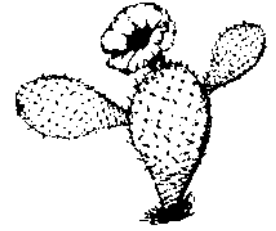




Amorphophallus titanium

@ the Huntington Garden

The Cactus Patch



Opuntia basilaris var. treleasei

Volume 21 **October 2018** Number 10

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BAKERSFIELD CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

This Month's Program

“Three Weeks in Madagascar”

(and a Few Succulents)

Maynard Moe

October 9th @ 7:00

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

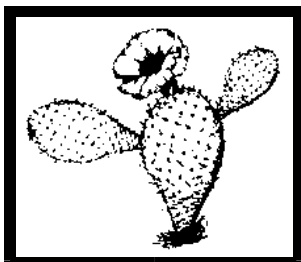
SHOW & SALE

Oct 13 & 14

St. Paul's Church
2216 17th St.

Meet the Speaker!

Dinner at
Sizzler
5:00 PM
900 Real Road



The Cactus Patch

Volume 21 Number 10
October 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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October 9th Meeting

Three Weeks in Madagascar (and a Few Succulents) maynard moe

In 2013 I went to Madagascar with Rob Skillin (founding "father" of BCSS), Kelly Griffin (of Aloe fame), Woody Minnich (annual speaker for our club), and five others. We went into remote places, got lost a couple times, had to rebuild bridges, destroyed two Toyotas, and saw fabulous plants. I'll give a captivating account of our trip.



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September 11, 2018

"Aloes On My Mind:"

"Exploring Aloe Hybrids One Generation at a Time"

Karen Zimmerman

Wow! What endless possibilities for variation exists. How exciting it is to see all "your babies" seek to amuse and amaze in form, color and flowers.



BRAG TABLE

Sidney Kelley brought a *Crassula* sp. which was in flower. It was in a dog pot

Polly brought a *Nepenthes* hybrid . This is a pitcher plant with the insect catching pitchers growing from the ends of leaves. It cost \$10 at Home Depot. When purchased, it had only dried up cups. Vons had \$25 plants with fresh cups, but it was worth waiting for the fresh cups to grow rather pay the higher price. We saw two species of *Nepenthes* in the wild in Madagascar. Most of them grow in Southeast Asia.



I brought an *Aloe elegans* which I donated to our garden at Cal State. I had donated a similar plant to the silent auction at Huntington's symposium. I also brought a Mexican blue fan palm (*Brahea armata*) which Fred Gaumer had given me in Fresno and which I am passing on to our garden. It originally came from Davis.

The Succulent Garden at Cal State

Cylindropuntia bigelovii



“Teddybear Cholla” is a common cactus of the southwest U.S. and Northern Mexico. It is often found in huge colonies which can be thick enough to make it difficult to walk through. It is one of the 'jumping' chollas, so named because it detaches and grabs on at the slightest touch. Many times you aren't even aware that you've brushed against it – surely it must have jumped out and grabbed you. This of course is a strategy for dissemination. You will

have dragged it quite a ways by the time you've extracted the cactus segment and tossed it to the ground.

Hardy down to freezing and not bothered by sun and heat it is easy to grow and grows moderately fast (for a cactus). Covered in barbed spines, too big for pots and shedding segments makes this not good for cultivation.

Stephen Cooley



Plant of the Month

Yucca rostrata



I was browsing through U-tube and ran across a segment called “10 Outstanding Succulents”. I thought perhaps I would find a subject for this month’s column and sure enough I did. The plants shown were all very pretty but *Yucca rostrata* fit best with my wish to give people ideas that can be used in

dry landscapes.

Yucca rostrata or “Beaked Yucca” is a tree-like plant with a straight trunk up to 12 ft. (3 m.) in height, considered by some to be the most attractive of the Yuccas. The trunk is topped with a spherical rosette of leaves. The leaves are about 2 ft. (60 cm.) long and only 3/4 in. (15 mm.) wide, blue-green in color, making a head about 4.5 ft. (1.5 m.) in diameter. Usually the trunk is unbranched although in older plants short branches may occur. The leaves are persistent and dead ones will drape down along the trunk for years.

