

A U G U S T 2 0 0 3



Central SPINE

CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

www.centralarizonacactus.org

President's Message August 2003

Greetings: I've spent some of this past weekend in the greenhouse carrying out dead plants which have succumbed to this, one of the hottest summers in memory. Yes, the summer rot season is upon us, and no matter how much water or shade we give our precious plants, some of them do die. When the nights stay this hot for such a long time, the plants can't carry on their metabolic processes like they're supposed to. They just sit and wait out the heat and some slowly cook in their own tissue. I've lost at least 30 plants, and we have at around six weeks more to go. Yes, don't count on September being any better for your plants than August, as the nights are usually just as warm. We lost our large *Dracaena draco* at the Garden after more than twenty years. It probably happened mid-June with the terminal disintegrating at the end of July. This plant only grows on the Canary Islands, and species like these, which are adapted to mild summers and winters with higher humidity, are very difficult to keep alive in the Phoenix area. I, like many others in our club, like the challenge of raising plants like these, but I'm reminded every summer of the limitations of having a shade structure that is not cooled. Unless you want to undertake the expense of sealing your structure and installing a cooling system, your choices will be limited to plants that can take the heat here. Don't feel bad if you've also lost plants this summer, we all have. You have to look at it as a learning experience, an indication of what type of succulent will not work here, and as freeing up some space for new plants picked up during that next buying trip! Come to this month's meeting and hear Doug Dawson tell of his travels in Africa. See you there!

Scott

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CACSS Library News, August 2003

NEW BOOKS / JOURNALS:

- o *British Cactus & Succulent Journal*, Vol. 21, No. 2, June 2003. Articles of Interest:
 - A new genus of the cactus family from the state of Nuevo Leon in Mexico - *Digitostigma caput-medusae*. By Carlos G. Velazco Macias and Manuel Nevarez de los Reyes.
 - A brief encounter with *Lithops optica*. By Rogan Roth.
 - A new species of *Espositoa* from Peru. By Graham Charles and Elizabeth Woodgyer.
 - A glochidiferous *Euphorbia* from Somalia. By Bert Jonkers.
 - Cacti of the Huaura river valley, Peru - a conservation study by Carlos Ostolaza, Aldo Ceroni, Gustavo Dreyfus, Natalia Calderon and Siodney Novoa.
 - A new subspecies of *Ariocarpus agavoides* from San Luis Potosi. By Manuel Sotomayo, Alberto Arredondo Gomez, Francisco Rene Sancheza Barra, and Mario Martinez Mendez.
 - *Mammillaria moelleriana* - pay your money and take your choice. By John Pilbeam.

REVIEW OF SOME BOOKS IN OUR LIBRARY:

- *Cacti*, by Charles Glass and Clive Innes. (1991, 320 pp., hardbound) Over 1,200 species and hybrids are treated in this directory. A lot of information is offered for each plant here, like identifying characteristics, soil type, light requirements, and general care. It should be noted, however, that some of the minimum temperatures that are listed seem a little higher than need be, at least for Phoenix. See what you think. Color photos.
- *Cacti and Succulents for the Amateur*, by Robert Foster and Charles Glass. (1977, 80 pp., paperbound) A good book for the beginning collector with tips on horticulture, labeling, pests, as well as descriptions of major families and genera. B&W photos.
- *Name that Succulent*, by Gordon D. Rowley. (1980, 268 pp., hardbound) This fine book deals with the taxonomy of succulent plants. Not only are there keys to all the plant families that contain succulents, but there are chapters on how plants are named, how they are classified, and what to do if you think you've discovered a new species or cultivar. Line drawings.
- Thanks to Tim Chapman for these reviews.

THANK YOU!!

Jim and Electra Elliott of Arizona Cactus Sales donated a cart to the CACSS to make it easier for me to transport our CACSS library books. This means now I'll be able to put out a bigger selection of books at the meetings. Thanks !!!

HOW DO I CHECK OUT CACSS BOOKS?

To see a list of the books we have please see our catalog. Paul Schueneman, the CACSS librarian, can email you a copy of the catalog (see contact information at the end of this article). Or, you can pick up a catalog from him at a CACSS meeting. Or, there's a copy of the catalog on the CACSS website: www.centralarizonacactus.org/liblist.htm. When you would like to check out books or journals, contact Paul at least a couple of days before the CACSS meeting and he will give the books to you there or he will go with you to Webster Auditorium (our books are shelved there) after the meeting and you can browse/check out books.

NEED HELP?

Contact the CACSS librarian, Paul Schueneman:
602-381-9859 (W) • 480-706-1672 (H)
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An Invitation!

Hello fellow CACSS members, my name is Jim Smith. Although I have been a member for some time, I do not get to many meetings due to my location. In 1997, I left my job as production manager at Linden Tree Nursery, purchased 20 acres and started my own nursery. Currently I have about 4 acres in production including 13 greenhouses which covers just under 25,000 sq. ft. Most of the greenhouse space is taken up by *Echinocactus grusonii* but I grow other varieties of succulents as well. I am a wholesale grower so I try to concentrate on plants that I can sell in large numbers. Many of the plants in field production are water efficient plants such as *leucophyllum*, *cassia* etc.

