

Central Spine

April, 2011

*Newsletter of the Central Arizona
Cactus & Succulent Society*

An Affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

On the Web at www.centralarizonacactus.org

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CACCS meeting: Sunday, May 1

2 pm, Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden



Graptopetalum rusbyi

Barnhardt Trail south of Payson, March 2011
Photo by Doug Dawson

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2011 Meeting Schedule

There are changes to our normal meeting schedule due to a holiday and the CSSA National Convention in San Diego. Barring any unexpected event, the schedule is:

May 1 (in place of April 24th)
June 5 (in place of May 29th)
June 26
July 31
August 28
September 25
October 30
November 20 (in place of Nov 27)

Peru: From the Sea to the Sky
May 1, 2011 2 pm Dorrance Hall at DBG

Woody Minnich, a frequent speaker to our group, will share his experiences traveling through Peru four separate times. He will use his skills to paint word pictures of this fascinating country. Here is how he describes the program,

"This presentation is my total experiences of four trips into Peru. We will cover most of the regions rich in cactus and succulents, from Cajamarca in the North to Arequipa in the South. I will feature the towns, the people, the animals, and of course, the cacti and succulents of this historically important country. We will also encounter the many amazing plants that survive in the coastal sand dunes as well as the wonderful species that inhabit the highest elevations of the Andes.

We will see many genera of cacti and succulents: Austrocylindropuntia, Haageocereus, Armatocereus, Melocactus, Mila, Puya, Echeveria, Oroya, Matucana, Lobivia, Trichocereus, Weberbauerocereus, Peperomia, Oreocereus, Espostoa, Corryocactus, Cumulopuntia, Cleistocactus, Browningia, as well as many of the Bromeliads, especially the Tillandsias. I will try and give insight into the habitats and the conditions in which most of these plants grow. Hopefully this will allow you to apply their field growing conditions to how you might better cultivate these plants in the green house or garden.

Peru is a very fascinating and romantic country. From its coast lines to the Andes and into the Amazonian jungles, Peru has it all! What a wealth of intrigue, from its plants to its animals and of course, the mysterious Nasca lines to the ruins of Machu Picchu. "

President's Letter

Well, for once I will not talk (much) about the weather even though we have had some crazy late cold and some crazier early hot. The weather is crazy all over the world. I am leaving for Namibia on May 4th and they are having crazy rains, one thousand year flooding, trip will be affected, oh well. What I want to say is how proud I am of our members,... we had a GREAT Show and Sale!! What made it great? An outstanding turnout of new and returning exhibitors. We almost tripled the number of entrants from last year and showed over 600 plants, a number we have not even come close to in many years. We also had a tremendous team of committee members and volunteers to help produce and orchestrate this big event. The hot weather (sorry) wasn't the best scenario, but there was good attendance and the vendors all had more than respect-able sales. I think everyone had a good time contributing and socializing with other members and vendors. It is truly like a family affair. We had our usual volunteer thank you

party where we ate wonderful appetizers and croissant sandwiches, enjoyed cake and cold drinks. If you didn't volunteer this year, think about next year. We are looking for two members to be assistants to the Show co-chairs for 2012, so if you are inter-ested, contact me, Gard or Lois. On another note, the CSSA convention is coming up, April 24th to 29th. You can go on a per day basis so check the schedule for the speakers you want to hear. I will be there every day except Wednesday, so maybe I will see some of you. It is a great way to meet and connect with growers and explores from all over the world. The "cactus and succulent" world is relatively small, and you are literally one or two degrees separated from the top people in the field. Take advantage of a great opportunity and at the same time enjoy a few days in beautiful San Diego. I know I will enjoy it after these recent hot (sorry again) days!

See you at the meeting!
Steve M.

Contact the *Central Spine* Editor

for article and photo submissions,
questions or comments:
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I deeply appreciate the cards of
encouragement from quite a few
members, including one new member.
My injury is healing well.

Debora Life, Second Winner of CSSA Membership

The second drawing for a one-year membership
in the CSSA (Cactus and Succulent Society of
America) was held at the March meeting. The
drawings are open to those members of CACSS
who have not been a member of CSSA during
the last five years. Two more drawings will be
held. Doug Dawson and Gard Roper funded two
of the drawings. The club funded the other two.

