Central Spine

January 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 Meeting

Sunday, January 25
Speaker: Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich
Topic:
Madagascar: Plants, People and Places

Articles

- President's Letter
- Dues
- Pick Up Your T-Shirts
- Biography of Woody Minnich
- CACSS Show & Sale meetings
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- Showing Cactus & Succulents for the Novice
- Plant Questions??? Whom To Contact!!!

Madagascar: the Plants, People and Places

By Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich

Madagascar is a special place, an island in many respects, where the plants, people and animals are as unusual as anywhere in the world. This presentation will feature most of the succulent plants that we find so special. It will also address its most fascinating people, the Malagasy, with their intriguing heritage from the Malaysian Arabian and African regions. Also, their many wonderful landscapes and biological regions vary from moderately high mountains to the rolling hills of grasses and inselbergs, to the dynamic canyons and geologically special places of rugged treacherous limestone to dense jungles. Because this island is so isolated from the main continent of Africa, its endemism of plants and animals, estimated at 6,400 species, is also very remarkable. One could spend a lifetime roaming this special island and not see it all.

The plants from Madagascar are considered to be most spectacular, especially the succulents, palms, orchids and carnivorous genera. The succulent plants are notably diverse and range from giants to geophytes, which include such spectacular species as: Adansonia, Adenia, Alluaudia, Aloe, Commiphora, Didierea, Euphorbia, Kalanchoe, Moringa, Pachypodium Seneio, and Uncarina. There are also many fine genera of palms include such icons as the Travelers Palm the giant noble blue palm *Bismarkia Noblis,* and the famous bottle palm, *Chrysalidocarpus deciepens.* The orchid species total more than 1,000 and many are considered some of the most unusual in the world. The carnivorous plants range from the fascinating Pitcher plants *(Nepenthaceae)* to the amazing *Droseras.* It can

(Continued on page 4)

February 2015 *Central Spine* Deadline: February 10, 2015

2015 CACSS Officers

President:	Wayne Whipple 480-460-3623 w7676@msn.com
Vice-President:	TBD
Secretary:	Jeanne Ann Brush 480-982-3899 ckbrush@hotmail.com
Treasurer:	Nick Diomede 602-772-8282 phxnickd@yahoo.com

Directors-at-Large

Serving through December, 2015

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Serving through December, 2016

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CACSS Program and Committee Leaders

Archivist/Historian	Lois Schneberger
Audit Committee	Mike Gallagher
CSSA Affiliate Representative	Sue Hakala
Donations	Jim Oravetz
Facebook Coordinator	Dan Smith
Finances, Accounting	Nick Diomede
Holiday Party - December 2015	TBD
Library Co-Chairs	Wendy Barrett, Nancy Mumpton
Membership	Beth Kirkpatrick
Members-Keeping-In-Touch	Jo Davis
Mailed Newsletter Subscriptions	Sue Tyrrel
Newsletter	Diana Decker
Nominations for Board Officers and Directors	TBD
October Silent Auction	Mike Gallagher
Plant Rescues	*Open Position*
Private Plant Sales at General Meetings	Sue Tyrrel
Programs	Diana Crummey
Pumice Sales	Gard Roper
Refreshments	Kat Hanna
Show & Sale – 2015	Sue Tyrrel
Website	Beth Kirkpatrick

Telephone numbers, email addresses, and street addresses can be found in the CACSS Member List emailed periodically to members by Beth Kirkpatrick.

CACSS 2015 Meetings

Board Meeting
11:00 am, Sunday, January 17

February Meeting
2:00 pm, Sunday, March 1, Julie Plath

March Meeting
2:00 pm, Sunday, March 29
Scott McMahon: Peru

PRESIDENT'S LETTER
January 2015
Wayne Whipple

I hope you had a great holiday season and are now happily enjoying the New Year!

The New Year was ushered in by some freezing weather causing us to unravel the frost cloth that we acquired many months ago. Gard Roper was able to purchase it at a very reasonable cost and to pass on the great price to our members. Thanks, Gard, for saving our plants.

The chatter from our new Facebook sight seems to indicate that the freeze did little damage to our Members' plants, but some Members did comment that the plants that they did lose was due to them rotting in the soggy ground, which was brought about by several days of rain.

We welcome this year five new enthusiastic Members to our Board of sixteen; this is probably the largest number of new Directors to join the Board in any one year. This is the first time since I have been a Member of CACSS that all the speakers for our meetings have been booked for the entire year, and several will be speaking to our Society for the first time. Thanks go to Gard Roper and Dan Smith for organizing the speakers for the first three months of the year. But special thanks go to Diana Crummey for booking the other six, which took her less than one week in November to complete. More information about the speakers can be found on our website.

We are also looking forward to another Show & Sale in April. Sue Tyrrel and her steering committee have been meeting since October to make it another enjoyable success. Many volunteers are needed, and we are going to use an online program that will permit Members to volunteer to help by signing up electronically. In the past, we needed about 60 Members to volunteer, and I am sure we will have a similar number to help this year.

We are again looking forward to having Open Gardens. Tammy and Cliff Fielding have again invited us to view their well-attended succulents at their home on Sunday, February 8th. I also bet that their tortoises will be in view although probably a bit lethargic because of the cool weather.

