

Central Spine



November 2015 Newsletter of the Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society

An Affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America-On the Web at www.centralarizonacactus.org

2015 CACSS
Sunday, November 22, 2015
2:00 pm
Presenter: Leo Martin
Presentation:
Mexican *Dioon* Species
and
Raising Cycads From Seed
Desert Botanical Garden

- **President's Letter**
- **Library Notes**
- **Holiday Party**
- **Save the Date – 2016 Show & Sale**
- **Doug Dawson-South Africa photos**
- **PEG Points: What's Going on with the Propagation Education Group**
- **Send Articles for the Newsletter**
- **Plant Questions: Whom to Contact?**

LEO MARTIN'S BIOGRAPHY

Leo Martin began learning vegetable, ornamental and house plant cultivation from his mother and grandmothers at age 4. His earliest plant interest was cacti and other succulents. He has gardened in southern and northern California, the Pacific Northwest, the Midwest and the Sonoran Desert. Aside from cacti, he grows cycads, geophytes, various tropical plants, orchids, an extensive fruit orchard, and aquatic plants. He grows many of his plants from seed.

Leo served on the Board of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) for nine years. He oversaw publication of the Journal of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, the scientific annual *Haseltonia*, and was Convention Program Chair. He has served the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society as Board member, President, Web master and Show & Sale Chair, and has offered workshops on winter-rainfall bulb growing to the CACSS. He has written many articles for the newsletters of the Henry Shaw Cactus Society in St Louis, as well as the Central Spine. Most of these articles are available on the CACSS Web site. He is a life member of the CSSA, CACSS and the Gesneriad Society. He is also a member of the American Orchid Society, California Rare Fruit Growers, Cycad Society and Pacific Bulb Society, The accompanying photo was taken volunteering at the CSSA Annual Show & Sale at the Huntington Gardens, San Marino, California.

Leo is a physician specializing in anesthesiology. In his spare time he serves on the board of Arizona Schnauzer Rescue, Inc., an Arizona 501(c)3 charitable organization, and also volunteers with Valley of the Sun Giant Schnauzer Rescue, Inc.

Leo has been growing cycads from seed since 1999. He has traveled to Mexico twice to see cycads in habitat, with September 2015's CACSS speaker Jeff Chemnick as guide. In his talks to the CACSS he will cover the *Dioon* species of Mexico, which are particularly well-suited to our gardens. He will also demonstrate the process of growing cycads from seed.

Cycads are cone-bearing descendants of truly ancient plants. Individuals are either male or female. They evolved from seed ferns long before flowering plants existed, and were contemporaneous with dinosaurs. Surviving species exist almost exclusively in tropical and subtropical climates. Once the dominant form of plant life on the earth, they are being driven rapidly to extinction by humans. Cycads do not form wood, and regularly form new stems from their bases as old stems die, so ages of individual plants cannot be determined. Their growth form resembles that of palms, but they have juicy succulent stems more like carrots than fibrous palm trunks. Cycads also have enormous root systems that store large amounts of water. They grow slowly but can live an extremely long time. Colossal specimens of *D. merolae* in Chiapas, Mexico, grow in an area where climate conditions have not been correct for sprouted seedlings to become established for some 12,000 years. Many cycad species, from most genera, do well in Sonoran Desert gardens, and many other species are excellent container plants for the home or patio.

There are three plant families in the order Cycadales: Cycadaceae, from Asia, Australia and Madagascar; Stangeriaceae, from Australia; and Zamiaceae, from Africa, Australia, the Caribbean islands, North America and South America. Genus *Dioon*, in family Zamiaceae, is found exclusively in North and Central America, with all but 2 species endemic to Mexico, often in tiny populations of less than a hundred individuals. Leo will give an overview of genus *Dioon*; species can be hard to tell apart except by specialists, but their growing requirements are quite similar. He will mention the two other Mexican genera, *Zamia* and *Ceratozamia*. He will discuss the uses of cycads in Sonoran Desert horticulture, including rewarding species to grow in metro Phoenix. Then Leo will turn to seed sprouting; techniques he will show are used for all cycads.

