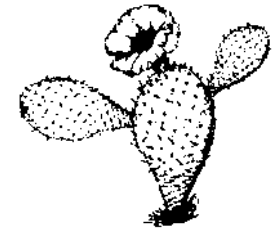




**Senecio  
stapeliaeformis**  
BJH

# The Cactus Patch



*Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei*

Volume 20 **May 2017** Number 5

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program  
"2014 CSSA Trip to the Canary Islands"

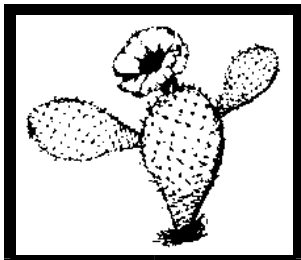
Nels Christianson  
@ St Paul's Episcopal Church  
6:30 PM  
May 9<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30

This is your  
Newsletter!

**Send articles and  
pictures for  
inclusion**

**Meet the Speaker**

Dinner @ 5:00 PM  
Sizzler  
900 Real Rd.



# The Cactus Patch

Volume 20 Number 5  
May 2017

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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## **May 9<sup>th</sup> MEETING**

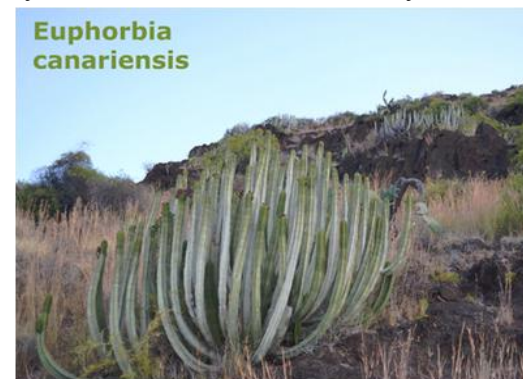
### **"2014 CSSA Trip to the Canary Islands"**



### **Nels Christianson**

Nels Christianson is a native of Merced, California. He was educated at UC Santa Barbara, Georgetown University, UCLA and the Federal University of Minas Gerais where he studied Brazilian literature through a Rotary Foundation scholarship. He retired in 2012 after a 37-year career in hospital administration and international relations at the Ronald Reagan

UCLA Medical Center. Nels is a board member of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, a published poet and a board member of California Poets in the Schools, an organization which brings poetry composition workshops to 25,000 K-12 students statewide. Nels has been a member of the CSSA and of the Sunset Succulent Society in Marina del Rey since 1984. He has participated in CSSA trips to Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Oaxaca, northeastern Mexico and the Canary Islands. He is a potter and sells planter pots at his club meetings. Nels is the president of the Westchester Begonia Society, a member of the Culver City Gesneriad Society, Bromeliad Society international, La Ballona Valley Bromeliad Society and San Fernando Valley Bromeliad Society. He is a weekly volunteer at the Desert Collections at the Huntington Botanical Gardens.



# April 11, 2017

## “Propagation of Cacti and Succulents”

Rob Roy MacGregor



Rob showed how to be cruel in order to be kind; to be drastic in order to propagate our plants. He has a lot of success multiplying difficult plants and some of us got plants to grow and report on later...

~4~



## The Succulent Garden at Cal State *Mammillaria magnimamma*

Though *Mammillaria* is a very large group of cacti (over 200 species in the Genus) we have very few in the garden. One that has done very well for us is *Mammillaria magnimamma*.



This small cactus doesn't get much more than a few inches high but can with age form a nice clump from small pups arising at the base. In its native Mexico it is widespread and can grow from sea level to 6000 feet. Due to its great range it also is quite variable. Flowers can be cream colored to deep pink and spines can be very short to very long.

It has survived everything our climate can give it in the nearly ten years it has been growing. However it is protected by a large rock on the south side (wouldn't we all like to sit in the shade of a big rock in the afternoon). This is a very common cactus in the trade and can usually be found in the trays of succulents at the big national stores.



Stephen Cooley

~5~



## Children's Container Garden for Fair Competition

The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society is sponsoring a youth completion at the Kern County Fair in September. This will be a succulent container garden. Members will assist in the planting of the containers. Parents are encouraged to help.

BCSS will supply the soil and plants. We will show them how to mix the soil and assist in the planting of the containers.

Children are encouraged to bring decorative items they may want in their display. They may bring plants if they have some they prefer to use.



We are encouraging unusual containers.

Containers should be approximately 12inches x 12in x 6in or smaller.

**We have scheduled the planting day for May 13th, 2017, at 10 am.**

**This will be held at Sydney's house.**

We'll need their names and ages. There is a limit on the number of participants. At least one parent should accompany the child/children.

You can call me for further details. Sidney Kelley: 831-8488

## Tables at the Show & Sale on October 14th & 15th

After last year's Show & Sale, we think it might be a good idea to have one table assigned to each member who wants to do an individual table. The other member's would share tables, until they are full. To get an idea of how many would like an individual table, we're asking for you to sign up at the meeting. You can also call Sidney: 831-8488.

