

# Central Spine

November, 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](http://www.centralarizonacactus.org)

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**CACCS Meeting: Sunday, Nov. 20**  
2 pm, Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden  
**Presentation: Gary James-Ethiopia**

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Arizona Native: Agave toumeyana bella, taken by Doug Dawson on 3/18/09  
Location: Barnhardt Trail, west of highway 87, 2 miles south of Rye on the way to Payson

## December Newsletter Deadline: Dec. 14, 2011

### 2011 CACSS Officers

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**Membership Committee Chair**  
**Beth Kirkpatrick**

#### Welcome to New Members

**Bob Kenison**

**Jim Schuster**

## 2011 Meeting Schedule

*Note the date change in November meeting  
because of the Thanksgiving weekend.*

**November 20** (in place of November 27th)

#### **Presentation: Gary James-Ethiopia**

Gary has traveled to the far corners of the Earth, in search of seeing new plants and experiencing different cultures. He will present a program about the Plants and People of Ethiopia. We have never had a program about this country because not many people go there. Put this presentation on your calendar.

## **Christmas Potluck**

**1:30 to 5 pm, Sunday, December 11**  
**8625 N. Mountainview Rd., Scottsdale**

**Your hostesses this year will be**  
**Dana, Jo and Debora.**

#### **Bring a main dish, appetizer or dessert of your choice.**

We have room for 100 members. Join us for a memorable time Bring your holiday spirit and a plant to exchange. If you bring a plant, you may take a plant. Please bring an appetizer, a main course or dessert, with utensils for serving it. You'll also need to bring your own plates, silverware and napkins. As always, Gard and Loren will make a great punch and serve coffee.

#### **IT'S VERY, VERY IMPORTANT TO RSVP to Jo Davis by phone, 480-839-3792.**

She must know what you're bringing so she can coordinate the menu. Please get your reservation in now. If you leave a message for Jo, be sure to include your phone number, so she can call you back.

**Reservation deadline:**  
**Sunday, December 4.**

## President's Letter

I can't believe I'm almost at the end of my second year as President of the CACSS. It has been another great year in my book; we've had a lot of fun activities to participate in, good workshops, lots of participation from our members, good meetings, and now I'm looking forward to our picnic at the Boyce Thompson Arboretum. I really enjoy being part of this club. I am writing this from Patagonia AZ, near the Mexican border, where I am hunting for a couple of days. This is a great area to hike and see many varieties of cacti and succulents in a small area. In one location, within one hundred feet I saw an agave species, yucca, ocotillo, echinocereus

(2 species) , coryphantha and opuntia. I definitely want to do more habitat exploration in our own backyard. Back to club matters, we just wrapped up a very successful silent auction, and I would like to thank all who donated plants and/or helped at the sale for making it so. I would also like to thank the Board for their good work throughout the year. It is at these Board meetings where all the issues and ideas are discussed, formulated and put into action. Every club member is welcome to attend these meetings, and I encourage you to do so: you might even want to run for office one day! Well that's it for now, and I know I was kind of all over the map on this one,..... see you at the meeting,.. Steve M.



## CACSS Silent Auction

The October 30 silent auction was the most successful in Wayne Whipple's four years as CACSS Treasurer.

Photos by Doug Dawson



Bidding on the wide variety of plants



Board member Jack Meharian gets festive.

More photos in the December Central Spine

# Plants Killed by Summer Heat

By Sue Hakala

Via e-mail, members were asked to report plants they felt were killed by the endless heat both day and night this summer. Ten members responded some able to identify their plants others not. It seems *Aloes* were hardest hit. Some of the *Agaves* were probably victims of the Agave snout weevil based on descriptions given. I've deep watered my landscape plants with a soaker hose slow and deep and almost everything has revived. I hope that your plants have too.

Here's a list of the deceased:

- *Adromischus cristatus*
- *Adromischus oviforme*
- *Parry's Agave*
- *Agave macrocantha*
- Ribbon *Agave*
- 2 very large *Agaves*

*Aloes*

- *buhrii*
- *casttanea*
- *ericetorum*
- "Hercules"
- *krapohlana v. dumoulinii*
- *microstigma*
- *munchii*
- *peglarea*
- *vaombe*.
- *Cleistocactus straussii*
- Several night blooming *Cereus*

- *Crassula mucosa*
- *Dorsantherum filiribundum*
- Large *Ferocactus cylindraceus* (compass barrel)
- *Graptoveria amethorum*
- *Haworthia variegata*
- *Hoodia juttae*
- *Mammillaria bosacana* "Roseiflora"
- *Mammillaria parkinsonii* (owls' eyes)
- *Ocotillo* blown apart and dry
- 3 large *Pachycereus marginatus* (Mexican fence posts) *Tephrocactus alexanderi v. geometricus* (very small ones)
- Multi-headed *Thelocactus hexaedrophorus* larger heads, smaller heads unaffected
- It seems the rabbits were hungry for moist plants and wiped out beds of *Haworthia* and small aloes. They chewed tops of *Lediborious* (scilla?).
- Birds pulled out *Zephyranthes* (rain lily) and *Albuca spiralis* bulbs from the ground and pots.
- Pickle Cactus
- Several arms of a fuzzy white not old man cactus

45% of all potted small specimens kept in the shade and watered carefully.



