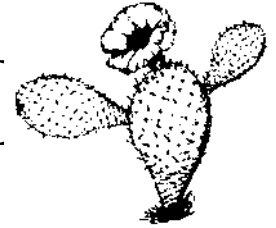


The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society
% Polly Hargreaves, editor
pollypearl@hotmail.com



Giant Tradescantia
Anne Lee's shade garden
(photo by BJH)

THE CACTUS PATCH



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

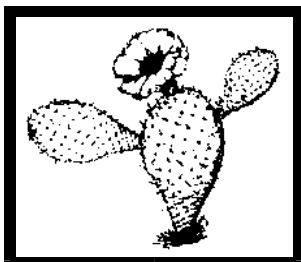
Volume 18 **May 2015** Number 5

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program
"FAMILY PICNIC/POTLUCK"
at FACT at CSUB
by everybody
6:00 PM

Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, May 12th
at 6:00 PM
**@ the Facility for
Animal Care and
Treatment Center**

NOTE
**change of
location and
time**



The Cactus Patch

Volume 18 Number 5
May 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

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May 12th, 2015

See you at the potluck/picnic at 6 PM at

The Succulent Garden at Cal State



May is our spring potluck/picnic. Tables and chairs and paper service will be provided.

Come to admire the cactus garden!

DIRECTIONS: FACT is located in the Environmental Studies Area on the south east side of the CSUB campus. To get to FACT enter the CSU Bakersfield campus from the south entrance off of Camino Media Blvd. Just after the information booth the large parking lot on the right is the access road to the facility. Turn right in the first driveway. Go through the parking lot past the recycling drop off area, at the softball field backdrop find a short dirt road and follow it over the campus bike path (yield to traffic on the bike path) to the Environmental Studies Area/FACT parking area. The parking area is lined with railroad ties, please park straight in toward the fence or railroad ties.

CALENDAR of EVENTS

NO May Board Meeting

June 9th BCSS meeting

Charles Spotts

“opuntias, black sheep of the cactus family”

June 14th-19th: Cactus and Succulent Society of America, Biennial Convention @Pitzer College, Claremont, CA

June 30th Board Meeting

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Meeting of April 14th

Buck and Yvonne Hemenway presented a program on South Africa from an interesting perspective: as immigrants.

Having visited RSA several times they finally took the plunge and bought a very old house (seemingly held together by its wall paper) directed its renovation and are moving there in June.

I think this little guy, as well as the rich succulent flora, was a factor in their decision.

They know a lot about the people in the Karoo area as well as the history, climate, fauna and flora, and were happy to share their knowledge with us.



Spheniscus demersus

President's Corner



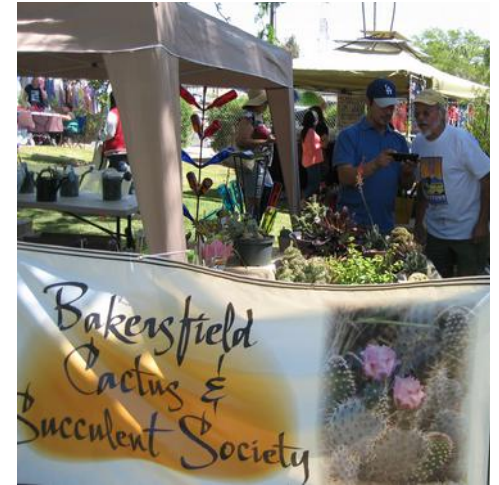
Well it has been quite an April. The 14th meeting was highlighted by a program presented by Buck Hemenway about South Africa. Buck and his lovely wife Yvonne are about to embark on a true life adventure. They will be moving permanently to South Africa from

California. We wish them well.

April 18th was the Garden Fest at Bakersfield College. Sidney Kelley did her usual great job coordinating this event. Thanks to all those that contributed to make the fest a successful venture.

I recently was contacted by Larry Hunsdorfer. Larry has some serious health issues but is now on the mend. That is why

we have not seen him at the meetings lately. Recently he was able to go for a ride on the Caliente Bodfish Rd. A couple of miles south of the Lions Trail cutoff he found a large patch of Bakersfield Cactus in full bloom. Getting out and finding the cactus helped make for a good day. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your wife, Larry. Hope you are able to make it to the meetings soon.