On Saturday September 6, I would like to invite you and your friends to drop by and see my place. I will have the gate open from 7am to 12:00 noon, so you are welcome to stop by any time between those hours. In addition to visiting the nursery you may want to take a short hike to see a *Ferocactus* which stands just over 8' tall. The Wittmann area is being developed at a rapid pace and I am afraid this beautiful specimen will not be around much longer. If you decide to take the hike which is under a mile be sure to bring some water because it is still pretty warm here on the creosote flats in September.

DIRECTIONS:

To get here from Phoenix you take 60 west towards Wickenburg, turn south on Patton rd. drive about 7 miles and then turn north on 251st ave. The nursery is just up 251st on your right. Hope you can make it.

Jim
New Growth Wholesale Nursery

Fungal Infections of Cacti

The following article originally appeared in the June/July issue of the Central Spine.

Cactus Anthracnose (fungus - *Colletotrichum* (*Gleosporium*) spp.): This disease affects several kinds of cacti, *Cereus*, *Echinocactus*, *Mammillaria*, and particularly *Opuntia* (prickly pear). Infection results in a rather moist light brown rot which shows many light pink pustules on the surface. Spots are small at first, later enlarge and become covered by the small spore-producing pustules. Large areas may be affected, sometimes destroying entire plants. No satisfactory control is available, other than removing and destroying diseased cladodes as soon as noticed. In the greenhouse, soil from infected plants should be removed and benches disinfected. Spraying with a copper fungicide may help in checking this disease.

Dry Rot (fungi - *Phyllosticta concava* and *Mycosphaerella* spp.): Small black circular spots develop first, which later increase in size until they reach a diameter of one or two inches. Further advance is checked by the development of callus tissue. Minute fruiting structures are seen in the infected tissue. The disease is in part physiological, influenced chiefly by soil moisture. Remove and destroy diseased specimens.

Scorch or Sunscald (fungus - *Hendersonia opuntiae*): This disease is common and serious on prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia*). Spots at first are distinctly zoned, later enlarging until entire cladodes turn a reddish-brown and finally die. The center of the disease area is grayish-brown and cracked. Other fungi may also be present in the diseased area. No practical control has been developed.

Cotton Root Rot (fungus - *Phymatotrichum omnivorum*): Several members of the cactus family are susceptible to attack by the cotton root rot fungus. Infected plants die. When pulled from the soil the brown strands of the fungus can be found growing on the root surface. No control practice is available.

The following is a web link with the same information:

<http://plantpathology.tamu.edu/Textlab/Flowers/cacti.html>

Soft Rot (bacterium - *Erwinia carotovora*): The bacterium enters tissue through natural openings and wounds. Under conditions of high humidity, the bacteria reproduce quickly, spreading to healthy parts of the plant. Diseased tissue is watery, soft, black and deteriorates rapidly. If environmental conditions turn dry, the development of the disease may be checked. The best control is to avoid wounds, treat broken surfaces right away with a copper fungicide and avoid having plants in places where humidity is high.

Nematodes (*Meloidogyne* spp.): Most of the cacti and succulents are susceptible to infection by root knot nematodes. Infected roots show small galls which are typical of the disease and serve to identify it when clean, washed roots are observed. Fumigate or sterilize soil before potting.

Other Diseases (fungi): Other fungi known to cause disease on cacti are *Fusarium oxysporum* (*Fusarium* rot), *Macrophomina phaseolina* (Charcoal rot), *Septoria* spp., *Helminthosporium cactivorum*, and *Aspergillus alliaceus* (Stem and branch rot).

Scab (physiological): Particularly common on prickly pear cactus. Rusty colored, corky areas appear on the stems. Scab is thought to be a form of edema, resulting from overwatering and poor ventilation. Increase light and decrease humidity for control.

Stem Rot of Cacti (fungus - *Drechslera cactivorum*): Basal or top rot of seedling cacti that turns cactus into a shrunken mummy covered with brown spores. First symptoms are yellow spots. It can completely rot a plant in four days. The fungicide Captan should give some control.

Missing Trophy!

This is an appeal for a missing trophy! It is for "Best Novice Succulent", and it needs to be returned so the plate can be attached with this year's winner. If you happen to have this trophy in your possession, please bring it with you to the next meeting. Thank you!
Scott

Open Garden!

Marc Fleischer will be having an open garden November 2nd. More details will be provided in the next issue.

AUGUST 2003

Upcoming Events - CALENDAR

General meetings are at 2:00 pm unless otherwise noted. Board meetings are one hour earlier. Members are welcome to attend board meetings.

August 24, 2003 CACSS Board Member Doug Dawson - CSSA Tour to Richtersveld & South Africa

September 28, 2003 CSSA President Duke Benadom - Echinocereus of Mexico, Dorrance Hall

October 26, 2003 Silent Auction of Member's Plants, Dorrance Hall

November 2, 2003 Open Garden - Marc Fleischer

November 23, 2003 Leo Martin - Convention report, Dorrance Hall

December 7, 2003 Holiday Party 12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., Webster Auditorium

Central Spine is the newsletter of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society. All opinions are those of respective authors. Publication herein does not imply that CACSS or any CACSS members agree with any statements published.

Change of Address: contact our Treasurer, Judy Brody, with any changes of address.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE!

The deadline for material submission for the next issue of *Central Spine* is:

September 5, 2003

Please make a note of this!

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