

Central Spine

June 2012

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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CACSS Meeting July 29,

2 p.m. Dorrance Hall

Desert Botanical Garden

Woody Minnich:

The Great American Southwest

The Great American Southwest

by Woody Minnich, p. 4

Mesemb Day 20th Anniversary Edition, p. 5

2012 CACSS Show and Sale: A Great Success p. 6



Woody Minnich takes many photos of plants. .

See Woody's article about his presentation, The Great American Southwest. Page 4.

President's Letter

It's amazing what one day of clouds, rain and cooler weather does for me, and my plants. As far as the plants, while there is a certain "magic" in rainfall, it is also the respite from incessant heat that kind of perks the plants up, as you may have noticed if you observed your outdoor plants after the Fourth of July rains.

So now we are in monsoon season, having made it through what I consider the 'killing time' of very hot, dry June. We still have over two months of brutal weather, however, and then there is about a month and a half of Halcyon days until I start to worry about the cold coming and having to bring in the tender varieties that I grow.

Miserable? I wouldn't have it any other way. That is the challenge and the joy of growing these plants, nurturing their growth when conditions are favorable and keeping them alive when conditions are not so favorable. Obviously, seeing how many people think I'm a bit crazy, not everybody gets

REQUEST FOR CACSS LIBRARY BOOK PURCHASE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The CACSS Board passed a motion to budget \$500 annually for purchasing CACSS library books. The Board also gave the CACSS President authority to appoint a committee to approve the purchase of selections made by CACSS members.

If you are interested in being considered for this committee, please contact our current president, Steve Martinez, before August 24, 2012. Steve's email is altrigo2@aol.com, phone (602) 688-4339.

**CACSS member Carol Clapp and her plants are
the focus of an article in the Arizona Daily Star, July 1, 2012.**

**"Plant collecting a hobby only for the hardy
Soil, climate matter: no stuffing these living assemblages on a shelf"
by Elena Acoba**

Here's the link to the article and photos:
http://azstarnet.com/lifestyles/home-and-garden/plant-collecting-a-hobby-only-for-the-hardy/article_870b9937-bf33-57a8-a7fc-3b3df38b60e8.html

this. That's OK; that's what makes the world go 'round. (By the way, I do NOT have a pet name for each of my plants, and the classical music in the background is for me, not the plants.)

Just a reminder: the Inter-City Show at the LA Arboretum is coming up on August 11th, and the Huntington Symposium is on September 1st. These are both wonderful events. (We visited both Gardens on our Club trip in 2010). There is a cost for the Symposium and advance registration is required, but it's well worth it.

For the crazies like me, keep the faith, we'll get thru another summer, and.....hope to see you at the next meeting!

..... Steve M.

Special Thanks to

Bob Web

*for a wonderful June meeting presentation.
Bob is the owner of Arid Lands Nursery in
Tucson. The nursery has the highest number of
aloe species for sale of any nursery in the U. S.*

More photos of the CACSS June Trip to San Diego

Here are the links:
CACSS San Diego trip <http://bit.ly/MedUF7>

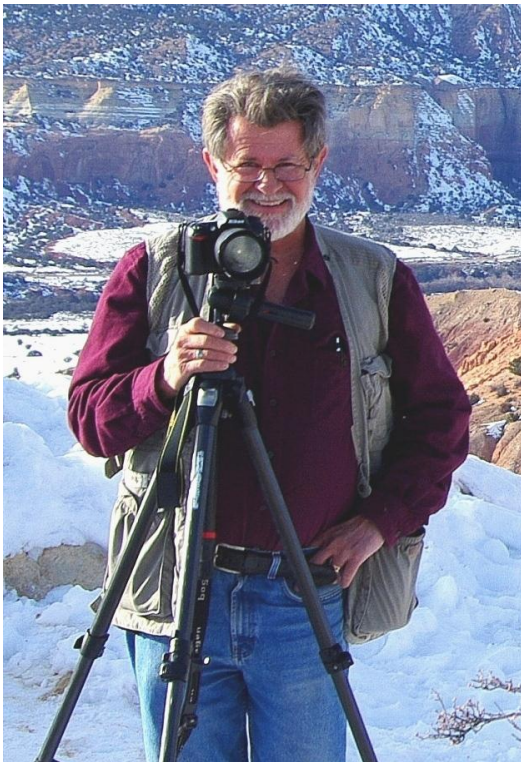
San Diego club show <http://bit.ly/Nlddic>

Thanks to Wendy Barrett for putting the
photos online.