For further reading, see:

The Cycad Pages, a publication of the Royal Botanical Garden, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
<http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/PlantNet/cycad/>

The Cycad Society <http://cycad.org>

The Arizona Palm and Cycad Association, <http://www.arizonacycad.com>



Leo Martin

December 2015 Central Spine Deadline: December 14, 2015

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CACSS Program/Committee Leaders

Archivist/Historian	Lois Schneberger
Audit/Finance	Nick Diomede, Mike Gallagher, Carol Parrott
CSSAA Affiliate Representative	Sue Hakala
Facebook Coordinator	Dan Smith
Finance/Accounting	Nick Diomede, Ingrid Swenson
Holiday Party - December 6, 2015	Sue Glenn
Library Co-Chairs	Wendy Barrett, Nancy Mumpton
Membership	Beth Kirkpatrick
Members-Keeping-in-Touch	Jo Davis
Mailed Newsletter Subscriptions	Sue Tyrrel
Monthly Speaker/Programs	Diana Crummey
Newsletter	Diana Decker
Nominating Committee 2015-Chuck Brush, Dan Smith, Jo Davis, Lois Schneberger	
October Silent Auction	Mike Gallagher
Propagation and Education Group (PEG)	Tristan Davis
Plant Rescues	Open Position
Private Plant Sales at General Meetings	Sue Tyrrel
Refreshments	Kat Hanna
Show & and Sale 2016	Dan Smith
Website	Beth Kirkpatrick

Telephone numbers, email addresses, and street addresses are in the Member List emailed periodically to members by Beth Kirkpatrick.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

November 2015

Wayne Whipple

This year's October Auction was one of our best. Hundreds of plants were donated by our Members to the October 18th event held in the Wildflower Pavilion at the Desert Botanical Garden. A large number of bidders generated proceeds of nearly \$3,000, probably a record amount for such an event. This year's auction was chaired by Mike Gallagher, whom we greatly thank along with all others who also worked on the auction. Hearty thanks also go to those who contributed plants and other auction items and to all the enthusiastic bidders.

Here are the results of this year's auction compared with those of 2014:

	<u>Total Sales</u>	<u>Oral Auction</u>	<u>Silent Auction</u>
2014	\$1,977	\$421	\$1,556
2015	\$2,891	\$590	\$2,301

Many members journeyed to Morristown on Saturday, October 24, to visit Signature Botanica, the nursery of Julia and Steve Plath. The last time our Society made a trip to their nursery was seven years ago. So it was pleasure to see how their wholesale nursery has developed over the years. I believe all of us acquired new plants to help satiate our succulent desires. Among my favorite acquisitions were the aloe hybrids with alluring names – 'Dragon', 'Princess Jack', 'Baby Boy Blue', 'Well Done', and 'September'. Again, I thank Rita Gosnell for coordinating this visit.

I did not see the email that the Cactus Ranch Nursery & Garden had to cancel their invitation because of flooding on their property. So Karen and I showed up anyway at their nursery and were pleasantly surprised. Owner Gilbert Duran invited us to visit his seven acres of immaculately cared-for growing areas. It was an amazing display of many huge outstanding specimens that any botanical garden would be happy to own. We certainly need to reschedule this outing

Just another reminder. Our Holiday Party is scheduled for Sunday, December 6, at the Mountain View Community Center in Scottsdale. The chairperson for this year's event is Sue Glenn, who will be aided by her daughter Emily Glenn. Do not forget to let them know if you will be attending and what dish you plan to bring. This will be a special party -- we will be honoring our new Honorary Lifetime Members.



CACSS NEW MEMBERS

**Mike Fisher
William Lawrence
Karen LeTourneau**

**Membership Chair:
Beth Kirkpatrick**

**For questions, and to send photos
for the newsletter, contact the
newsletter editor, Diana Decker:
(602) 220-9825
dianadec@cox.net**

**Please Wear Your Name Tag
at Monthly Meetings**

**Board Member Jo Davis asks members to wear
their name tags at monthly meetings and other
club events. Members then can more easily spot
guests and talk with them about the guest's
interests and CACSS.**

**If you need a lanyard to hang the name tag
around your neck, see Jo at the meetings.**

**Please bring boxes to the
meetings so you can carry
plants home more easily.
Jo Davis**



LIBRARY NOTES:

Our CACSS library has received the September-October 2015 issue of the CSSA Journal. There is an excellent book review of the Tucson Cactus & Succulent Society's new *Field Guide to Cacti & Other Succulents of Arizona*. Our library has a copy of this book to lend.