**CACSS Voter Information**

Please return ballots by mail by December 8, 2011. Time will not allow for voting at the Christmas Party.

**Grand Opening  
Carefree Desert Gardens.  
3 pm Sunday, November 13**

Desert Foothills Landscape owners Juanita and Mark Wdowiak have contributed more than four acres of desert specimens to the Town of Carefree for the Carefree Desert Gardens. The plantings, installation, lighting and irrigation systems are in the, Carefree Town Center, 101 Easy Street

**CACSS Picnic  
Boyce Thompson Arboretum  
11 am, Sunday, Nov 13, 2011**

*More information for those who have made a reservation with Debora Liife:.*

Arrive early for "guided music & meditation" in the picnic area from 8:30-9:30, followed by a concert of 'world music' (flute, didgeridoo, ghousheng) from 10-11, then a concert at the drover shed. Mention you are with the CACSS for the \$7 admission, vs the normal \$9. If you arrive early, ask for "picnic area parking, please." There is room for only about 30 cars.

## Agaves that can be acclimated to our full sun

by Tom Gatz

(Reprinted with permission from the *Gatherings*, the newsletter for the volunteers at the Desert Botanical Garden)

Are you tired of watching your prized landscape agave turn yellow from too much sunshine each summer, requiring you to cover it with shade cloth until fall like we have to do for many of the agaves at the Garden?

Agaves don't grow naturally in the Valley of the Sun. It's just too hot. The nearest natural populations of agave to Phoenix are *Agave deserti*, growing in the Sierra Estrella Mountains southwest of Phoenix. The patches of *Agave murpheyi* growing at a little higher elevation not too far out of town are likely descendents of agaves originally transported from Northwestern Sonora and planted here by prehistoric people.

I was happy to see that a list of almost 40 sun-hardy agaves was developed by agave experts right here in Arizona that can (hopefully) take full sun and still look good, once established. I found the list on the website Xericworld.com. Check it out. There are lots of interesting threads on this site covering everything from succulent identification to pest control.



Some species of agave like this *Agave parrasana* may need to be acclimated to full sun by protecting them for a few summers with 30% shade cloth. Photo by Tom Gatz

Keep in mind that while all of these species of agave can theoretically be acclimated to our full sun if planted as medium to large specimens in the fall or early winter in the ground here and watered appropriately, some may still take up to three years to acclimate especially if originally grown in California or in a shade house. Also, young specimens may require shade protection until they get larger. Agaves in containers are not as sun-hardy as those planted in the ground since the roots get very hot in our pots. Planting too close to a highly reflective wall or being surrounded by light-colored gravel or rocks in full sun light can cook just about any succulent, even sun-hardy species.

According to Mary Irish in her great book, *Agaves, Yuccas and Related Plants*, some of the species listed below would still really look better with at least some shade, especially in the heat of the afternoon. I've indicated those with an asterisk. However, I have had good luck with *Agave desmettiana* in full, all day sun (but protect it from frost!). And don't forget to treat your larger, broad-leaved agaves for agave snout weevils (see the

DBG or CACSS websites for more details on weevils).

Here is their list of full-sun agaves for the low desert:

A. americana  
A. angustifolia  
A. arizonica  
A. asperrima  
A. cerulata  
A. chrysantha  
A. colorata  
A. deserti  
A. desmettiana\*  
A. difformis  
A. durangensis  
A. franzosini  
A. geminiflora  
A. gigantensis  
A. havardiana\*  
A. lechuguilla  
A. lophantha\*  
A. macroacantha\*  
A. marmorata\*  
A. multiflifera  
A. murpheyi  
A. 'Nova' †  
A. ovatifolia  
A. palmeri  
A. parrasana\*

A. parryi  
A. pelona  
A. salmiana\*  
A. schidigera\*  
A. 'Shark Skin'  
A. sisalana  
A. striata  
A. subsimplex  
A. victoriae-reginae  
A. vilmoriniana  
A. weberi  
A. xylonacantha\*  
A. zebra

\*In the hottest desert areas, these species may still look their best with some shade, especially in the afternoon.

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† A likely hybrid sold as *A. celsii* 'Nova' but experts question this affinity.

*Thanks to Wendy Hodgson for helping me with this article.*

**Contact the *Central Spine* Editor**

Diana Decker

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for article and photo submissions, and to suggest topics you'd like to see included in the *Central Spine*.

## **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. Call or e-mail Diana Decker, the *Central Spine* editor. (See contact information above, on page 6.)

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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Specializations include Growing from Seed, Flora of Namibia, Lithops, other Mesembs, and Melocactus.

### **MIKE GALLAGHER**

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

### **DEAN PATRICK**

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Specialization in softwood stem cuttings, plant division and seed starting (rooting cacti, agave and aloe)

### **STEVE PLATH**

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

### **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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