

The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society
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Ihlenfeldtia vanzyleae
Found in Bushmanland in
South Africa

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 19 **March 2016** Number 3

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

"Mexico"

The Hidden Treasures of Coahuila

Woody Minnich

@ St Paul's Episcopal Church

6:30 PM

Monthly Meeting

**Tuesday,
March 8th**

6:30 PM

2016 Dues

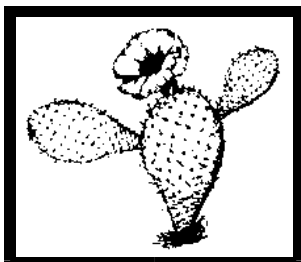
Payable NOW

Meet the Speaker

Dinner @ 5:00 PM

Sizzler

900 Real Road



The Cactus Patch

Volume 19 Number 3
March 2016

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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www.BakersfieldCactus.org

March 8th MEETING

“Mexico”

The Hidden Treasures of Coahuila **Woody Minnich**



Woody, as he is commonly called, has been in the cactus hobby for some 45 years and has become 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 and Friend of the CSSA (Cactus & Succulent Society of America.) He is known for his extensive field work studying primarily the cactus family

Woody is also known for his many presentations. His photography is considered to be special and his commentary very entertaining and educational. He is a recognized international speaker and has spoken for plant conventions - organizations all over the USA, as well as in England, Germany, Australia, New Zealand and Mexico.

We are pleased that he is able to share his knowledge and enthusiasm with us again!

Visit us on the Web!

www.BakersfieldCactus.org

Facebook:

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

Meeting on February 8th

Eunice Thompson brought us a talk of the Islands of Baja. Most of



us had not had the time to get to them. She has traveled to many of the Islands in the Sea of Cortez since her first trip in 2008. She covered several islands showing both their differences and similarities to the botany of the mainland on both sides of the Sea. She also had lots of plants to sell.

South Coast Cactus & Succulent Society
44th Annual Show & Sale
April 9-10, 2016 9 AM – 4 PM



South Coast Botanic Garden
26300 Crenshaw Blvd.
Palos Verdes Peninsula 90274

Show included with paid garden admission. Adult \$9, Senior/Student w/ ID \$6, ages 5-12 \$4, under 5 & Garden Members free.

Schlumbergera

BRAG TABLE

Jack Reynolds brought an *Echevaria* sp. which has survived in a tiny rock “pot” for about 20 years!



Richard Amaya brought *Euphorbia resinifera* which is also doing well in a small pot. (To be fair, it is a bigger pot, but so is the plant.)

Jack Kelley brought a *Cissus tuberosa* because he likes it! It is an interesting member of the grape family.

Sidney Kelley brought *Graptapetalum filiferum* which has crested and is known as “Silver Star Crest”.

Polly brought a small elephant tree: *Pachycormis discolor*, because it grows only in Baja and its islands.

Bruce brought a Mesemb called *Ihlenfeldtia vanzyleae* (see back cover) which had bloomed, but was closed for the night. He had received it as a gift at the Sunset Club meeting. It is named by his friend, Dr Heidi Hartmann, for her friend Prof. Ihlenfeldt. How’s that for a way to get around the rule that you shouldn’t name things after yourself? Heidi separated it from *Cheiridopsis* because the fruit is different.



Mexico, The Hidden Treasures of Coahuila

By Wendell S. Woody Minnich 2015

Mexico is thought by many to be the richest region in the world for cacti. For all those individuals who travel in search of rare and unusual cacti, their first choice is often Mexico. The Sierra Madre Oriental is considered the center of diversity for Mexican genera, ranging from *Ariocarpus* to *Aztekiums*, *Echinocereus*, *Ferocactus*, *Geohintonia*, *Gymnocactus*, *Mammillaria*, *Obregonia*, *Pelecephora*, *Thelocactus*, *Turbinicarpus* and many, many more. Because of the plethora of plants found in the states of Tamalipas, Nuevo Leon, San Luis Potosi and Hidalgo, most field workers have just decided to ignore the little explored Coahuila.



For most of us, Coahuila and its neighboring state of Chihuahua were often only used as drive-throughs on our way to the succulent rich south. In recent years, many of the serious plant explorers have started finding new back country roads in

these two states. These new roads have graciously opened up some of the rarely explored areas to extremely remote regions, and some of these back country roads (trails) are not even found on the maps! Coahuila, as close as it is to the USA, actually has some of the least explored and most remote regions in all of Mexico.



On our trip through Coahuila, we drove for many hours without ever seeing other vehicles or people. There were no urban or agricultural developments as these wild places are still virtually untouched! The valleys and mountains of these expanses will surely offer many new species for the field worker willing to do some serious exploring. Near the roads, if you wish to call them roads, I saw only a few dried-up old ghost towns where

apparently some tough old Mexicans, probably from the Poncho Villa era, once resided.

From the unknown territories of Coahuila, there have been numerous new cacti and other succulents discovered and rediscovered. The crown jewel of these new plants is the fantastic *Mammillaria luethyi*. It was lost for over 60 years since its original sighting, growing in a rusted tin can on a dusty ranchito porch. All of us



exploring Mexico had searched for this very special *Mammillaria*, until only a few years ago, Luethy found it in northern Coahuila. The Sierra del Carmen, which abuts the Rio Grand and the Big Bend National Park, has also been the origin of other new species. Close to this area, we discovered a new, very beautiful *Echinomastus*, or possibly *Gymnocactus*? Also from this region we found a very handsome red *Sedum*, as well as *Echinocereus longisetus*, and the northern most of the *Echeverias*, *Echeveria strictaflora*. In a remote dry lake bed, Laguna la Leche, we admired the amazingly cryptic *Escobaria abdita*. Wow, just some of the treasures of Coahuila!



