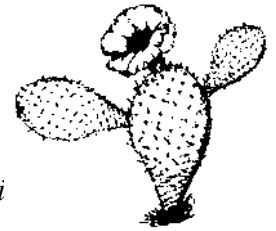


The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society
% Polly Hargreaves, editor
pollypearl@hotmail.com



Blossfeldia liliputana
at the CSSA Show

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 20 **July 2017** Number 7

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

The Genus Hechtia

presented by Andy Siekkinen

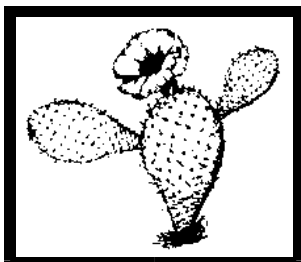
St Paul's Episcopal Church
July 11th @ 6:30

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 7
July 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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July 11th MEETING

The Genus *Hechtia* Andy Siekkinen



The genus *Hechtia* is a succulent genus in the bromeliad family that is only found in Mexico and surrounding regions. It has long been understudied, and frankly ignored, but this past decade has seen a burst of interest that is continuing to reveal more and more interesting species. In the last 8 years the genus has grown by around 50% and with Andy's new discoveries, it will easily grow by that much more in the coming few years. In cultivation, *Hechtia* are usually thought of the big, ugly brother of *Dyckia* and *Deuterocohnia*, but with the new species making it into cultivation and first serious hybridization program started, we will start to have many new gems to add to our collections and xeric gardens soon.

This talk will give some background to the genus relative to the rest of the family (they are actually only distantly related to the fellow succulent genera from South America, *Dyckia* and *Deuterocohnia*) and cover the basic biology of the genus—including a quick look at the evolutionary relationships within the genus. Then we will go on a tour through the varied habitats taking a closer look at many of the species, including many of the recently published and yet-undescribed plants. We can learn a lot

~3~

about how to cultivate these plants better by looking at the habitats and think how to maximize their potential. In Southern California, and San Diego in particular, we are spoiled as our climate is ideal for these tough, drought-adapted plants, but Bakersfield may take a few tricks to ensure their success. The program will wrap up with examples of new hybrids that are in development and how to grow these plants in our area.

Andy Siekkinen is a graduate student at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden/Claremont Graduate University studying the systematics (taxonomy, anatomy, biology, and evolutionary relationships) of the genus *Hechtia* as well as other bromeliads. He began exploring Mexico and studying the genus over 7 years ago as the recession provided a strong encouragement to leave his previous life as a nanoparticle chemist. During that time he had been provided tours to Mexico for 'botanical and cultural adventures' for small groups with his company Eagle Eye Adventures, which is currently on hiatus during his graduate studies.

Anyone Go to the CSSA Show & Sale at the Huntington?

Share your experience at the next meeting!



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The Succulent Garden at Cal State



No Sweat

We had a wonderful winter, unseasonably warm and wet. A lot of rain soaked down to fill up the deep soil reservoir that the larger plants can rely on this summer. As a result our plants in the garden at Cal State have looked quite healthy all through the Spring. I have done almost no irrigation. And then Summer started.

Ten straight days over 100F – four of them at 110F. Add to that the fact that even with what seemed a rainy winter it hasn't rained hard enough to soak into the ground since mid April. That April shower was the first good rain since February. Our rainy winter left us with just over one inch more than our normal. Not all that much really.

So, I was a bit worried when I went out to the garden last week knowing the plants had not been watered in such a long time and it had been so horribly hot this early on. I know they are desert plants but I still worry.

No sweat. Those plants looked as if it were still Spring. Sure, there was a bit of sun bleaching on the ones that always turn yellow in summer and some of the winter aloes were folding up for the dry season. All in all, that rainy winter did a lot of good.

Stephen Cooley

~5~



CRUZ'n'

A Letter From Bruce

On 31st May we joined my sisters Lora and Anne on a recon trip to Santa Cruz to prepare for a reunion which will celebrate our late mother Alice's 100th anniversary. Our first stop was at Santa Nella for Anderson's pea soup. Then it was over the coast range to Gilroy and Watsonville and finally the Best Western Motel in downtown Santa Cruz. I was pleased to see their garden was planted with succulents and other water conserving plants.

That evening we had dinner a block south at the Golden Palace which has an eclectic choice of Chinese cuisine. We even managed to order some large and succulent scallops. They have agreed to supply takeaway food for our reunion. This is in memory of the annual gathering of the nuts at my grandfather's house in Stockton back when Chinese was about the only takeaway available.

