

Central Spine

October 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 Silent Auction
Sunday, October 14, 2 p.m.
Wildflower Pavilion
Desert Botanical Garden**

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Mammillaria grahamii

Photo by Cliff Fielding. See Cliff's article on page 5.

Party time!
Annual Holiday Potluck

1:30 to 5 pm, Sunday, December 9
Mountain View Park Community Center
8625 N. Mountain View Rd., Scottsdale

Your hostesses this year will be Wendy and Margaret Ann.
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 will also need to bring your own plates, silverware and napkins.

The club pays for the punch and coffee but we need a volunteer to buy the ingredients and put it all together this year. We have the coffee pot and punch bowl.

Can you be that volunteer? Call Wendy or Margaret Ann.

IT'S VERY, VERY IMPORTANT TO RSVP by Sunday, Dec. 2 by email or phone to
Wendy (602)-971-5345 wbarrett@cox.net

Margaret Ann (480)-413-2124 mahecox@cox.net

They must know what you're bringing to coordinate the menu. Please get your reservation in now.

If you leave a message, be sure to include your phone number so they can call you back.

The reservation deadline is Sunday, December 2.

Desert Rivers Audubon Tour de Bird

Saturday, October 27, 2012

9 am to 2 pm

Volunteer guided tours, plant lists, and onsite ticket purchases available.

Tickets: \$10. Children 16 and younger, free

Will Call and map provided

Gift provided with each ticket purchase

www.desertriversaudubon.org

***Mammillaria* Shangri-La**

By Cliff Fielding

When you visit Southern Africa, looking for mesembs (*Mesembryanthemaceae*) — lithops, conophytums and their relatives — you begin to notice that the bright white quartz fields are great places to start. There is some speculation that the reflectivity of the white stone leads to cooler temperatures and allows the plants an extra edge in surviving in a very harsh environment.



Mammillaria grahamii Photo by Cliff Fielding

I have often wondered if this advantage might be of benefit to our own desert plants. While hiking various areas around Arizona, I was not able to find any evidence to support my theory. One day while driving home from the grocery store, I noticed a hill that had an extraordinary number of young plants in a very small area. The underlying stone was very white. A short six steps up the hill from the road was *Mammillaria* Shangri-La. There was an amazing display of old and young *Mammillaria grahamii*. Their profusion was not limited to the shade of other plants but seemed to be mostly concentrated in the areas of the white stone. A smaller yet still impressive patch can be found on a similar white stone patch the next hill over.

The recent rains encouraged the *Mammillarias* to produce a great flush of flowers. *Ferocactus* and hedgehog seedlings were also plentiful in this area. Why many cacti seem to get a start in this unique area is unknown to me. I would like to think that when the surrounding darker rock is under our intense sun, it heats up the soil and makes it more difficult for seedlings to survive. The white rock, like the crystal in Africa, may be just different enough in temperatures to make a difference. Of course, there could be a hundred other reasons for the abundance of plants in this habitat.

If you want to visit the area or have better insight, please contact me by email: clifffielding@msn.com.

More Photos by Cliff



Ferocactus seedlings



Profusion of old and young *Mammillaria grahamii*



Mammillaria grahamii

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. Find 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.

Please note the addition of Dan Smith, who specializes in adeniums.

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

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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

623-915-7615

revegdude1@juno.com

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

DAN SMITH

480.981.9648

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Specializes in adeniums. raising adeniums from seed, grafting and adenium culture in general

BOB TORREST

480-994-3868

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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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