This trip was also to be an adventure in seeing some of the brand new *Agaves*, *Echeverias*, *Astrophytums*, *Echinocereus* and *Mammillarias*. We scored on almost everything we went to see, and never, in the 45 years that I have traveled Mexico, have I seen it so green. This talk will also feature many cacti and other succulents that have never

been seen in books or presentations. Come explore Mexico with me!

Mountain Memories



~A Letter From Bruce

We did not go to Fresno in February. Instead we went south to the meeting of the Sunset Succulent Society at Marina del Rey to hear Tom

Glavich speak on the High Drakensbergs of Lesotho and South Africa. We lived in Lesotho for 6 ½ years while I taught at the National University there. I had never heard anyone speak on Lesotho except myself, so I was curious to hear

another viewpoint. Incidentally, I told Tom I was glad he referred to the “high” Drakensbergs as South Africa refers to the whole escarpment as “Drakensberg”. (I ran into this problem when I wanted to name a new *Crassula* species after the highest range since it was only found at 10,000 feet. I first looked at “Malothi” which is Sesotho for “mountain range”, but rejected it as it refers to lower ranges as well. I rejected “Drakensberg” for the same reason. Finally I chose the name “Qoatlhamba” or “barrier of spears” as this refers only to the high range. Unfortunately this gave the new species the name “*Crassula qoatlhambensis*” which many people find unpronounceable since the “q” is a difficult palatal click.)

Polly finished the newsletter by the afternoon of the 2nd of February and so we set off for the south. It started to drizzle at the Grapevine and by the top it was slushy. I began to wonder whether we had made a wise decision, but it soon cleared and the weather was good the rest of the trip. (In fact in L.A. they were complaining that they had not seen any of the alleged El Nino storm.) We reached Marina del Mar by 6:30 despite the cross traffic from highway 10 and found a build it yourself burger place (The Counter) for supper. We were not sure where in the Chace County Park the meeting was, but when we arrived there were lots of other cars pulling in so we just followed them. (The only time I had been to the Sunset Club was in 1987 and they met in Santa Monica. At that time I spoke to them on “Succulents in the Snow” – all about Lesotho!)



~8~

The first thing we noticed was a largish bird on the lawn outside. At first I thought it was a statue, but then it moved. If anyone wants to look it up, it was a black-crowned night heron. It seems to like that one spot because it was still there when we came out of the meeting! It just ignored all the people trooping by. It only got upset when I took a couple of flash pictures, but it just moved a short way and then came right back.



The Sunset Club follows the format of a lot of clubs. There were plants for sale and for free. There were also give-away books and magazines. One difference was the raffle. Members are given a number as they come in and then they receive a plant if their number is

drawn. Guests such as ourselves are simply given a plant. The “brag” plants are judged and a lot of time was spent on this.

Tom’s talk was excellent. He covered a lot of territory for a short visit and was there at the right time (southern spring- our fall) to catch the plants in bloom. We were surprised by the number of different pineapple lilies and red hot pokers he found. He did include *Euphorbia clavarioides* and the spiral aloe, but not in bloom. Just the scenery of the mountains in spring brought back fond memories. The only thing needed was a few snow pictures – although he did show a ski resort that has been built on the South African side of the border.

The trip home was uneventful and we arrived at two minutes after midnight.

On the 7th we had an anti-super bowl party at Anne’s (play games during the big game and stop to watch the ads!). Of course we were at the Bakersfield meeting with its excellent talk on Baja islands. It was amazing to see so many plants on “barren” islands! Actually we knew there were interesting plants there as we had looked at some through a telescope at Bahia de Los Angeles on the BCSS trip in 2000. And on Valentine’s we had dinner at Lora’s- it’s her wedding anniversary! That evening Polly and I saw Casablanca at the Fox.

~9~ Bruce Hargreaves

The Succulent Garden at Cal State



Aridaria noctiflora

When one thinks of an 'ice plant' or 'mesemb', what typically comes to mind are freeway ground covers or small succulent rock mimics. But the ice plants are a large and diverse group which cover the range from tiny *Conophytum* to almost tree-like *Stoeberia*. *Aridaria noctiflora* is one of the larger shrubs in the

group reaching a height of 3 feet and a diameter of 5 feet. It may get bigger, but I have had to keep trimming it to keep it in bounds.

This is a night blooming plant, which means you can see it covered in white flowers if you don't sleep in too late. It has proven to be hardy down to 20F and grows fast enough



to need pruning every year. It occasionally reseeds and is easily grown from branches stuck into the ground. Full sun is probably best, though I have never grown it in the shade.

As with many mesembs, it is native to western South Africa and Namibia.

[If you have trouble pronouncing *Aridaria noctiflora* you might just want to call it by it's common name 'Brakveldwitvygie']

Stephen Cooley

CALENDAR



March 8th BCSS Meeting

Woody Minnich

"Mexico, the Hidden Treasures of Coahuila."

April 9th Open GreenHouse Day

Skillin Ranch, 8910 Camino Cielo, Arroyo Grande

April 12th BCSS Meeting

Kelly Griffin

"Oaxaca, Fall 2015"

April 16th

Garden Fest at Bakersfield College

An advertisement for the 15th Biennial Mid-States Conference. The background is a close-up of several bright red flowers. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

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MID-STATES
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