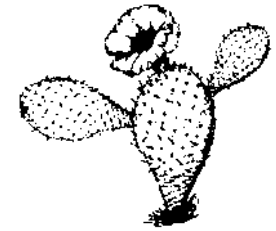




Cardon
Succulent Garden
@ CSU Bakersfield

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 20 **November 2017** Number 11

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

“So, what exactly IS a succulent?”

L. Maynard Moe

November 14th

@ 7:00

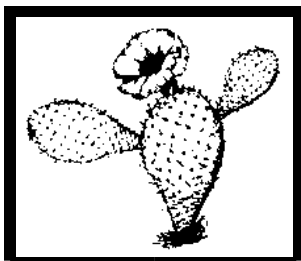
St. Paul's Church, 2216 17th St.

Election of
Officers this
month

We need you!

December 12th

Family Potluck Dinner
&
Installation of Officers
&
Silent Auction



The Cactus Patch

Volume 20 Number 11
November 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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November 14th MEETING

So, what exactly IS a succulent? L. Maynard Moe

I am a field botanist (taxonomy and ecology) by training and only recently became interested in cacti and [other] succulents. After reading popular gardening and collecting books, and talking with other collectors, I realized that my notion of a succulent plant and the collector's notion are not the same. Maybe others in our club share this confusion, so I will give a brief, yet riveting talk that may be informative.

Many are quite familiar with the term "succulent," but misconceptions abound. Comments such as "This aloe plant is in the succulent family." or "I don't grow cacti, I only grow succulents." reveal some of these misunderstandings. Of course, our own society's name, "Bakersfield Cactus and Succulent Society," as well as some books such as "Succulents: the Illustrated Dictionary," that do not include cacti, contribute to this confusion by implying that cacti are somehow different from other succulents. The basis for this confusion appears to be a misunderstanding of the term "succulent," which is a descriptive term, not a scientific classification. Generally a succulent is a plant that has developed (through evolutionary adaptation to water stress) swollen, water-storing tissues that protect it from desiccation. This includes plants such as pickleweed (*Salicornia*) adapted to high salinity, as well as cacti and aloes that are adapted to hot, dry climates.

By convention some plants that display succulence are not considered succulents, such as impatiens and some orchids even though they have fleshy stems and leaves. Plants with fleshy underground bulbs (onions, lilies, daffodils, tulips), corms (gladiolus, freesia, crocus), rhizomes (iris, calla), or tubers (dahlia, begonia, potato) are also not generally considered succulents. Exceptions include pregnant onion (*Bowiea*) and veld fan (*Boophane*), both of which have large, green or brown, above-ground bulbs and are often found in succulent collections.

This confusion about what, exactly, is a succulent will be cleared up by a riveting, entertaining talk with lots of nice photos.

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October 10th, 2017

The Islands of Baja, part 2

Eunice Thompson

Eunice showed us how much difference a short stretch of water can make in the flora and fauna of these islands.



Election of Officers for 2018

- **PRESIDENT:** Paul Bowles will not be able to continue next year.

Others are willing to continue:

- **VICE – PRESIDENT:** Jill Brennan
- **SECRETARY:** Pat Tennant
- **TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP:**
L. Maynard Moe
- **NEWSLETTER:** Polly Hargreaves

CALENDAR



November 14th

L. Maynard Moe

“So, what exactly IS a succulent?”

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Family Potluck Dinner &

Silent Auction

2018

January 9th

BCSS Meeting

Garden Fest @ BC

Saturday, April 21st 2018

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BRAG TABLE



Sidney Kelly brought a beautiful yellow-flowered mesemb which had teeth on the leaves. The teeth were not as pronounced as in the Tiger Jaw (*Faucaria* sp.) so I think it is a *Stomatium*, of which there are some 40 species in South Africa. One of these sneaks across the border into Lesotho where I have seen it in the wild.

Jack Reynolds brought a magnificent bonsai of *Encephalartos caffer*. Although there is some debate as to whether Cycads are succulent, I would definitely say yes on most of them. My only complaint on this plant is the species name which is derived from a racist term which is derived from the Arabic for non-believer and is used like the N-word in the US. None-the-less, I was glad to see it at the show.



I brought a young cabbage tree (*Cussonia spicata*) and explained how I had seen such a plant with the tuberous root brought up and twisted around unnaturally. I said it would be a tall tree in nature. Fortunately Jill brought a different cabbage tree to the show and we got to see how a bit of mature stem on its side with a shoot coming from it can result in a “natural” bonsai.



Sabrina Mesa brought a planter with assorted succulent and decorative objects. Unfortunately some of the objects were sea shells which probably will leach salt out into the soil. Another problem with such planters is the lack of drainage which necessitates misting rather than watering.

Polly brought plantlets from the large *Agave americana* which I took down after it bloomed and died. They were given away and I hope the new owner is not as allergic to them as I am. I have now planted a large offset which I had kept for the occasion.