On the 1st of June we went back to Watsonville and checked out Sunset State Beach where we have reserved a large group camp site. The wild flowers were in full bloom on the dunes – more California poppies with more variation in size and color than California Hot Springs!

On the road in there were two large stumps (presumably redwoods) with aloes on one and prickly pears on the other. The vast fields of strawberries were being harvested, so we stopped at a stand and bought a large box. The taste was fantastic!



Next we had lunch at Sanderling's near Aptos which has a beautiful view of the ocean. We could see the cliffs of New Brighton Beach State Park where we used to vacation from Stockton so we could visit our grandmother Hargreaves who lived in Santa Cruz. Unfortunately the park is too small for large groups to camp. The food was a bit expensive, but the large scallops were great. Unfortunately, the hot wings were just so-so. We arranged for the farewell lunch of the reunion to be held there.

From there we drove up north to see Roaring Camp where they run old logging trains through the redwoods and down to the boardwalk. Unfortunately it was anything but roaring as the season had not started. We still managed to find what we can do during our reunion.

That evening we ate at a hole-in-the-wall Cajon place called Roux Dat. The food was good and cheap, but it would never do for a large group. On our way back to the hotel we stopped to see a "weeping" agave. The tall flower stalk had branches hanging down which not only had flowers, but had plantlets on them!



Next day we went to the Buttery to order an Alice cake for the reunion. We then stopped at a Sewing Center which had quilts etc. and then across from it Dig Gardens which had not only

succulents but orchids, insectivorous plants and even a three sided palm from Madagascar. They had a picture book on Bancroft Gardens, but I didn't buy it. The echium (Borage family) across the street was glorious.



We had lunch at the Boardwalk which included a long, curly potato, fried artichoke (greasy) and a giant doughnut which Lora bought since it was national Doughnut day. I was disappointed to find the old Funhouse was no longer operating, but they did have a historic section with some of the old distorting mirrors. The

reunion will include a day at the boardwalk.

After that we went to the harbor so Anne could photograph a light house. The S.C. Natural History Museum was on the way back, so we stopped to see the model whale and the exhibit on banana slugs. (Yes, they are big and yellow, and live in the redwoods.)

That evening we had dinner at the Crow's Nest, a very expensive restaurant overlooking the harbor. The scallops were good and the artichokes not greasy. We each had an orchid flower on our plate. We decided not to include the restaurant in the Reunion. The shop next to the parking lot had lots of souvenirs.



That evening the news included an obit on Jack O'Neil of Santa Cruz who invented the wet suit. We also learned it was the 50th anniversary of Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band. On the 3rd we drove down to the Succulent Garden in Castroville which has succulent wall mosaics, a mail box and an old trunk full of succulents. My favorite was a blooming Echinopsis X glorius.

We then went to the Giant Artichoke (and bought baby chokes), only to find that the Castroville Artichoke Festival is now In Monterey! So we went there and dined on artichoke in sausages, fried chokes, artichoke ice cream, an artichoke burrito etc. Lora entered the artichoke eating contest and won third place! It was a long trip home from there but we arrived not too totally exhausted.

We shall see what we are like after the reunion!

On the 13th we heard Steven Frieze talk on Chile. An excellent talk except that we didn't need to see every Copiopoa in the whole country!

The only other major event was a dinner at Hungry Hunter on the 14th to say good bye to Jean Caughill who is retiring as pianist for the Goldenaires. We will miss her.



Bruce Hargreaves

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



Take some time to contemplate this empty space. Let all those cumbersome thoughts rattling around in your brain flow into the void. Feel Better? No? Why not try writing a little something to be included in the newsletter so we can fill it.

BRAG TABLE



Polly brought a cultivar of *Cotyledon orbiculata* which has two and three forked leaf tips. It was rescued from Vons where it badly needed water. The flowers are cream.

I brought half of the *Agave* cv "blue glow" which had been split in two at a previous meeting. It was forming a new head.
Ken Foster brought two *Tillandsia* species. The larger one was blooming.

Jack Reynolds brought a blooming *Adenium obesum*. Although the genus is native to Africa and the Arabian Peninsula only, he mentioned that it is now common in Asia.

Bruce

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July 11th
"Bromeliads"
Andy Siekkinen
BCSS Meeting

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

August 8th
BCSS Meeting

September 2nd
SUCCULENT SYMPOSIUM
HUNTINGTON BOTANICAL GARDENS

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