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## Earthquakes

California is well known for its faults. The San Andreas is very noticeable at the Carizzo Plains. This year it was even more so as the wildflowers gave it more dimension.

But did you know that Botswana has faults as well? The Okavango Delta is formed when the Okavango River spreads out after crossing the Gomare Fault. At the bottom of the Delta there are two more faults and most of the water disappears into the deep sand there.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> April this year there was a 6.5 earthquake at 10:45 am PT. It was 107 km from Sojwe, Botswana (238 km NW Gaborone- the capitol). Shocks were felt in Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa.

Earlier that day a 4.6 quake occurred in South Africa.

Fortunately the area of the Botswana quake was remote and no damage or injuries were reported.

# BRAG TABLE



Bonnie Patman brought an *Ornithogalum* (or *Albuca*) which is called “yellow lipstick” after the yellow tip on the white flowers. She also brought a Mediterranean spurge (*Euphorbia characias*). The cultivar she brought has a red stem. Thirdly she brought a South African Euphorbia which was about to bloom. Fourth she brought a *Crassula* with a flower stalk with buds. And finally she brought a *Sedum* which had white flowers.

PollyHargreaves brought an *Ornithogalum* (*Albuca*) *multifolium* from Augrabies in South Africa. It was blooming.

Bruce brought A *Senecio* (*Kleinia*) *stapeliaeformis* which had a bud. It bloomed a week later.



Luis de la Torre brought plants of *Melocactus matanzanus* which he had grown from seed. He also brought some seedling elephant trees (*Pachycorus discolor*).



Sidney Kelley brought two related Euphorbias. One was the plant from the silent auction which had been labeled *E. alfredii*. The other had ridges on the stem and was said to be the “true” *E. alfredii* whereas the one from the auction was *E. milloti*. After looking at the pictures available, I believe the auction plant was correctly labeled and the ridged plant is the related *E. ankarensis*.

Sidney also brought a coffee pot planted with *Gasteria* and *Sedum*.

Jack Reynolds brought a *Sedum* which was blooming.

Jill brought a Plant of *Euphorbia californica*, a species of Baja which resembles the *E. misera* found in Alta California as well as Baja. It has smaller leaves and yellow bracts around the flowers.



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# Plant of the Month

## *Echeveria agavoides*

I have written about several large specimen plants that one could use in a dry landscape setting in the central valley. This time I am writing about a smaller species suitable for growing around rocks or in pots but would likely survive and add color to a garden. *Echeveria agavoides* is a member of the Crassulaceae. The genus contains over a hundred species spread from Texas to Argentina.



Plants are stemless rosettes 3-5 in. (8-12 cm.) tall and 3-6 in. (7-15 cm) in diameter. Leaves are pointed at the tip and edged with red-brown which darkens in full sun. Plants tend to be solitary when young but will form clumps when older. They are very drought tolerant. Many varieties have been produced for the plant trade with many colors and different degrees

of heat and cold tolerance. A variety called "Lipstick" is cold tolerant to 20 F. They should not be watered during cold weather.

Flowers are produced in summer and may be pink, orange to red. They form on long cymes up to 20 in. (50 cm.) long. Hummingbirds like them.

They have shallow roots and prefer a gritty well draining soil. They may be propagated by leaf cuttings or clump separation. In general they are very easy to keep.

Jack G. Reynolds

## An Extraordinary Spring!

### A Letter From Bruce



I have already noted that the American Cactus and Succulent Journal had an obituary on Darrel Plowes, but the January issue of *Asklepios* (the Journal of the International Asclepiad Society) not only has a cover picture by his son Richard (who lived in Botswana while we were there), but it devotes most of the issue to his work on the Stapeliads or carrion flowers as well as many other subjects.

The December 2016 issue of *Euphorbia World* has a page dedicated to the late Daphne Pritchard who, with her previously deceased husband Albert, founded the Euphorbiaceae Study Group. I was honored to contribute many articles to their journal.

We have seen quite a number of films lately. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of March we saw *Hidden Figures* which tells the story of three women who did computation for the space program and how they struggled for recognition. It should have won the Oscar for best picture! We are aware of conditions of this time because Polly worked as a Geophysical Computer for the Exploration Division of Shell Oil here in Bakersfield in the early 60s. She was lucky. Her job was classified as a "man's" job, so she got a decent salary.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> the Californian ran a picture of a ceremony in Berlin for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Union. Right next to it was an article on Turkey which is still struggling with the decision as to whether to join. (And of course Britain is withdrawing.) Our choir sang for a celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Botswana.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> we saw *Marguerite* at "Flics". It is based on the story of Florence Foster Jenkins, who fancied herself a singer and was wealthy enough not to be contradicted. (A recent film tells a more documentary story of her.) The film begins and ends with "Der Holle Rache" from "The Magic Flute". Interestingly, this same song was used by Disney in a cartoon "the Orphan's Benefit" in which the duckling orphans in the balcony shoot peas at the singer hen so she hits the high notes! Is it a coincidence that the first "concert" in *Marguerite* is an Orphans' Benefit?



