

Central Spine



March 2013 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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Our next meeting
Sunday, March 24, 2013
Dorrance Hall
Desert Botanical Garden
Presenter: Matt Johnson
Southern Arizona Cacti

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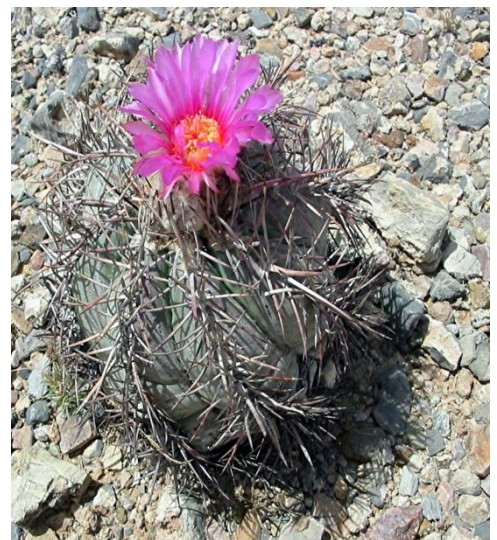
Southern Arizona Natives



Dudleya saxosa collomiae



Mammillaria tetrancistra



Echinocactus horizonthalonius

Photos by Doug Dawson

Matt Johnson: Southern Arizona Cacti

The speaker for our March 24th meeting is Matt Johnson who will speak on cacti and other native plants of Southern Arizona. This region includes a diverse cactus flora, from the majestic saguaro to tiny pincushions. Various species can be found from arid deserts to cool, forested mountains. Most cactus species native to southern Arizona will be shown with information on their habitats and ecology, as well as horticultural observations. Matt is the author of *Cacti, Other Succulents and Unusual Xerophytes of Southern Arizona*, which will be available at the meeting. This is an excellent and frequently-used field guide by those exploring this region.

Next Newsletter Deadline
April 8, 2012

Please send your articles, announcements and photos to
Editor, Diana Decker at dianadec@cox.net

2013 CACSS OFFICERS

PRESIDENT.....Wayne Whipple
w7676@msn.com.....480-460-3623

VICE PRESIDENT:Gard Roper
No email.....602-996-9745

SECRETARY.....Lois Schneberger
lschenberger@cox.net.....480-946-8373

TREASURER:Tom Rankin
tomrankin@cox.net.....602-904-2737

IMMEDIATE PAST

PRESIDENT:Steve Martinez
altrigo2@aol.com.....602-688-4339

BOARD OF DIRECTORS Serving through 2013

Joe Barnes.....480-883-1651
.....barnesinaz@gmail.com

Cindy Capek.....623-979-9389.
.....ronluccap@gmail.com

Joe Miracle.....480-345-6644
.....demiracle@cox.net

Nancy Mumpton
.....480.649.1558
.....nancy.mumpton@gmail.com

Sue Tyrrel480-797-8952
.....styrrrel@cox.net

BOARD OF DIRECTORS Serving through 2014

Wendy Barrett.....602-971-5345
.....wbarrett@cox.net

Jo Davis.....480-839-3792

Doug Dawson.....480-893-1207
.....dawsonlithops@hotmail.com

Mike Gallagher.....602-942-8580
.....mgallagher26@cox.net

Beth Kirkpatrick.....480-275-4833
.....2kirks@cox.net

Dan Smith.....480-981-9648
.....smithdans@cox.net

Desert Botanical Garden Plant Sale--March 15-17

Friday: DBG members only
Saturday and Sunday Open to All
7 AM to 5 PM Friday and Saturday, 9 AM to 5 PM Sunday

There is no admission charge. See the Desert Botanical Garden website for more information. Click on Events and Exhibitions in the left menu.

Welcome New Members

Sally Albertz
Stephen Bass
Nic Diomede

Jon & Marie Ford
Heather Gates
Andrew Glover

Leigh Hill
Ric Lopez
Ryno Meiring

PRESIDENT'S LETTER Wayne Whipple

This is the year of the Cactus and Succulent's Society's 40th Anniversary; the Society was officially organized on May 27, 1973. I have just completed reading the first two volumes of our history 1973-1989 compiled by our Historian Lois Schneberger. What a terrific assemblage of Society records; Lois has been diligently arranging our files and documents in binders for our 40th Anniversary.