Flowers are white and produced in long panicles up to 3 ft. (1 m.) tall. They come in the spring. The flowers are visited by humming birds for nectar and bees for pollen. The seeds are eaten by some birds.

Yucca rostrata is native to southern Texas, New Mexico, Chihuahua and Coahuila in Mexico. It is a popular landscape plant all across the southwestern deserts from low to high desert even to Denver CO. It wants well drained soil and occasional deep watering. One of my books on western landscaping suggests it as part on a grouping of plants such as palo verde, *Salvia*, *Atriplex* to form a sort of oasis attractive to the eye as well as wildlife.

Jack G. Reynolds



Memories Returning

A Letter From Bruce

No sooner had I written about four obits, when two more appeared. John McCain was, of course, expected, but was, nonetheless, a great loss to the nation. I may not have agreed with him on many points, but his skill at negotiating with opposites was remarkable.

Neil Simon also will be missed. He made us laugh and we could use a few laughs right now.

The September issue of Natural History was devoted to articles on human origins. I am neither a paleontologist nor an anthropologist, but I have always been interested in both. While I was working on a Ph.D. in malaria in New York, I spent a lot of my “spare” time at the American Museum of Natural History. I even went so far as to take a course on human origins from Dr. Shapiro which used the vast collection there to enhance the lectures. Later, when we had returned to Africa, we were able to stop by the American Museum while on leave and see the remarkable display they had of bones showing clues as to human origins. I don’t believe there has been such a gathering of specimens before or since then.

I was pleased to note that Martin Pickford and Brigitte Senut of Paris got a mention. They had worked in Botswana examining cave deposits with stone tools when I was there. More recently they have named *Orrorin tugenensis* (Original man from Tugen {Kenya}), a 6 million year old relative of man. There is a beautiful painting of the related *Ardipithecus* of Ethiopia, which shows the mix of ape-like and human features in these.

On the 24th of August we went over to John’s house and watched the film “Finding Altamira”. It tells the story of the discovery of this remarkable collection of prehistoric art in Spain and the disbelief that met this. Later, of course, other caves such as Lascaux in France showed the truth of this discovery. I visited the Museum of Natural History in Paris as a guest of Bernard Bataille (who worked on early mammals in Lesotho when I was there) and they had a mock-up of Lascaux. It was impressive. (I also met with Martin and Brigitte while I was at the museum.)



On 1st Sept. we went with John to the Huntington for the annual Succulent Symposium. They have tried to keep costs down and there is no longer an evening session, so it was easy to make it a one-day trip. Following a light breakfast at 8:30 and a

welcome by James Folsom, Director of the Gardens, we had a lecture on winter growers of the Richtersveld (South Africa) by John Trager, Curator of the Desert Garden and Collections at the Huntington. He showed us a lot of Aloes, mesembs etc. but only a half a dozen Euphorbias. It was a great comparison of plants in their natural habitat and at the Huntington.

The second lecture by Lucas Majure of the Florida Museum of Natural History on the Cacti of the Caribbean was less interesting for me. He had too many family trees with so much detail it would take a month to study them. Jeff Moore of Solana Beach then showed us Soft Succulents, mainly a lot of cultivated *Crassula* relatives. We then had a delicious lunch. We were invited to visit the Desert Garden, but there wasn’t time and a lot of the pathways are being redone. Instead I went to see the giant arum which had bloomed. Unfortunately it was setting seed and no longer smelled. It had a sign “Stank”.

After lunch we were treated to a talk on How to Move a Botanic Garden by Cathy Babcock of the Boyce Thompson Arboretum, Judy Mielke and Rod Stanger of Logan Simpson and Al Dunstan of the Wallace Desert Garden. It seems H. B Wallace, vice president under Truman, had built up a huge succulent collection in Scottsdale, Arizona. After his death it was decided to move the collection to the Boyce Thompson Arboretum in Superior. This involved mapping and moving thousands of mature plants, an amazing feat.