Our Sunday, November 22nd speaker is our very own Leo Martin on the topic of cycads. While there are very limited published books on this topic, CACSS library has recently purchased a book titled *The Cycads* by Loran M. Whitelock. It is an excellent resource now available for our members. We also have *Cycads of South Africa* by Cynthia Giddy (if her name is familiar, it is because an Aloe is named after her).

Nancy Mumpton



Join The Celebration! Annual Holiday Party

1:30 to 5:00 pm Sunday, December 6
Mountain View Park Community Center,
8625 N Mountain View Rd., Scottsdale

We have room for 100 members. Please RSVP with your name and the item you will bring to pass (Main dish, Appetizer, Salad/Vegetable or Dessert). Please include a serving spoon/ fork with your item you bring. We will have a plant exchange for anyone interested. If you bring a plant, you will get a ticket from Jo Davis. Jo will be conducting the exchange during the meal, so please wait for your number to be called before taking a plant. We will have plates, napkins and eating utensils. RSVP to Sue Glenn (920) 327-3137 - ekmglenn@hotmail.com by November 29.



Photo by Doug Dawson

Save the Date!
2016 CACSS Sow & Sale
Friday, Saturday & Sunday, April 8, 9 and 10

Doug Dawson's Photos from His August 2015 Trip to South Africa



Conophytum obcordatum



Diplosoma luckhoffii

PEG Points: What's Going on with the Propagation Education Group

- **NEXT PEG MEETING: 10am-Noon; November 14, 2015 at the DBG Whiteman Conference Room in the Webster Center**

Are you **too** good at propagation?

As if there **is** such a thing, right?

Seriously though, if you start learning all those neat ways to propagate cacti and succulents - like, growing from seed, growing from cuttings, and grafting to speed the thing up - some of us don't necessarily have "too many" plants...we just don't have as much room to increase our collection! It's actually a great place to be. The question is, how can you get rid of those pesky plants preventing you from going on another Tucson nursery binge or hitting eBay 'til all hours of the morning?

Actually, there are a lot of ways to "get rid of" your excess from propagation, including ways to kill two birds with one stone: deplete your extras and increase your newbies.

I've personally ended up with hordes of seedlings of species that ended up growing really well from seed. I mean, you do need to plant bunches because in many cases, only a small number - sometimes just one or two - of the seeds you sow will reach maturity. But when things go really well, do I really need 25 of that same species?

And then there are those pesky - but necessary - monsoon storms, which for a collector of tall, thin columnars, can spell doom for many a weak-based cactus. Most species of South American columnar cacti are simply not built to withstand high winds because they hail from relatively calm-climates. Dry, hot, and dusty maybe, but normally calm wind-wise. So, after the monsoon season, I usually have a bunch of inadvertent cuttings from several of my plants. I stick those in pots and root those, plus the broken stems of the main plant usually start pupping at the broken site too. What I end up with is a bunch of rooted plants of the same species. What do ya do with **those**?

eBay

Of course, one of the easiest ways to make room when you have extras is to put them up for sale on eBay. A lot of folks don't realize how easy it is to ship plants domestically. In reality, all you need to do is remove the plant from the pot and clean off the dirt, let it dry, and wrap the plant in newspaper, stick a tag on it, and pack it in a box with more newspaper or Styrofoam peanuts. These can be shipped regular first class mail or my preference of 2-Day priority. No papers or permits needed! Sending plants or seeds to foreign addresses is something else though, and I don't recommend it without knowing all the requirements and restrictions.

