has established at Cal State is a 'succulent garden', not every plant in it is a succulent. I'm not talking about weeds, these are plants that were intentionally brought into the garden.

Some of these plants serve a function, like the trees Blue Palo Verde (*Cercidium floridum*), Mexican Palo Verde (*Parkinsonia aculeata*), Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*),



Desert Candle



Blue Palo Verde

Desert Ironwood (*Olneya tesota*) and Whitethorn Acacia (*Acacia constricta*). These are to provide shade for some of the succulents that can't take the full sun. At some point they will be home to the likes of *Mammillaria* and *Echinopsis* which tend to burn during the summer. Some of these are just now getting large enough to consider planting under them.

Others are shrubs that give our garden more of the look of a desert rather than just a collection of 'cacti.' We have Pink & Red Fairy Dusters (*Calliandra*), Desert Mallows (*Sphaeralcea*), Creosote Bush (*Larrea tridentata*), Prince's Plume (*Stanleya pinnata*), San Joaquin Milkvetch (*Astragalus asymmetricus*), California Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) and Mormon Tea. (*Ephedra viridis*).

Another group of non-succulent plants are the winter wildflower annuals. These are just for show, in the way that desert areas are



African Daisy

noted for their marvelous wildflower displays. I have to admit that on wet years the garden can be over-run with Lupines, Fiddleneck and African Daisies. Also to be found are California Poppies, *Phacelia*, *Gilia*, *Ursinia*, Monkey Flower, Evening Primrose, Chia, and this year there is a neat group of Desert Candles.

*Stephen Cooley*

## Another Day At The Garden

The weeds are nearly gone (at least the winter ones, the summer weeds haven't come up yet). There is still some work to be done, so if you would like to help take out weeds or just want to come out and enjoy a Spring day in the garden we will have another **GARDEN DAY on Saturday March 14<sup>th</sup>**. Note that this month it is not on a Sunday. We will meet from 9AM to 12 noon. Bring gloves, knee pads, hand weeders, Hula Hoe, maybe a bucket. Rain Cancels. For directions and more info see:

[www.BakersfieldCactus.org](http://www.BakersfieldCactus.org)

~9~



**Trip to Desert Images (Oak View),  
Ventura Cactus & Succulents,  
John Matthews (Haworthias plus other  
plants in Ventura) &  
Cactus Mart (Piru) WHEW!**

April 11, Saturday

Meet at the Home Depot parking lot corner of Gosford and District Blvd.

Leaving at 8 AM, sharp!

**This will be a trip where we will be stopping at four nurseries so we will be on a time schedule, allowing a certain amount of time at each one.** Feel free to travel to as many of these as you would like. You can leave the group at anytime.

**Meet to eat at 6:45 am.** Those wanting to meet for breakfast, we'll be at **Denny's**, 4440 Gosford Road. Just south of White Lane.

**Leaving 8 am:** We'll leave the Home Depot parking lot, 4700 Gosford Road, just south of White Lane. We'll take Highway 33 through the mountains. It takes about 2 hours to reach **Desert Images**.

We stop in **Maricopa** to do the last "break"; then again at the top of the hill on Highway 33 to look down on the valley. On to **Ojai**, actually the nursery is in Oak View, just south of Ojai.

After visiting Desert Images, in Oak View, we will stop for lunch. Then on to **Ventura**, there are two succulent nurseries there that we haven't visited.

Our next stop is at the **Cactus Mart**, in **Piru**. The Cactus Mart has mostly cactus.

Then home via I-5, with a stop in Castaic at the Foster Freeze.

There will be a signup sheet at the March meeting. Questions or info: 831-8488. sbkelley@bak.rr.com

~Sidney~

~10~



**My, Oh, Maya**  
A Letter From Bruce

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of February we went to Fresno. The roadside was full of blooming mustard and radish and even some lupines. This should be an early year for wildflowers.