The Great American Southwest

Nowhere in the world is there a more dynamic and picturesque region than that of the American southwest. This romantic and historical part of the USA is marked with drama from its indigenous peoples and landscapes to its grandest plants and creatures. This presentation will include the seven most cactus and succulent rich states; Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas and Utah.

In these seven states there is a wealth of endemic plants and animals. Along with these plants and animals, one will often encounter some amazing and beautiful scenery. Due to the fact that many of our cacti and succulents are found in these unique environments, their special characteristics are frequently developed for adaptation and survival in these harsh places. The geology in this general region is very often tortured and dramatic, and thus the plants, animals and scenery are frequently nothing short of breath taking!



Woody with his camera

Each state will be addressed with the cacti and succulents that are primarily found in that state. A

fair number of the taxa inhabit more than one state, but many species are often found in a geographically small area located only within a single state. These genera include some of the rarest and most difficult to cultivate cacti and succulents to be found in the trade today. Their environments range from extreme cold regions with blazing sun to high elevations with meters of snow, and from very arid low deserts with furnace like temperatures to Mediterranean-like coastal niches.

We will focus on the most unique and classic representatives of the Cactaceae and the many other succulent genera. These genera will include; *Agave*, *Ancistrocactus*, *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*, *Carnegia*, *Coryphantha*, *Dasyilirion*, *Dudleya*, *Echeveria*, *Echinocereus*, *Echinomastus*, *Epithelantha*, *Escobaria*, *Ferocactus*, *Graptopetalum*, *Lophocereus*, *Lophophora*, *Mammillaria*, *Neobesseya*, *Neolloydia*, *Nolina*, *Opuntia*, *Pediocactus*, *Sclerocactus*, *Stenocereus*, *Thelocactus*, and *Yucca*. We will also take a look at some of the old plant names and their places, and stories in history.

Adding to the mystique of the Great American Southwest is a wealth of information, from the places where these plants were found to the people who found them. Names like *Coloradoa*, *Navajoa*, *Toumeyia*, and *Utahia* are just a few of the romantic and descriptive epithets used for some of these prized genera. There are many famous explorers and botanists who spent their entire lives to find these unique plants. These people include such prominent names as Britton, Rose, Engelmann, Benson, Earle, Gentry and Weniger, just to mention a few.

This presentation, The Great American Southwest, is an epic story and view of this magic land. Many people from all over the world have been attracted this special region, and for me, I will be sharing over 40 years of my field work in this most incredible part of our country.

By Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich

"Cactuses know best time to bloom—they're not idiots"

Valley 101 column by Clay Thompson, *Arizona Republic*, June 15, 2012

The reader's question:

Why do cactus flowers only open in the morning and remain closed for the rest of the day?

Clay's answer, which begins in paragraph 9 of his column:

Anyway, about the question:

Cactuses—unlike many of the people I see out jogging or speeding around on racing bikes at noon when it's hot like this—are not complete idiots. Many cactus types open their flowers at night or early in the morning for a couple of different reasons. For one thing, it helps them reduce the evaporation of precious water that might otherwise be wicked away in the heat of the day.

And many such plants are pollinated at night by bats or by doves or other birds that are most active early in the day before the heat sets.

Editor's Note: CACSS members use 'cacti' as the plural for cactus. Clay Thompson uses "cactuses." According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary, Revised Tenth Edition, both are acceptable. I left both words as the authors wrote them.



Mesemb Day 20th Anniversary Edition

Tim Jackson is a well-known expert mesemb grower in Phelan, California, north of San Bernardino. He is hosting his 20th annual Mesemb Day on Saturday, October 20th. Doug Dawson and Leo Martin will leave early, drive there, and drive home in the late afternoon. Tim's huge screen / greenhouse is a wonder. The Lithops and Conophytum are usually in full bloom. We will find car space for everybody who wishes to go.

