

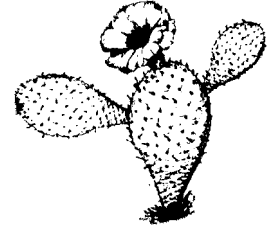
The Bakersfield Cactus & Succulent Society  
% Polly Hargreaves, editor  
5817 Pryor Street  
Bakersfield, Ca. 93308-4026



### **Agave**

W The top 12 feet of our  
32 foot flower stalk  
A "Charlie Brown Christmas"

# The Cactus Patch



*Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei*

Volume 21 **January 2018** Number 1

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

**"Rockin' with Cacti and Succulents"**

**Marcia Tatroe**

**January 9th**

**@ 7:00**

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

**Looking Forward**

**Garden Fest @ BC**

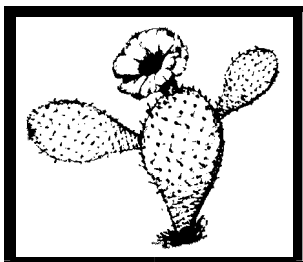
**Saturday, April 21st  
2018**

**We need you!**

**Meet the Speaker!**

**Dinner at  
Sizzler**

**5:00 PM  
900 Real Road**



# The Cactus Patch

## Volume 21 Number 1

### January 2018

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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## January 9<sup>th</sup> MEETING

### “Rockin' with Cacti and Succulents”

**Marcia Tatroe**



If you want to succeed with a collection of cacti and succulents outside, a rock garden is the ideal environment. Raised beds allow you to provide soil that is compatible to the plant's needs. Rocks help protect against weather extremes, while moderating temperature fluctuations enough to increase hardiness by a zone or two. This presentation considers stone selection, the basics of construction, and reveals rock garden tricks and techniques that will help make your garden flourish.



Marcia Tatroe writes the monthly "Mountain Garden Checklist" for Sunset Magazine and is a frequent contributor to Colorado Gardener and other gardening publications. Her photography and gardens have been featured in numerous books, magazines and nationally televised gardening shows. She lectures throughout the West focusing on garden design, rock gardening, xeriscape, and native plants. In her most recent book, Cutting Edge Gardening in the Intermountain West, she advocates using drought-tolerant and native plants and indigenous materials to create a gardening aesthetic

unique to this region. Her garden was awarded Gold Habitat Hero status by the Audubon Rockies in 2017 as an outstanding urban wildscape.

~3~

# Spider of the Month

## *Agelenopsis species*



I go out to check my greenhouse each night between 10 PM to midnight. Lately I have worn a headlamp to light my way and for convenience. About a year ago I noticed some sparkles in the grass along the path. At first I thought they were small crystals but then one moved. I was curious. Closer examination revealed a small brown spider.

The sparkle was eye shine just like the eyes of a dog or cat reflecting the light from the headlamp.

I started to watch for them each evening. Often I would see the shine in the same location. Spiders are territorial. I tried to get close for a good look. It was a light brown spider with slender legs. The body was about half an inch long. There were two parallel darker brown bars running the length of the cephalothorax (the segment that the legs emerge from). I don't have a spider book but my copy of *Insects of the LA Basin* has a short section on spiders. Grass spiders seemed the best bet. The internet gave me a good picture and a name.

Then there were the eyes, what about the reflection. In the university I majored in zoology (minored in botany), but was interested mostly in vertebrate evolution and ecology but I did take one course in invertebrates. I still have the text by Barnes. Would the answer be there? What luck, in the brief chapter on spiders the eyes are diagrammed and discussed. Spiders have two kinds of eyes so called "direct" and "indirect"; it has to do with the direction the photo-receptors are pointing. In direct eyes they

point toward the light, in indirect they point away toward the back of the eye away from the light.