Woody Minnich spoke on the Karoo at the Fresno meeting and as usual had lots of interesting pictures. He even managed to keep the time reasonable.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> we heard Paul Klaasen speak on Fog Deserts. He apologized for his accent, but I found him pleasing and easy to follow. I just wish his picture captions were a little larger. He had great fog pictures.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> I helped weed at Cal State. The wild flowers are blooming there too. I was especially interested to see some desert candle, a mustard relative with inflated stems.



And back again to the cruise: On the 17<sup>th</sup> of November we reached the island of Cozumel which belongs to Mexico and is just east of the Yucatan Peninsula. The long dock from ship to shore was a tunnel of duty free shops. After running the gauntlet, we met our guide, a diminutive Mayan woman who told us her name in Spanish and Mayan and then said to call her Mimi!

~11~

We took a bus out to the middle of the island, passing some *Hilocereus undatus*, one of only two cactus species seen on the island. At the restrooms there was a potted plant of *Euphorbia millii*.

We reached the San Gervasio ruins which are smaller than the mainland Mayan ruins, but still quite impressive. (I can now check that item off on my bucket list.) There were a number of iguanas on the ruins. They are called “green” iguanas, but most of the ones we saw were grey like the ruins. (Polly did photograph a green one on the grass.) The only other time I had seen wild iguanas was in 1969 when we visited my uncle George in Panama. My cousins had some green ones which they fed on hibiscus flowers.

There were plants of *Tradescantia spathacea* which can cause skin irritation. It was blooming and attracted black and red butterflies. There were also small blue-flowered Commelinas which looked like ones in Africa. Nearby there were Sansevierias, which are, of course, African! There was also an orchid which had pseudobulbs and is probably a *Bulbophyllum*. There were large trees such as the buttressed kapok, the prop-rooted mangroves and the green trunked *Burseras* with orange peeling bark. This latter is called gumbo-limbo and is said to have medicinal uses. Among the trees was a huge blue butterfly.

After the ruins we went east to the other coast and noted the shortened vegetation. This is due to the hurricanes which come in from the Caribbean. There was a succulent shrub growing next to the beach which I have not yet identified. One treasure to be brought ashore by the hurricanes is black coral which is cut and polished for jewelry. There were freshwater ponds on the inland side of the road with water lilies and crinums. There were also a few prickly pears.

Returning to the boat we had a late “Caribbean” lunch which was rather ordinary. That evening all four couples were at our dinner table as we did not have to dress up. We were at sea while we slept.

*Bruce Hargreaves*

[Bruce's opinions are his own and are not necessarily that of the BCSS]

# Plant of the Month

## *Conophytum bilobum*

Steve Cooley gave a small cutting of this delightful little succulent at the last show and sale. I was attracted to it for its small size and pleasing shape. *C. bilobum* is a dwarf succulent native to



that region of South Africa known as Namaqualand. It forms clumps of short stems with fat little leaves 1-2 in. (3-6 cm.) high. Each leaf is divided into two lobes at the tip which gives this plant its name. Leaves are pale yellowish to whitish green and often have a rusty red tip. They are winter growers, so for us they will want water during our winter and spring but should get little water during the summer when they go dormant. A gritty well draining soil is best for them.

Flowers are typically yellow but some are pink or white. My Namaqualand flower guide says that they bloom from Feb. to May in South Africa. Does this mean that they bloom in our fall here in the US? I'm not sure, my little start has yet to bloom. Flowers are daisy like with a tubular base. The fruit has five valves and is closed, opening when rain falls and the splashing water drops help to scatter the seeds. This is a highly variable species across its range and many of the different varieties have been given species names but recent taxonomic work has lumped them into one.

*Conophytum bilobum* is member of the Aizoaceae or Mesemb family. This is a very large family of succulent plants found mostly in Africa. Wikipedia listed 102 species in the genus *Conophytum* but it is unclear how many of these are true species or just different varieties.