In Tim's words: ...Mostly we talk. About the latest mesemb books and articles, taxonomy, cultivation... and the sheer joy of mesembs. There are always plants and seeds to share, plants that need a name, people that need a little help with something unusual, others with something special to show. It's a very informal day - no speakers,

lectures, tours or auctions; just good people, good food, and great plants. We are a varied group: some have grown mesembs for just a few years, others have many years of experience, most are in between. We regularly get visitors from northern California and Arizona, and once in a while from as far away as Australia and Germany. The one thing we all have in common is interest in these nifty plants. There is a large minority who also grow haworthias. We are expecting about twenty people again this year. I hope you will join us.

If you are interested contact Leo Martin: voice 602-852-9714 text 602-799-8703 or leo@possi.org .



2012 CACSS Show and Sale: A Great Success

Special Thanks to Everyone Who Helped

By Gard Roper

Desert Botanical Garden staff and CACSS Treasurer Wayne Whipple helped set a \$5,000 record at the 2012 Show and Sale. Wayne repeatedly puts his finger on key financial issues. Cactus cuttings produce an 85% return to CACSS while other vendors produce 15%.

This little idea, "unplanted cactus cuttings" donated by members, produced a bigger gain than vendors. This is the second year of selling them.

The bank balance has doubled since Wayne became Treasurer. We're working smarter, not harder.

Leo Martin donated so many cactus cuttings that the nose of the truck rode high as we pulled away from his house. Thank you, Leo. Lee Brownson also helped us run a good sale.

Since all volunteers helped on this increased bank balance, we can afford some new educational activities and opportunities for members. Let's propose something new the society should be doing.

Besides Wayne, the other key to our increased success was the Director of Marketing at the Desert Botanical Garden, John Sallot. He put out a large number of press releases. Record heat during the Show and Sale did not stop our success and more people are joining CACSS thanks to John's efforts. Membership is up 28% compared to this time last year. John is a great DBG representative.

Amber Hahn, a coordinator from the Garden's Event Services, kept us on track and all past confusions were unexpectedly eliminated this year. She also is our coordinator for meetings and workshops. Thank you, Amber, for helping to increase our membership by providing good event set-ups.

Another invaluable improvement was Cynthia Robinson's cash register coordination ALL THREE DAYS of the Show and Sale. Cynthia is calm under fire and extremely capable. Because of heat, customers jammed into morning hours.

Jo Davis coordinated volunteers and one example of all volunteers' good efforts was John Crummey. He volunteered all day each of the first four days (Wednesday and Thursday set-up days and Friday and Saturday of the Show and Sale) and had Sunday off. We needed him badly on Sunday and Jo Davis begged him to come in. He did, fortunately, doing the work of three people and pulling us through. Our members are as unique as our plants and as much fun.

Our good judges at the Show commented, as they have after previous Show and Sales that newer growers need to gradually give their plants more sun during the cooler season. An improvement in your use of shade cloth will improve the growth of your plants.

On awards at the Show, Steve Mack beat all previous years' point totals. I wish he would give us a workshop. He is a grower



Steve Mack's plant, *Echinomastus johnsonii*, won the Best Arizona Native award. Photo by Pat Isaacson.



Steve Mack's *Aloe dorotheae*, got the rosette for Best Advanced Succulent. Photo by Steve Mack

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, *Central Spine* editor. See contact information on p. 2

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

480-893-1207

dawsonlithops@hotmail.com

Specializations include Growing from Seed, Flora of Namibia, Lithops, other Mesembs, Melocactus.: Miniature Cacti and Succulents of Arizona.

MIKE GALLAGHER

602-942-8580

mgallagher26@cox.net

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

DEAN PATRICK

480-759-0312

desertpatrick@cox.net

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

STEVE PLATH

623-915-7615

revegdude1@juno.com

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

BOB TORREST

480-994-3868

robertst9114@msn.com

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

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