April 25th Sidney was able to arrange a garden tour at Gary LaMadrid's home. Gary is not a BCSS member but he graciously opened his home to the four of us that showed up. His front yard was an interesting collection of cactus and succulents. Then we went to the back yard. We were completely blown away with the amazing way he has landscaped his using mostly recycled materials. He has been working on the back yard for ten years. He has created a beautiful oasis of cactus, succulents and other plants. He was quite knowledgeable about his plants and also generous with sharing cuttings and pups. This was an excellent example of missing a great tour for those of you who could not make it.

May 12th we will not be having the meeting at St. PAULS. It is time for the family potluck and picnic at the cactus garden at CSUB. Food will be served at 6PM, so come a little early to set up and socialize.

Frank Drake

Visit us on the Web!

www.BakersfieldCactus.org

Facebook:

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

BRAG TABLE

Polly brought a hybrid Aloe which had stripes like *striata* and spots like *maculata*! The flowers were yellow.

I brought a tree nettle (*Obetia ficifolia*) from Reunion which is a variety without stinging cells. Elsewhere (e.g. in Botswana) they do sting but the trunk is still stripped for fiber.

Sabrina Mesa brought an Echeveria which looked like a curly cabbage. She had put it in a sea shell pot.



unusual yellow flowers.

Donna Pitcher brought a hypertufa pot which she said came out much brighter yellow than she had intended.

Debbie Brule brought a Haworthia which was just about to bloom.

Lucy Leal-Pereida brought a Graptopetalum with beautiful tiny star-like flowers.

Jack Reynolds brought *Euphorbia gottliebii* which looks like the “crown of thorns” (*E. millii*) but has very narrow leaves and flowers with pointed bracts.

A Surfeit of Succulents

A Letter From Bruce



Our month-long odyssey began on the 28th of March with a trip to Arroyo Grande. Our first stop there was the five city orchid show. Fantastic flowers (plus some of

the orchids were succulent and one of the sellers had plants more usually thought of as succulent) and they had a food corner where we had breakfast. Next we drove out to the Skillins for their plant sale. Just as we pulled to the top of the steep drive, warning lights came on in the car. We figured (rightly, it turned out) that it was overheating. We left the car to cool off and went to see the plants. We first went in the growing greenhouse where Rob was preparing an *Adenia spinosa* for friends of ours from Fresno. I told Rob of a plant in Botswana which was hanging upside down on a cliff and he replied he would like to see them in the wild. We admired all of the various *Adenias*, more than I have ever seen before, and then went over to the house where the sale was held. I was busy looking at some more *Adenias* (small ones) offered for sale and missed a step in the walkway. Fortunately I wasn't hurt in the fall, but all the attention was embarrassing.



The car was still flashing warnings so we drove up to San Luis Obispo where the Toyota dealer is conveniently next to the freeway. They had the heat control unit we needed and three hours (and \$500) later we were back on the road. There were restaurants conveniently located next to the Toyota dealer so we had a leisurely lunch at Acapulco Tacos while waiting. We then drove up to Morro Bay and visited the Elfin Forest there. Actually, there are no elves, but the oaks and other “trees” there are quite short due to the soil. We managed to find Dudleyas, although not quite where

the guide leaflet said they were. We also saw loads of birds including a quail which stood on top of an elfin oak and sang his lungs out. Our next stop was at the Paso Robles Inn where we had a delicious supper in the upstairs bar. We managed to return to Bakersfield by 10.

We skipped the Fresno meeting and had Easter dinner with family at our niece Tina's in E.B. On the 11th of April I left Polly home and went with Anne on the long trip to collect plants for the Garden Fest. I had been to Cayama and Ojai, but never on the connecting road. It is a beautiful drive and there were wild flowers at the higher altitude, but I still wonder why they built such a road. I had not been to the Oak View Nursery since they moved it. The expansion was impressive. The nursery in Ventura was disappointing. Just north of Camarillo we visited a strange "co-op". It is actually land rented by four succulentophiles who needed space for their various collections. The nursery at Piru was much the same as on a previous visit and of course there was a stop at the Castaic Foster Freeze.