*Come Celebrate Spring*  
at the Skillins

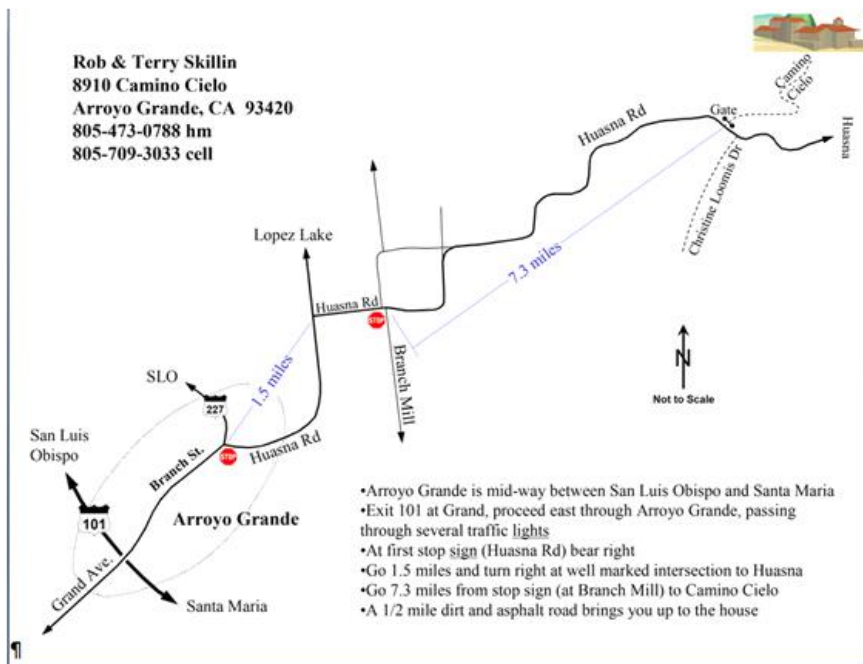
## Open Greenhouse Day

Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015, 10:00 to 3:00

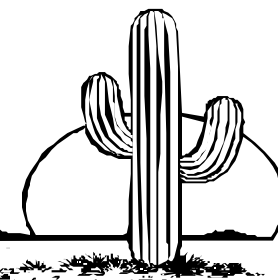
Skillin Ranch, 8910 Camino Cielo, Arroyo Grande

Enjoy a glass of wine and refreshments while touring Rob's personal collection of cacti and succulents. Rob will also be offering a wide variety of plants for sale – everything from inexpensive starter collectables, to show ready specimens – all propagated and grown on the premises

For information please call Rob or Terry at (805)709-3033



## UPCOMING EVENTS



**March 10<sup>th</sup>: BCSS meeting**

Woody Minnich

"South Africa, Klein Karoo and Great Karoo"

**MARCH 14<sup>th</sup>: GARDEN DAY on Saturday**

**March 21<sup>st</sup> : Hyper tufa Workshop**

**March 28<sup>th</sup>: Open Greenhouse Day**

Saturday,, 2015, 10:00 to 3:00

**March 31<sup>st</sup>: Board Meeting**

**April 10<sup>th</sup> South Coast Club Show and Sale**

**April 11<sup>th</sup>**

Shopping trip to Ojai and Ventura for Garden Fest

**April 14<sup>th</sup>: BCSS meeting**

Buck and Yvonne Hemenway: "Why We love South Africa"

**April 18<sup>th</sup>: Garden Fest @ Bakersfield College**

Setup: 7 am to 9 am. Opens to public at 9am.

Those bringing tables, etc., can bring them after noon on Friday, after noon. Be there as early as you can on Saturday, when you bring plants, cuttings, etc. I will be there about 7 am. The college wants us to be setup by 8:45 am. There will be more information at the March meeting and in the April newsletter.

**May 12<sup>th</sup>: Family Picnic/Potluck**

At the Cactus Garden on the CSUB Campus