Congratulations, Debora

Welcome to New Members

(listed in order of membership date)

Susan Boyes

Ty Petersen

Linda Iger

Cristina Lewis

Hans Mathiesen

Greg Presto

Pamela Slate

Christina Carlson

Ron Parker

Roberta Reichel

2011 CACSS Show and Sale

-photos by Doug Dawson



Show Chairs Gard Roper and Lois Schneberger taking a well-deserved rest



CACSS Member Melinda Louise, near her winning *Dudleya* entry



Part of our Show of more than 600 entry plants

CACSS Plants of the Month is on hiatus.

Agave "Blue Glow" – A Handsome Hybrid

By Tom Gatz

(reprinted from the "Gatherings", the volunteer newsletter at the Desert Botanical Garden)

If you haven't seen the newly landscaped amphitheater area just east of the Desert Botanical Garden's tour gathering area, be sure to make a point of detouring off the main path and take a look. Our new Director of Horticulture, Brian Kissinger, Agave Curator Chad Davis, and Gardener Sam Tafoya, with help from the hort aides, have used succulents from around the world to create a wonderful mix of contrasting shapes and patterns in this little hidden garden area of the DBG. I sometimes start my Sunday docent tours here to give the visitors that instant "you are no longer in Kansas" feeling.



A troupe of Agave "Blue Glow" in the Desert Botanical Garden's amphitheater area

Photo by Tom Gatz

One of the stars of this area of the Garden is a fairly new agave hybrid named "Blue Glow" after the blue-green leaves with smooth chestnut-colored leaf margins that glow red and yellow when

back-lit by the sun. The clean, symmetrical rosettes staged in a mass-planting of over 30 individual "Blue Glow" agaves have elicited many inquiries from visitors and volunteers such as "What is that beautiful succulent? An aloe? An agave?" One person commented "they look so perfect, they almost don't look real."

It is sometimes difficult to trace the parentage of the many new agave hybrids appearing in the trade in recent years. I did some digging on the inter net and talked to Chad and learned that Agave "Blue Glow" was likely developed by crossing *Agave ocahui* and *Agave attenuata*; though some suspect there was a ménage a trois involving *Agave shawii* as well.

Agave "Blue Glow" appears like it will do well in our Phoenix area gardens. It grows slowly to about 2 feet tall and 3 feet across. It has reportedly withstood temperatures of 20 degrees and possibly lower and was unscathed by the recent freezing nights when left uncovered at the Garden this past January and February. It does well with weekly watering or even less but also tolerates the heavier watering we give the specimen growing in the Butterfly House. It is generally solitary but produces the occasional pup. "Blue Glow" appears to maintain its best form with lots of sun but Chad suggests that some relief from full sun on hot afternoons would be appreciated by this California hybrid. It also looks nice in a wide, shallow, concrete pot in my backyard surrounded by desert bluebells and Mexican gold poppies.

White and yellow variegated forms of "Blue Glow" are being sold under the trade names of "Snow Glow" and "Sun Glow" respectively. Some of the other many agave hybrids appearing in the trade include: "Blue Flame" (*Agave attenuata* X *shawii*) which is frost and sun sensitive here, "Royal Spine" (*Agave victoriae reginae* X *macroacantha*) and "Burnt Burgundy" (*Agave victoriae reginae* X *palmeri*?). Still apparently unnamed is a hybrid of *Agave bovicornuta* X *colorata*. There is even a small spotted hybrid called "Mangave Blood Spot" resulting from crossing a species of *Manfreda* with *Agave macroacantha*.

PLANT QUESTIONS??? WHOM TO CONTACT!!!

Many CACSS members have experience with different kinds of succulent plants. I hope they will add their names to the following list (Just call or e-mail Bob Torrest—480-994-3868; robertst9114@msn.com).

For now the list is simply alphabetical with principal interests. When more members add their information, the list will be cross-referenced by topic.

DOUG DAWSON

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MIKE GALLAGHER

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Specializations include Aloes, Haworthias, Columnar Cacti, and *Turbinicarpus*.

STEVE PLATH

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Specializations include *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*, *Cyphostemma*, *Echinocereus*, *Fouquieria*, *Thelocactus*, General Propagation, and Desert Revegetation.

BOB TORREST

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Specializations include Desert Landscaping, Unusual (including Rare Fruit) Trees and Shrubs, Aloes, Agaves, Columnar Cacti, *Trichocereus*, and *Opuntia*.

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