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The Succulent Garden at Cal State



San Gabriel C&SS Winter Show & Sale

Okay, this isn't going to be about the Garden at Cal State. It is going to be about the Winter Show & Sale put on by the San Gabriel club. As with any Show & Sale it is a great place to learn about

(and perhaps obtain) plants that are unusual. I purchased a *Euphorbia hamata* that I will try out in the garden.

This show, because it is in the Fall, has some plants that you just don't see in the Summer Shows. The plants for sale also reflect this. Winter growers have the advantage of being more in tune with our growing season. It was nice in that there

were fewer people at this show than some of the bigger

summer shows. This makes viewing and shopping more pleasant. It is also easier to talk to the vendors and exhibitors.

This is the first time I have been to the Winter Show – it's not going to be the last.



Plant of the Month

Fouquieria splendens

We are continuing with landscape plants as before. *F. splendens* is a member of the Fourquieriaceae family. The genus contains eleven species all found in the desert southwest areas of CA, AZ, NM, TX, northern and central Mexico and Baja Calif.

Fouquieria splendens is a shrub with a unique growth habit. The plant forms many branches about 2 in. (5 cm.) in diameter from the base. These branches then elongate out without re-branching into long stems up to 20 ft. (7 m.) long. Each stem will produce numerous oval leaves 0.75-1.5 in. (2-4 cm.) long, along its entire length. Leaves are produced when moisture is abundant and drop off when conditions are dry. The petiole of the leaf however will remain as a spine hence the stems appear to be armed for their entire length. When moisture is sufficient clusters of bright red flowers are produced at the tips of the branches.

Fouquieria splendens is widely cultivated as a decorative accent or specimen plant in the desert southwest. Plants may be found in specialty nurseries or grown from seed. When transplanting one should keep the same N/S orientation that the plant had in its previous location because the south facing side is adapted to the sun. They prefer sandy well drained soils on slopes or mounds. Supplemental water may be helpful for a few months or a year when transplanted.



Branches have been used as fencing because of their spines and also as walking sticks because of their light weight (without spines I suppose). Flowers are edible in salads etc. Bark and flowers also have uses in folk medicine.

Jack G. Reynolds

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Protests and Shows

A Letter From Bruce

We have had some peculiar weather lately. The extreme heat brought down most of the pecans before they were ripe! Then a wind storm tore large branches off some of our trees. I was lucky in that the largest came down in the hour interval between changing watering.



I thought with our civil rights protests ending in the civil rights act and our anti-war protests ending in withdrawal from Vietnam we had lived to see the end of protests. But recently they are back more than ever! On the 19th of September we went to see a Sikh

film about the reaction to an attack in Ohio. Fortunately most Sikhs are peaceful and the reaction was one of uniting the neighborhood.



On the 21st we heard an ethics talk on "Fake News". It was depressing as we were presented with no solution by an expert in the field!

Then we saw the movie "Dolores" with Dolores Huerta present. It was interesting to see the past lead right into the present.

On the 22nd we went to the fair and were pleased to find the Boy Scouts have learned how to market a little better. I was able to get a "yummy yam" with a side of chili verde. (Last year they didn't know how to price this when I asked for it.) The plant exhibits were OK, but not outstanding. I was surprised to see a ZZ plant with only a third place ribbon! It was good-sized and in full bloom! (I had never seen one bloom before, although I knew it was in the same family as callas, and, of course, has a similar flower structure.)

Polly's birthday was the 29th and she had a free lunch at Denny's. On the 1st of October the family gathered for a bigger celebration at Hooters. It was sad to note that the former Cactus Valley across the road is now defunct. It was still rude of them not to let us know they couldn't honor our reservation for the previous month.



On the 5th we had dinner at Polly's sister Martha's in Fresno and celebrated once again. Afterward we went to the member's sale at the Fresno CSS. I bought a *Ceropegia stapeliformis* for a mere \$4. Of course we were at the talk by Eunice Thompson on the islands of Baja. Once again we were reminded that some succulents of the islands on the Pacific side relate more to the Channel Islands than the mainland!



On the 13th we helped with the setup for the show and sale and were there for the opening on the 14th. It was fascinating to watch the crowd pour in right on time and continue throughout the morning. After the closing on Sunday we heard the Bakersfield Little Big Band play great jazz at the First Congregational Church. I am happy to say that the 2017 issue of *Bradleya* (year book of the British CSS) is out early and contains two articles of which I am third author after Joachim Thiede of Germany and Theo Campbell-Barker of England. The first is on *Sansevieria sinus-simiorum*, *Crassula swaziensis* and *Crassula setulosa* which are recorded as new to the plants known for Mount Mulanje in Malawi. (We had visited Mulanje at Christmas of 1965 and I photographed an unidentified *Sansevieria*. It turns out this is the first record for there!) The second article is on *Crassula zombensis* which is named for Zomba Plateau in Malawi. The University of Malawi, where I once taught, is in the town of Zomba at the base of the plateau and I collected the crassula.

Bruce Hargreaves

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



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