
CENTRAL SPINE

Newsletter of the

CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Special Issue 1, 2001

PRESIDENT'S LETTER MAY 2001

Our next meeting is Sunday, May 20, 2001, at 2 pm in Webster Auditorium at the Desert Botanical Garden. We will award trophies from the Show, and we will have the Silent Auction.

In the Silent Auction, members bring in properly-labeled plants and a bid sheet with a suggested opening bid, usually in the 50 cents to 1 dollar range. The plants are placed on tables. Each table has a timer. For 10 minutes people look at the plants.

Then, the timers are set, placed under cover so nobody knows how long they will go, and bidding begins. You bid for a plant by writing a bid on the bid sheet and your name. You must overbid the previous bid; if you are the first bidder, just put your name next to the suggested bid. When a timer goes off, that table's bidding is closed. When all timers have gone off, take the bid cards for plants you have bought to the front of the room and pay the treasurer. While some very rare plants bring higher prices, most plants go for \$2-\$5. It is a great way to increase one's collection. Please remember to bring your checkbook or cash to pay for plants. And, bring a box to carry home your plants.

The Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society (CACSS) meets monthly in Webster Auditorium, usually on the last Sunday. We feature lectures, demonstrations, Silent Auctions, a Holiday Party, club-coordinated buying trips, a monthly newsletter (the *Central Spine*, which you can receive by mail—or as an E-mail attachment), and our annual Show and Sale. Members host Open Gardens where all members are welcome to view plants while enjoying refreshments. While our meetings are open to all, other events and the newsletter are to members only. There is a membership blank in this special issue of *Central Spine*.



Winter Party 2000 at Webster Auditorium

Each of our meetings features a Q&A session on how to grow plants or on problems. Bring in a plant if you have a question about it. Many of our members have lots of experience and we are glad to help share our love of the plants. Members exchange cuttings or pass out extra cuttings frequently.

The CACSS is an affiliate of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA.) The CSSA was founded in 1929 just months before the crash, but survived the Depression and War. It is a charitable and educational institution dedicated to furthering knowledge and cultivation of cacti and other succulents. To this end, the CSSA: supports C&S lab research; sponsors scientific field expeditions; offers for sale plants new to cultivation and rare seeds; publishes a bimonthly newsletter *To the Point*, edited by CACSS member Carol Clapp; publishes the annual *Haseltonia*, a compilation of scientific papers; sponsors non-collecting field trips to cactus and succulent habitat, such as an upcoming trip to Madagascar; holds a biennial convention with lectures about the plants; and publishes the bimonthly, mostly-color *Journal of the CSSA*.

The *Journal* has been published continuously since 1929. It features articles with numerous color photos on newly discovered plants; how to grow plants; travel logs detailing plants, geography, and climate of many places; reviews of C&S books; sources of plants, books, and seed.

The 2001 Convention is coming up July 1-5 in Los Angeles. It will feature 4 days of lectures on plants, habitats, cultivation workshops, and a little history. There will be an enormous sale area with over 50 vendors of plants, pots, and books. One day is devoted to field trips. There is an opening reception, a midweek rare plant auction to raise money for the CSSA Research Fund, and a concluding banquet.

Many of our CACSS members will be there. The CSSA Web site is <http://www.cssainc.org>, from which you can link to the convention page. There is a CSSA membership blank in this issue as well.

Leo A. Martin

BUG-OF-THE-MONTH

By Sue Hakala

Ladybugs: Don't Buy Them

Life Cycle: The length of the ladybug life cycle depends upon temperature, humidity, and food supply, usually requiring about three to four weeks. In the spring, overwintering females find food, then lay egg clusters of 10 to 50 eggs in aphid colonies.

They lay from 50 to 300 eggs in a lifetime. Eggs hatch in 3–5 days; the larvae feed on aphids or other insects for 2–3 weeks; then, they pupate. Adults emerge in 7–10 days. There may be 5–6 generations per year. In the autumn, adults hibernate in aggregation sites. These sites can be along fence rows, under fallen trees, or under rocks.

Amount of Food Consumed: Although adults and larvae are primarily known as predators of aphids, they also like soft-scale insects, mealybugs, and spider mites. Some feed on plant and pollen mildews. One larva will eat about 400 aphids during its development. An adult will eat about 300 aphids before it lays eggs or about 3–10 aphids for each egg laid. An adult will consume more than 5,000 aphids in its lifetime.

Collecting Ladybugs for Sale: Ladybugs are collected in the mountains of California. Ladybugs return to the same huge aggregation sites each year. Some sites have been known to contain as many as 500 gallons of the bugs (72,000–80,000 adults per gallon). Bugs collected in December, January, February, and early March, before normal migration, are cold-stored. When released they tend to disperse quickly and widely, especially when temperatures reach 65°F and above. It has been discovered that ladybugs have a genetically programmed need to fly to new territory before eating; they will not begin eating until they have flown a great distance. As a consequence, few stay in the area where they are liberated. Those released in the summer don't disperse

any great distance. They will drink water, but don't eat, existing on their stored fat.

Purchased Ladybugs = Unwise Investment. Shipped-in ladybugs aren't really an economical way to manage aphid infestations.

They will not begin eating until they have flown to your distant neighbor's home. Bugs collected from outside Arizona are of less value as pest-eaters than the local beetle populations, which will multiply in accordance with prey.

However, ladybugs can be beneficial in a greenhouse with tightly screened vents. In that case, one-half pint (about 4,500 ladybugs) per 3,000 square feet is the recommended rate. Release in the evening after watering down the area. Spray *wheat* (a combination of whey and yeast) on plants to attract ladybugs.

Addendum by Leo Martin

A great memory is hiking up Finger Rock Canyon in Tucson on July 13, 1983. At the top of the mountain we were swarmed by ladybugs to the point where no skin was visible. They were after our sweat. They stayed on us as long as we were on the mountain top.

On the way down, after a certain point, they started flying off us; before we had gone 1/4 mile all had left, presumably to return to the peak.

CALENDAR

May 20	Awards & Silent Auction
June 24	Cathy Rice - Conservation
July 29	Wendy Hodgson - Surveying Plants Along the Arizona Trail
August 26	Patrick Quirk - Learning to be a Better Gardener Through Field Observations
September 30	TBA
October 28	Silent Auction
November 18	Woody Minnich
December 9	Holiday Party & Elections

Meetings are at 2 p.m. in Webster Auditorium, unless otherwise noted. All meetings include a question and answer session on growing plants.

Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society Member Application

Name: _____ Significant Other: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zipcode: _____

Phone (Home): _____ Phone (Work): _____

E-Mail: _____

Membership fee: \$20 for Individuals and \$25 for Households

Make check payable to: CACSS

Mail to: CACSS Membership c/o Leo Martin/Pam Bass

P O Box 8774

Scottsdale, AZ 85252-8774

CSSA Membership Form (from the CACSS *Central Spine*)

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zipcode: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____

CSSA Yearly Individual Membership: \$35; CSSA Associate Membership for Spouse/Partner: \$10
(Associate membership does not include the Journal)

Spouse/Partner Name for Associate Membership: _____

Payment may be made by personal check, money order, or credit card. For credit card, please complete the following:

Credit Card Type: MasterCard Visa Credit Card Number: _____

Expiration Date (MM/YY): _____ Signature: _____

Please mail, fax, or E-mail to: Mindy Fusaro, CSSA Treasurer

P O Box 2615

Pahrump, NV 89041-2615 USA

Fax: 775.751.1357

E-mail: cssa@wizzard.com

APRIL 2001 PLANT SHOW PHOTOS



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