On Monday the 13th I went to Taft to renew my driver's license (this was the closest DMV which had an appointment date before May) and found there is a small succulent nursery just across 2nd St. Don't rush out. It was even more disappointing than the Ventura one, but if you happen to be in Taft it's worth a visit.

On the 14th, of course, we heard the Hemenways speak on South Africa. We had heard they were moving, but were glad to learn more details. Incidentally, he complained about the bad view of a whale at Hermanus, but when Polly and I went there with Anne, we saw nothing of any whale. In fact, in years of visiting likely spots, we have never seen a whale outside of captivity.

And back to the Cruise:

The 19th of November was another boring day at sea. We had brunch at 9 and at ten we were shown how to fold towels into animal shapes. This was followed by a puppet show in which the towel animals came to life. This was actually the best entertainment of the whole cruise!

After lunch I had a dip in the pool just to say I had swum on a ship, but it was a cold and blustery day. Polly thought it was wrong to rain at sea!

At 3 we went to a question and answer session with the crew. They told a few funny stories like the woman who complained she had paid for a view and all she could see was a parking lot! She was told to wait until after the safety drill, and, sure enough, by then the ship was on its way and she had her view!



After dinner we went to a 60's musical but it was intolerably loud –so loud we couldn't hear the music! After that we watched the news and learned that Florida was having a cold spell with a high of 61.

Next month I will finish the cruise and return to Bakersfield.

Bruce Hargreaves

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

The Succulent Garden at Cal State



Agave ocahui

Yes, I wrote about *Agave* in my last article. But, there is another agave in our garden that is sending up a flower stalk. *Agave ocahui*.

This is another of the moderately sized agaves,

reaching only 18 inches tall and about 30 inches wide. Though it has sharp points at the end of each leaf, there are no teeth on the margins. The flower stalk should get ten or more feet tall with yellow flowers. It is hardy to at least 20F.

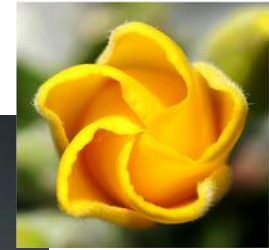
The two agaves that are blooming also happen to be right next to each other. This gives us an opportunity to compare them, as they represent two common, but very different looking types of agave. *Agave ocahui* has very skinny leaves with no teeth while *havardiana's* leaves are broad and toothed. *Ocahui* is not supposed to produce offsets while *havardiana* does. The flower stalk of *ocahui* is unbranched and has many small flowers encircling the stem, unlike *havardiana's* which is branched and the flowers are fewer, larger, and clustered at the ends.

Our next meeting is a potluck meeting in the garden – come and look at these two types of agaves (*Agave havardiana* should have its flowers open by then!).



PLANT OF THE MONTH

Pachypodium brevicaule



The choice was easy this month because the one I have in the greenhouse has decided to bloom its little heart out. This dwarf *Pachypodium* is native to southwestern Madagascar where it grows in

sclerophyllous, deciduous scrub lands of sandstone origin. It is found from 4-6000 ft. (1250-1900 m.) in very acid soils (pH3.5-4.5).

These are very atypical *Pachypodiums* in their growth habit. Instead of being the rather tall cactus-like plant like *P. lamerei* they are low growing lumps with numerous protruding nodules bearing rosettes of leaves. Average height of a caudex is 1-3 in. (2-8 cm.) high by 4-16 in (10-40 cm.) across. They are definitely a “fat plant”. The caudex is a shiny tan, silver color with small blunt spines surrounding the slightly protruding nodes. Leaves are bright green, ovate, 0.5-1.5 in. (1-4 cm.) long by 1-1.5 in. (2-4 cm.) wide.

Flowers are tubular and bright yellow. Up to seven on stalks 1-5 in. (2-15 cm.) long. Mine has bloomed a couple of times in the past but this year it is really going all out. I think it is because when I started watering this early spring I used rainwater that I had stored from the brief showers we had in Jan. Rainwater is way more acid than the tap water we get up here. Mine is a grafted plant on *P. lamerei* rootstock which is much less prone to root rot. They are not frost tolerant but can go down into the high thirties or low forties. They want a little more water than most *Pachypodiums* but should not be watered in cold weather. They might like a little vinegar in their water if they are getting tap water here in California.