Auctions

As you all know quite well, anyone can bring their plants, cuttings, pups, or other extras to monthly CACSS meetings and donate them to the auction. This is a great way to give back to the club. It's also the fastest way to clear a shelf for a mail order from a nursery that's headed your way! You can also save up your plants - especially the really nice ones - for the CACSS Annual Silent Auction in October of each year; this auction is always a big hit and one of the club's largest sources of funding. Plus, it's fun to see who else is interested in the same plants you are!

Trading

This one is my favorite. This is the best way to both clear out your extras **and** expand your collection all at once. Getting trades going is actually quite simple, and you can trade with folks from all over the country very easily thanks to a handy thing called the Internet. With the advent of electronic communication, the world of plant trading has simply exploded. Most of you - if not all of you - are members of online communities of like-minded enthusiasts. Forums like Facebook (be sure to become a member of this club's own Facebook Group!), DavesGarden, and cactiguide.com are not only great sources of information sharing, but also great places to hook up with traders. Some - like cactiguide - actually have a separate subforum for trading

requests/initiation. But, you really don't need that. I read through posts and when someone mentions something about a plant I am interested in, I just send them a private note. It's always good to have a list of your own trade material handy when initiating a trade. Another hint not to scare away folks with whom you are making a trade proposal: do **not** go overboard. I see it all the time; well-intentioned people that simply ping *everyone* and message them "Want!" every time someone posts. And when someone responds positively and sends a list of what they have available, don't go overboard by saying, "I want everything." The keys to starting a good trading relationship is patience and understanding. Understand that the plant in question may be very valuable and very small or hasn't yet bloomed (some people - myself included - hesitate to cut up any plant that has yet to bloom), so they may turn you down; and, remember, in order for a trade to take place, **you** have to have something **they** want as well! I've seen it many times...someone wants one of my most prized plants, but ends up only have a Golden Barrel to trade! If you want to be successful, work on **your** trade list in advance. If you get rejected, that's OK..don't get upset, just be thankful they responded; often they will contact you in the future when they are willing to trade that prized possession. It's all about cultivating a long-term relationship with collectors; it will pay ten-fold and more in the future! Trust me!

And lastly, a great way to get rid of your extras is....to bring them to the next PEG meeting!! Seriously! Every meeting there are members bringing in cuttings, seedlings, pups, or full-blown plants for FREE. Yes, that is correct: FREE! Can't beat that.

So be sure to visit us and start cultivating some trading relationships at the very next PEG Meeting (Nov 14, 2015 @ 10am). I look forward to seeing you there and being able to decrease and increase my collection all that the same time.

UPDATES to the PEG Seed Depot List (as of November 3, 2015)

- ** Seeds are in packets of 20-25 (sometimes more) unless otherwise labeled.
- **Cost is \$1 per packet; if you donate a packet of identified seed, you only pay 50¢ per packet.
- **Seeds are only available at monthly CACSS meetings or at PEG meetings.
- **If you would like to donate seeds or have any questions about the Seed Depot, please contact Tristan Davis (minime8484@hotmail.com).

NOTE: FULL PEG LIST IS NOW AVAILABLE ON THE CLUB'S WEBSITE!!

To access the list, go to www.centralarizonacactus.org; the Seed Depot list can be found towards the bottom right of the Home Page.

NEWLY ADDED:

- Mammillaria dioica*
- Mammillaria fraileana*
- Mammillaria grahamii*
- Mammillaria mainiae*
- Melocactus bahiensis*
- Stapelia hirsuta*
- Turbincarpus lophophoroides*
- Turbincarpus valdezianus*



Please Send Articles for Newsletter

For a more interesting newsletter, articles about plants and taking care of them are very important. Please send your articles or suggestions for topics to the editor: [Diana Decker--dianadec@cox.net](mailto:dianadec@cox.net)

Publication of material in the Central Spine does not imply agreement with the ideas expressed therein by any portion of the membership of the CACSS, nor does it constitute an endorsement or support for any portion of such material by the CACSS, or the Central Spine, regardless of any position or office held by the author. All such material represents a comment and/or personal opinion of the author.

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 email Diana Decker, Central Spine editor, dianadec@cox.net; 602-220-9825. 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

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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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