After a break we heard Bongani Ntloko speak on Lesotho Succulents. I was very interested to hear him as I had given a talk on the same subject decades earlier. It was an excellent talk with an

emphasis on the spiral aloe, Lesotho's National Flower. He and his wife Anisele were brought to the States by growers in Colorado who are, of course, interested in high altitude plants.

The day ended with a talk by Derek Tribble of London who showed us all the variations in *Cotyledon*, *Adromischus* and *Tylecodon*. I was interested because I have met all three genera in southern Africa and even published a paper on variations in *Cotyledon orbiculata* in Lesotho. The genera are even more complex than I knew!



Afterward there was a reception and we got to socialize with Bongani and Anisele. I also talked with old friends such as Brian Kimble from the Ruth Bancroft Garden and Kelly Griffith who started all the hybrid aloes that have flooded the market. On the way back to Bakersfield we had dinner at the Claim Jumper in Valencia. As it was September (but her birthday is the 29th!) they gave Polly \$25 off on her Claim Jumper Card! It's too bad they are so far from Bakersfield.

One sad note, at the symposium we were given a notice of the death of Lee Miller who has contributed much to our succulent world. I presume the next issue of the Cactus and Succulent Journal will tell us all of his accomplishments.

Billy and James Tyler have been visiting both at our exercise group and our choir. James was a minister at the Lutheran Church in Oildale and our choir still sings there at Christmas time. They met us in exercise and introduced us to the choir. They are now retired and living with family in Florida.



An even more exciting reunion was on the 6th of September when we met Sandy and Cornell Dudley for lunch at Milts. (We had already decided not to go to Fresno for the annual members' sale at the FCSS.) They had been in Malawi in 1976 when I taught at the University. (In fact Cornell was head of Biology – my boss – at one point.) We left in 1981, but the Dudleys stayed on and are now residents in Malawi. (Both are originally from California and they were in Bakersfield visiting relatives.) John was able to join us for lunch and they got to see the adult he became. Cornell is still monitoring vegetation in Liwonde National Park and reports that *Euphorbia lividiflora* populations there and elsewhere in



southern Malawi are dying out. No-one knows why.

The 7th of September was supposed to be the grand beginning of the new Flix at the Fox (replacing the old Flicks). There was a reception with food and drinks and 800 of us sat down to watch “Loving Vincent”, an animation of Vincent van Gogh’s paintings to illustrate his life. I had learned about it from John and recommended it to Phil Neufeld (former head of Flicks and now residing in Santa Fe). He knew of it and agreed it was worth considering. Unfortunately, the machinery let us down and all attempts at projection failed. It has been rescheduled for the 5th of October, but it was not a good beginning for the new Flix! Of course we were at the BCSS meeting with Karen Zimmerman of the Huntington. I had already heard Kelly Grffith talk on his hybrid aloes so it was a very repetitious presentation for me.

Speaking of Aloes, I promised an answer to the question of mistakes in the sentence about discovering the cave in Vietnam. The first mistake is calling the plant an aloe. Aloes do not occur naturally in Southeast Asia. The plant in question is probably eaglewood or sandalwood. They are sometimes mistakenly called “aloe”, but are unrelated dicots. (Aloes are monocots.) They do have a resin or sap which does have use in perfume. True aloes, of course, do not. For further information see “When is an Aloe not an Aloe?” by Bruce J Hargreaves. (See last month’s newsletter for the reference.)

Bruce Hargreaves

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



**Bakersfield Cactus and Succulent Society
19th ANNUAL SHOW & SALE**

Saturday Oct 13

10 AM – 5 PM

Sunday October 14

11 AM – 3 PM

4 GROWERS & 2 POTTERS

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

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Election of Officers

in November

**There are lots of places you can help
Make this club YOUR club**

**We will discuss opportunities for service
at tonight's meeting.**

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CALENDAR



October 9th BCSS Meeting

“Three Weeks in Madagascar”

(and a Few Succulents)

Maynard Moe

Cactus and Succulent Show and Sale

October 12th Afternoon Set Up

October 13th 10am – 5pm

October 14th 11am – 3pm

St. Paul's Church – 17th and “B” Street

November 13th BCSS Meeting

“Beauty in the Eye of the Beholder”

Gunnar Eisel

December 11th BCSS Meeting

Winter family Potluck

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