We started the year with a record Membership of 413, up by nearly ten percent over the 382 Members listed at the end of 2013. I view a stable membership as a positive sign for the future of the organization; and if it grows, so much the better. Many of our programs are dependent on our Members' dues. Because of the rising amount of dues that are being collected, our Board of Directors at its November Board meeting voted to increase our honorarium for the monthly speakers to at least $200 from the previous amount of $100, which was the amount paid for many years in the past. We will also continue to reimburse speakers from out of our area for their travel expenses.

We are still looking and hoping that someone will come forward to coordinate the cactus-rescue program. Unfortunately, this program has been dormant for the last several years. Lee Brownson initiated the cactus-rescue program ten years ago and would be happy to help anyone who might be interested in resurrecting it.

Volunteerism should be fun. By sharing our hidden talents, knowledge, and enthusiasm with other members and the general public as well, we will have achieved our purpose as a Society. For the Society to be a success, we need your help in ways that you believe would be the best to meet the purpose of the Society. Please contact me either through email (w7676@msn.com), by phone (480-460-3623) or in person with your ideas and questions.

CACSS Annual Dues

If you haven't paid your dues, please pay them now.
$25 for household, $20 for individual and $12 for US Post Office mailed newsletter. You can pay on our website via PayPal, Credit Card or send a check.
Thanks!

Will the following please be sure to pick up their CACSS T-shirts at the January meeting?

Clair Kioski, Sheryl Leigh-Dewalt, Cynthia Jones, Marty Shahan, Steve Crofout, Kate Gallagher, Margie Green, Irla Irwin, Cynthia Jones, George Kazaka, Leo Martin, Naomi Pier, Jerry Ronnebeck, Paul Schueneman, Richard Smith, Judy Tolbert, Vicki Woods. Thank You.

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

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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.

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SAVE THE DATE!

Cliff Fielding is having an open garden on
Sunday, February 8, 2015
10:30 AM to 3:00 PM

16819 S. 15th Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

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Please bring boxes to the meetings so you can carry plants home more easily.
Jo Davis
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Madagascar: the Plants, People and Places *Continued from page 1*

In my travels around the world, the people of Madagascar are some of the most fascinating and happy people I have ever seen. Their smiling faces and friendly demeanor are a genuine treat. Some of their customs, from their often very colorful clothing to their facial decor, are most attractive. The children are wonderful as they bounce around in a most innocent barefoot manner and always act as if they are excited to see everything. The soil that stains their feet and their windblown hair is very refreshing, and not one of them has an iphone. To watch the youngsters and old-timers all carrying their possessions, all balanced so well on the top of their heads, is also quite impressive. From region to region their facial characteristics see to change and one an almost imagine their African Malaysian or Arabic heritages.

The places of Madagascar are also a real surprise. Large cities with paved roads are not common. The smaller towns and villages are truly exciting, as many operate with a simple barter or hand to mouth system. Imagine the USA 150 to 200 years ago, this is what much of the rural life style in the remote regions seems to be. Grasshoppers, river fish, tubers, rice and zebu---the staples of life! Outdoor toilets, bathe in the river and drink the same water, it is what it is! Since the French left Madagascar in the 50s – 60s, much of the infrastructure has had no repair or modernization. Thus, Madagascar appears to be a country in decline as many of the wild places are being destroyed to feed as populous of 22 million. They also have no major economic exports.

Adansonia grandidieri Photo by Woody Minnich

Pachypodium brevicaule Photo by Woody Minnich

Lemur rufus, an inhabitant of Madagascar Photo by Woody Minnich

This is part two of the three presentations that I will be giving on Madagascar.
Part 1 is **Madagascar: Land of the Giants**; part 2, **Madagascar: Plants People and Places**; part three, **Madagascar: A Disappearing Island.**

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Brief Biography: Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich, 2013

Woody, as he is commonly called, has been in the cactus hobby for some 45 years and has become well-known for his participation in many of the cactus and succulent clubs. He is an honorary member of nine clubs as well as a life member of CSSA (Cactus and Succulent Society of America). He has served in almost all positions of leadership, from president to newsletter editor to show chairman and so on. He is also known for his extensive field work studying primarily the cactus family. He has traveled throughout Africa, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Madagascar, Mexico, Namibia, New Zealand, Peru, Socotra, the United States and Yemen. From these trips he has developed an extensive knowledge of the cactus family as well as many of the other succulent genera.

Woody is also known for his many presentations. His photography is considered to be special and his commentary very entertaining and educational. He is a recognized international speaker and has spoken for plant conventions-organizations all over the USA as well as in England Germany, Australia, New Zealand Argentina and Mexico. Woody has also authored a number of articles for various newsletters and the CSSA journal and his photographs are well published. Woody is the creator-originator of the first color version of the CSSA journal, "Cacti and Succulents for the Amateur" that also featured show plants shows and the growers of the pictured plants.