I found it intriguing to read about the early days of our Society. Although no Charter Member is with us today, we have several members listed in the first two volumes who maintain their memberships to this day. We are fortunate to still have Joan and Stan Skirvin as members. To be a Charter Member one would have had to join before June 30, 1973; Joan missed it by only a couple of months. During nearly 40 years as a member, Joan has compiled a stunning record of service to the CACSS, and almost every set of the Board's Minutes in the 1970s has a mention of Joan. She is recognized along with her husband Stan as one of our few Lifetime Members.

Another early member who still attends meetings is Ingrid Swenson who joined in October 1975 and won the door prize at her first meeting on October 26, 1975. I wonder if she still has the *Echinocereus reichenbachii* she won that day. Ingrid's membership has not been continuous as she moved to California for a number of years.

Our *Central Spine's* logo first appeared in July 25, 1976; it was not until January 1979 that the spine-cluster logo was approved after many drawings of the logo were reviewed. Botanist Artist Wendy Hodgson is accredited for drawing the logo based on *Ferocactus nobilis*. Wendy currently holds the positions of Curator of the Herbarium and Research Botanist at the DBG where her career began in 1974. (See the March *Sonoran Quarterly* for more details about Wendy.)

Sue Hakala worked on the joint DBG-CACSS Plant Show in 1979 when she was Director of Education for the DBG. She was also a speaker at a CACSS meeting in April 1981, giving a talk entitled "Sammy Saguaro Needs You." I hope Sammy is still around. According to the May 23, 1982, *Central Spine*, Mike Gallagher became a member and is currently our second longest continuous member. He became a Board member in 1983 and has continually served on the Board to the present.

In the early days, out-of-town trips to places like the Huntington Botanical Gardens were referred to as "safaris" and were identified with Roman numerals. Among the several nurseries visited during the September 1982 safari was to Cactus Data Plants, Woody Minnich's nascent nursery in Southern California. Woody, a current member, has been one of our more prolific speakers, a vendor at our meetings and a very worthy judge at our "Shows".

Jim Elliott loved being a Show judge in 1986, and he and his wife Electra joined soon afterwards. As my comments here only include our history through 1989, I do not cover the memorable contributions made by the dynamic duo and Lifetime Members Jim and Electra. Dolores Grotts, the desert-tortoise lady, became a member also in 1986. Marg Jantz joined in 1987, and after an absence of several years, rejoined the Society at our Holiday Party last December. Another early member was Edra Drake who joined in 1989.

The main event of those early years was the annual Cactus Show & Sale. Hundreds and even thousands of plants were entered in the 1970s and 1980s and in many cases more than that are entered in our recent Shows. The early Show & Sales were held when our Society's membership was only about a seventh of what it is today. I have never entered a plant in the Show but will this year in honor of the Society's 40-year heritage and its commitment to foster, disseminate and advance the knowledge of cacti and other succulents. I hope all members will participate to make this a stellar Show & Sale for 2013.



2013 CACSS SHOW AND SALE
April 5, 6, and 7
Friday and Saturday 9 AM to 5 PM
Sunday 9 AM to 4PM
Submit your plants for the Show on Wednesday, April 3rd

Here are some important reminders to those bringing in Show Plants on Wednesday, April 3, 2013.

All plant entries need to have a white plastic label stuck into the soil of the pot. Place the label at the back of the pot so that those placing it on the table know how to orient the pot for the judges' eyes.

In filling out entry forms, please make sure you have filled out the necessary information both above the dotted line and at the bottom, below the dotted line, even though some of the information is repeated twice. You do not need to fold the entry card.

Please notice that Sections I and II are only for a pot having a **single** plant. If there is more than one rooted plant, it must enter under Section V. (This means, for example, if you have a pot with 3 nice *Astropytum ornatums*, it cannot be entered under Section I or Section II.)

No cleaning of plants and pots is allowed in the auditorium room of Dorrance. If something needs a final cleaning, please do it **before** entering the building, preferably at home. We no longer have a kitchen area behind the auditorium.