Next day we saw *Fences* which was an Oscar nomination. I suspect it would not have been nominated had it not been about a black family. (And the previous awards not been lambasted for being so pale.) On 1 April we saw *Moonlight* which was the winner of Best Picture. Again, although it was better than *La La Land*, I suspect it was chosen for its black cast.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> we heard a live production of *Men in Blaque*, a men's chorus led by Joseph Huszti. (He was our choir director back in the 60s when we were up at BC.) We were pleasantly surprised to learn that the group had recently been to South Africa. They sang a few songs from there including *Tshotsholoza* which we know well.

Finally, on the 7<sup>th</sup> we saw *Phoenix* at "Flics" (the story of an Auschwitz survivor who is so marred her former husband does not recognize her), on the 8<sup>th</sup> we saw *Lion* with Nichole Kidman as a rather insensitive White Australian who adopts an Indian boy and on the 9<sup>th</sup> we watched *Queen of the Desert*, the story of an English woman (also played by Nichole Kidman) who traveled the Arabian deserts and survived by being culturally sensitive.



Back on the 6<sup>th</sup> we did not go to Fresno. Instead we went with Anne and Daniel to the Carrizo Plains. The wild flowers were fantastic except for the Gypsum Loving Larkspur which was not quite in bloom. It is somewhat succulent, and I have never managed to catch it in full bloom. At the visitors' center I saw a cottontail. When I told Anne she declined to see if there was a hole. We drove down a side road toward a "lake" of blue flowers and found some Desert Candles (which look succulent, but the stems are merely inflated). We did not reach the "lake" but assumed they were the same as on a previous trip. Later we were told they were not *Phacelias* as before and shown a picture of short plants with wide flowers. I have looked them up and they are just a different species of *Phacelia*- Fremont's.

As we continued SW we watched a car speeding toward us which hit a bump and went airborne! By some miracle it tipped but landed upright. It passed us at a much slower speed! As we came down from the hills, we had a good view of Buena Vista Lake and the numerous basins filled with water which, hopefully, will help the sinking water table. Back in Bakersfield we had dinner at the China Palace.

On the 11<sup>th</sup>, of course, we heard Rob Roy MacGregor and learned how to massacre plants. I have an Agave which he cut in half and will see if it produces the promised pups. I am not an expert in horticulture, so this is a first for me. (I study plants, I don't do well in growing them.)

On the 15<sup>th</sup> we went with John to California Hot Springs east of Ducor to look at more wildflowers. There were good stands, but not quite as good as Carrizo. The California poppies were quite variable-from yellow to red orange and small to large flowers. When we got to our destination we found the roads north and south were closed so we had a picnic by a stream and turned around. We saw lots of stumps and logs. The Forest Service says they are cutting 50 to 100 trees per day to remove the dead wood from the drought and bark beetles. There are still enough dead trees to be a major fire hazard. We took a slight detour to Glenville and had a snack at the Saddle Sore Saloon. From there it was straight (by winding road) to Oildale and home.



We had Easter dinner at Lora's with the usual crowd. On the 18<sup>th</sup> (my birthday) we went to Denny's with John for the usual free breakfast, and then we had lunch at Carl's Jr. and dinner at Coco's. Among the presents, John's was the most interesting. He gave me a gift card for Lowe's and said to ask for broken or

chipped paving stones. I got more than our poor little Prius liked for \$10 and am now making paths in the Agave garden so I can get into it.

### **An Asteroid Threat?**

On 19<sup>th</sup> April, Asteroid 2014 J025 approached within 1.1 million miles of the Earth. It is 2000 feet wide, roughly the size of the Rock of Gibraltar!



We heard of this in Botswana more than ten years ago and were discussing it after a meeting of museum department heads. I made some comment and someone replied, "Well, you don't have to worry!" I have survived long enough to be here when it came. So, there!

The next large asteroid to approach the Earth is 1999 AN10 which is 1/2 mile wide. In 2027 it will be 236,000 miles from the Earth. Should I worry?

**Bruce Hargreaves**

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



**May 9<sup>th</sup>**  
BCSS Meeting

**June 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**Gunnar Eisel**  
**"Beauty in the Eye of the Beholder"**  
BCSS Meeting

**JUN 30--JUL 2**  
CSSA ANNUAL SHOW AND SALE  
HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

**July 11<sup>th</sup>**  
BCSS Meeting

**JULY 26--31**  
CSSA CONVENTION, TEMPE, AZ.

**SEPT. 2**  
SUCCULENT SYMPOSIUM  
HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

**August 8<sup>th</sup>**  
BCSS Meeting

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