He is also known for his cactus and succulent nursery, Cactus Data Plants. CDP was started in 1975 and is still in operation today. Cactus Data Plants specializes in show plants and rare cacti and other succulents with particular emphasis in *Ariocarpis, Astrophytum, Mammillaria, Gymnocalcium, Turbinicarpus, Melocactus, Copiapoa, Fouquieria, Pachypodium, Euphorbia, Cyphostemma, Adenium* and *Adenia*.

Woody and his wife Kathy now live in the beautiful mountains south of Santa Fe, New Mexico, in a region called Cedar Grove. He has a small 1,200 sq. ft. greenhouse where he grows his unique plants. He is always on the move and travels frequently to do presentations and shows throughout the western United States. Woody is the proud parent of three children, Leah, Denver and Sarah, all of whom are now grown and out in the big world. Woody is also the proud grandparent of three grandsons, Indiana, Ashton and Logan. He is a retired high school teacher of 32 years and he taught Graphic Arts, Architecture, Art and Health.

CACSS Show & Sale Meetings

February 15, 1:00 pm Desert Botanical Garden, Farrington Room
March 15, 1:00 pm Kokobelli's Bagels
The Show & Sale is April 10-12. Show plants are to be delivered Wednesday, March 8, to Dorrance Hall. Volunteers are needed☺

Contact Sue Tyrrel for more information: 480-797-8952 styrrel@cox.net

Correction: The name of the plant in Doug Dawson's photo, *Aloe khamiesenis*
South Africa, October, 2014

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SHOWING CACTUS & SUCCULENTS FOR THE NOVICE
Part 1 of 3
By Steve Plath
(This article originally appeared in the March 2008 *Central Spine*)

IN THE BEGINNING
I attended my first cactus and succulent show back in the mid-70's which was in a little community hall north of Los Angeles. Since most of the plants then were field collected, they were a pretty beat-up lot with the scars and battle wounds attesting to their wild origins. Many of the exotic species of succulent plants that are somewhat common today (Adeniums for example) were unheard of then. The most decorative containers you saw were either the ordinary terra cotta clay pot or some garish colored, high-gloss ceramic donkey (with the obligatory peanut cactus growing out its back). The most common container you saw was the tin can, which was the typical nursery container of the day. No one used top dressing then and most plants were potted up in soil dug up either with the plant or from the garden. Wow, have we come a long way! In this article I'll go over what I consider are some of the basic fundamentals for novices to exhibit plants in the shows of today.
EXHIBITING PLANTS

Showing your plants for the first time can be intimidating. I know, because I was very tentative the first time I showed any of my plants. Heck, I wasn't even sure what half their names were. I think one of the fundamental rules for showing off your plants, especially for the beginner or novice is to keep it simple. Most judges are not looking for lavishly displayed plants in the Novice category. That doesn't mean you couldn't show some creativity if you're so inclined but don't stress out thinking all the plants you exhibit need to be displayed as some grandiose works of living art. Let the natural beauty of the plant do the work for you. All you need to do is present it.

Sometimes the novice is concerned not just about preparing the plant for the show but actually getting to the show and knowing how to fill out the entry cards, where to put the plants on the table or if they've got the plant names right. The simple answer is: Ask! Now, the advanced grower with a bazillion plants scattered on the floor in front of him as he's trying to fill out all his entry cards the day of set-up wouldn't be my first choice as the person to ask for help! Nevertheless, there will always be some knowledgeable person at any show willing to give a beginner a hand.

THE PLANTS

Obviously the whole idea behind showing off your plants is the plants themselves. Again, as a beginner, a judge isn't expecting you to have exceedingly rare, exotic or huge plants in the show. That doesn't mean you shouldn't show them if you have them, but it's not a prerequisite. I would rather see a well grown common plant in a show than a poorly grown rare one. In all honesty, I've judged shows where many of the beginner plants were in better shape than some of the advanced growers. One of the first things a judge will look for is whether the plan t is clean. Old spent flowers, spider webs, leaves and other debris should be cleaned off the plant. Pests and insect infestations will get your plant disqualified so avoid bringing plants with them. Is the plant actively growing? A plant that is vibrant and healthy looking will always look great and catch a person's attention.

When I'm judging and looking over the category of plants, the first thing I look for is the plants that are "smiling" at me, or the ones that show some vigor. Has the plant been growing in adequate light? Plants that are etiolated, or pin-headed trying to stretch for more light, show that the cultivation hasn't been quite up to par for that specimen. Is there a marked difference in other growth habits since the individual has owned the plant? Sometimes plants we buy at nurseries are mass produced and so their culture is basically a one-size-fits-all process for the nurseryman. This means it may not be optimal for all the plants they grow. When we take them home, provide them with good light, fertilizer, etc. all of a sudden the spine density and color improve and the plant body bulks up. It's not uncommon to see this different growth habit on show plants. As a judge, if I see that trait on a beginner's plant I know that person is providing better culture for that plant than it had before, which is great. If the plant is young enough, I know that eventually, under that same care, the plant will outgrow the inferior habit. But most importantly, it shows me the novice is doing the right thing for the plant.

Part 2: The Pots; Top Dressing (February *Central Spine*)
Part 3: It's Been Known to Happen (March *Central Spine*)

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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, Diana Decker; dianadec@ox.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
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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
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