Indirect eyes have a reflective layer called a "tapetum" just like nocturnal mammals. It acts as a photo-multiplier. The receptors get two doses of light as it first passes through and then is bounced back off the tapetum. Grass spiders have eight eyes, some of each type. All vertebrates have indirect eyes only, an accident of evolution.

The story continues, the Oct. 20 issue of *Science* had a beautiful orb weaver on the cover and articles on spider evolution as well as their venom and silk. It turns out that spiders produce many kinds of silk specialized for different things, entangling prey, wrapping up egg cases encasing prey etc. Efforts to commercialize their silk have resulted in inserting silk genes into yeast, bacteria and even goats in an effort to produce a light strong silk fiber for use by humans. The results are preliminary but The North Face Company has a parka now that contains spider silk and Adidas has a shoe with spider silk in it. Who would have thought?

Jack

Jack G. Reynolds

## MEETING of Dec. 12th, 2017

### Annual Family Potluck and Silent Auction

I was so busy admiring the nice table decorations (provided by Jill and Sidney) and eating the good food (provided by everybody – so many crock-pots!) and talking (I do that a lot.) that I forgot to take many pictures!

Maynard, Donna, Paul and Jessica were among the hard working people there before me.







## Thanking Thrice & Potluck Twice

### A Letter From Bruce

On 16th Nov. we headed north once again (over my objection!) to visit the grandkids. There was predicted snow for Donner Summit, so I suggested going up 395. Our first stop was at Pearsonville with its Subway. Then it was on to Spellbinder Books in Bishop with the Pupfish Café behind it. It started to rain and we ran into gusts of wind. At Cowley Gate Summit and Devil's Gate Summit there were snow flurries. From then on the road was clear and we had dinner at Jack in the Box in Carson City at 7:36. We finally reached James' at 10:42, only to be greeted with, "Why didn't you come over Donner Summit?"

Next day we all went out to supper at El Quatrero and then went to the Sacred Heart Church for a bizarre run by a number of churches in town (mostly Protestant!) On the 18th we went to a tree-lighting by "Light up a Life". We weren't there to honor anyone in particular, but Margaret Villanueva, James' Mother in Law, was playing in a group of bell ringers. (And they had cookies and hot cider- necessary after standing out in the cold.) On the 19th we all went to see Wonder, a wonderful movie. It made me feel that I was lucky. I only got picked on because I was always the littlest kid in school. (I was picked up by the police when I was walking to Kindergarten!) I now know my problem was nothing!

After a relaxing day on the 20th, we all went out to breakfast at the Copper Kettle on the 21st. We then ended our Thanksgiving visit and headed home – over Donner Summit! The holiday traffic on 99 was thick – a lot of stop/go driving.



That evening we had pizza in Fresno with Polly's sisters. The traffic was even worse the next day, but the distance was shorter. On the 23rd, the real Thanksgiving Day, we celebrated with a meal at Anne's house

On the 7th of December we went back up to Fresno for the annual potluck supper at the FCSS. As usual the auction items were underbid, but a set of The Succulent Euphorbiae signed by the artist Cythna Letty fetched a reasonable price. (I didn't bid on it as I have a set in better condition which is also signed.) And, of course, we were at the BCSS potluck on the 12th. I was happily outbid on the plants I wanted – much better bidding than in Fresno!

On the 9th of December we went to Harvey Auditorium to hear A "Merry Tuba Christmas." This brought back memories as we had heard one of the first such concerts at Radio City Music Hall back in the 70's! It is always fun to hear Euphoniums, Tubas and Sousaphones play melodies for a change.

The November issue of Natural History had an interesting article on Dinosaurs. I was surprised to see a long-neck sauropod named *Shingopana songwensis*. The species name implies it is from the Songwe, a river which we knew as the boundary between Malawi and Tanzania. (Our Peace Corps posting was 10 miles south of this!) Sure enough, it was collected in southwestern Tanzania. I wish I had found it on the Malawian side – there are some dinosaurs known from Malawi, but this would have been a new one.

Bruce Hargreaves

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

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