Photos of 2012 Show and Sale

by John Crummey

"Waking up Adeniums" by Mark Dimmitt

Mark is the speaker for our April meeting

Photos by Mark Dimmitt



Figure 1. Adenium 'Starfish', one of many striped cultivars to be created since 2003.



Figure 2. This Adenium arabicum X obesum hybrid is just beginning to leaf out after winter dormancy. It is using very little water and should be watered sparingly until days are hot and it has a full canopy of foliage.



Figure 3. Left: A branch has died and dried, forming an abscission layer. Right: The dried branch can be pulled off; it will break cleanly between the dead and live tissue.

Adeniums are succulents related to pachypodiums, plumerias, and oleanders (Figure 1). They are the newest ornamental plant to be domesticated (the process began only 20 years ago), and their popularity is growing rapidly. They are easy to grow if their cultural needs are understood and provided for. Spring is one of the critical times during which many adeniums and other winter-dormant tropical plants are lost. Whether they have leaves or not, adeniums are dormant over the cooler winter months, meaning that their growth – and therefore water use – has been minimal to zero (Figure 2). Even if they have been blooming throughout the winter, they have still been dormant. The warm weather of April in the desert Southwest causes them to wake up and resume growth. Adeniums need heat to grow, so they should be moved outdoors into the sun this month. Although spring days may be warm, nights are usually still in the 40s and 50s F, which is still in the danger zone for adeniums. Moreover, spring brings several cold fronts with cold days and may drop nights to near freezing. Adeniums HATE cold, wet roots. The awakening proceeds slowly, and watering properly is critical at this time. The plants don't use much water until nights are above 60, and if the potting medium stays wet for several days, the roots are likely to rot. As long as nights are below 50, water only to wet the upper couple of inches of medium (many of the roots are near the surface). Water thoroughly only if several warm days are forecast, and withhold water if a cold front is approaching. Wait until the medium is fairly dry before watering again. Once the days are hot, nights are consistently balmy, and the plants have lots of mature leaves, you can increase watering frequency and depth. By mid to late May, adeniums with roots filling their pots can be watered heavily every couple of days. They love water when it's hot. It is normal for some branches to die over the winter. Spring is a good time to groom the plants. Pull off dead, dried branches (Figure 3) and prune any leggy growth to produce a more compact, more branched plant (Figures 4a-4c).



Figure 4a. This old 'Crimson Star' has many crowded, overlapping, and droopy branches. It looks messy.



Figure 4b. After pruning, the plant's attractive branching structure is more visible. New growth will be vigorous and will flower better.



Figure 4c. The same plant flowering the summer after it was pruned.



New Website Enhancement

Check out what's new on our website. At the lower left corner of our home page it reads:

"Recent changes to the website are listed [here](#)."

Click on "here"--on the website, of course!

CACSS Program and Committee Leaders

Archivist/Historian	Lois Schneberger
CSSA Affiliate Representative	Sue Hakala
Finances, Accounting	Tom Rankin, Ingrid Swenson
Holiday Party - December 2013	Wendy Barrett
Library	Paul Schueneman, Marty Shahan
Membership	Beth Kirkpatrick
Members-Keeping-In-Touch	Jo Davis
Mailed Newsletter Subscriptions	Sue Tyrrel
Newsletter	Diana Decker
Nominations for Board Officers & Directors	Open Position
October Silent Auction	Jo Davis
Plant Rescues	Open Position
Private Plant Sales at General Meetings	Sue Tyrrel
Programs (Speakers, Workshops, ...Open Gardens, Special Interest Groups)	Gard Roper, Doug Dawson
Refreshments	Joe Miracle
Show & Sale – 2013	Cindy Capek
Website	Sue Tyrrel
	Leo Martin

Telephone Numbers, Emails, and Addresses can be found in the CACSS Member List



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.

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*.

DAN SMITH

480.981.9648

smithdans@cox.net

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

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*.



**CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY
PO BOX 63572
PHOENIX, AZ 85082-3572
WWW.CENTRALARIZONACACTUS.ORG**