

CENTRAL SPINE

June 2026



Arizona Queen of the Night (*Peniocereus greggii*) by Cameron Davis.

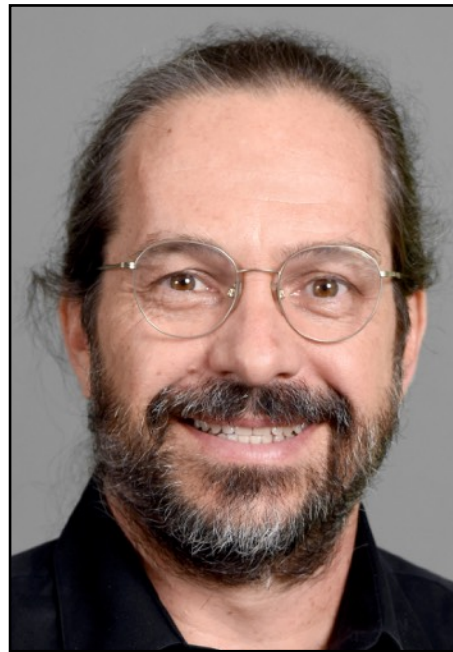
ECOLOGY OF THE BOOJUM TREE By Ken Sweat

The program starts at 2 p.m. on June 21, but come early to socialize, bid on plants, and get free plants in Dorrance Hall.



Boojum tree by Boyce Thompson Arboretum.

Rising above the desert scrub, *Fouquieria columnaris* (boojum tree) is a true desert survivor and perhaps the oddest of our arid-adapted plants. While boojum trees are common in some parts of this desert, most people have never seen one, and even research on the plant is thin. This talk will review what is known and what is suspected about the ecology and relationships of this unique Sonoran Desert icon.



Ken Sweat is a teaching professor and senior global futures scientist in the School of Mathematical and Natural Sciences at ASU West Valley where he has worked since 2000. Dr. Sweat's research and teaching have covered projects in cannabis/hemp horticulture, using plants to remediate environmental contamination, the use of pollen in forensic investigations, desert flora and adaptations, and science education. As part of his work at the west valley campus, Dr. Sweat is the organizing faculty member for the Desert Restoration Zone/Carbon Sequestration Forest and a contributing faculty for the community garden.

MESSAGE FROM ACTING PRESIDENT By Javier Gurrola

Dear Esteemed Members of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society, I would like to take a moment in this month's newsletter to share some recent changes within the CACSS Board of Directors. Over the past several days, several board members, including President Don Begley and Secretary Jennifer Leavitt, have decided to step away from their board roles. We are also experiencing some transitions within various club committees as we move forward into a new chapter for the Society.

On behalf of the entire CACSS membership, I want to express our sincere gratitude to Don Begley, Jennifer Leavitt, Kim Andrews, Bob Hopfner, Lisa Moore, Desi Kovacs, and Natalie Fruciano for the countless hours, dedication and passion they have given to our organization. Their efforts strengthened this Society and supported the cactus and succulent community in many meaningful ways. Their service and contributions will not be forgotten, and they leave with our deepest appreciation and respect.

During this transition period, the remaining board members are working closely together to ensure that the club continues to operate smoothly and successfully. I am currently serving as Acting President, and we are actively exploring the best path forward for filling open board and officer positions in accordance with our bylaws and upcoming election schedule.

As always, CACSS remains a strong and vibrant organization because of its members. If you have ever considered becoming more involved through board service or committee participation, I encourage you to speak with any current board member or with me directly. We would greatly welcome your support and involvement.

Most importantly, I want to reassure our membership that the Society will continue moving forward positively during this period of transition. Our meetings, events, educational programs and community partnerships remain very important to us, and we are committed to maintaining the welcoming and passionate spirit that makes CACSS such a special organization. This includes maintaining our vital relationship with our host, the DBG.

Please join us in thanking these departing leaders for their service, friendship, and dedication. We wish each of them nothing but success, happiness and fulfillment in the road ahead. They will always remain part of the CACSS family.

With appreciation,

The CACSS Board

Javier Gurrola acting president
Tammie Jansen, treasurer
Pat Adler

Kathi Metzger
Mary Dokes
Stephanie Halcrow

Ruthanne LaQua
Mary Miller
JR Trevas

AWARD-WINNING PLANT: *Haworthia venosa* subsp. *tessellata*

Answers given by Edith Luiten, age 4, with supplements by Ken Luiten (Dad).

AWARD: Best Junior Novice Succulent of the 2026 Show

GROWER: Edith Luiten

PLANT NAME: *Haworthia venosa* subsp. *tessellata*

PURCHASED: [Dad] This plant was a raffle giveaway at the May 2025 PEG meeting on *Haworthia*.

POT: I put this plant in a round green pot. I put a seashell, some marbles and a stone in the pot so I could win.

[Dad] It's in a 6" glazed ceramic pot with sufficient drainage.

FERTILIZER: [Dad] Fertilizer used is 50 PPM 15-15-15 with water acidified to ~pH 5.8.

POTTING MEDIUM: Dirt

[Dad] It's planted in a mix of 50% pumice, 25% potting soil and 25% coir.

SUN EXPOSURE: I keep this plant in Daddy's greenhouse.

[Dad] The greenhouse has 40% shade cloth with poly plastic sheeting adding a bit of shade protection beyond that.

WATERING: I water my plant every week with a watering can.

[Dad] It's roughly watered every two weeks in the summer months and occasionally during the winter months.

FROST PROTECTION: [Dad] The greenhouse is heated so no protection is needed.

OTHER NEEDS/COMMENTS: I like it because it has long flowers, and I've never seen them before.



[Dad] These are very 'easy' plants without any special care necessary. They offset prolifically. Blooms are unremarkable. It is perfect for those looking for a reliable plant with neat leaf patterning. Stress/winter coloring tends to be a dark purple/brown/red with new foliage coming in bright green during periods of growth.



Edith Luiten with her trophy.

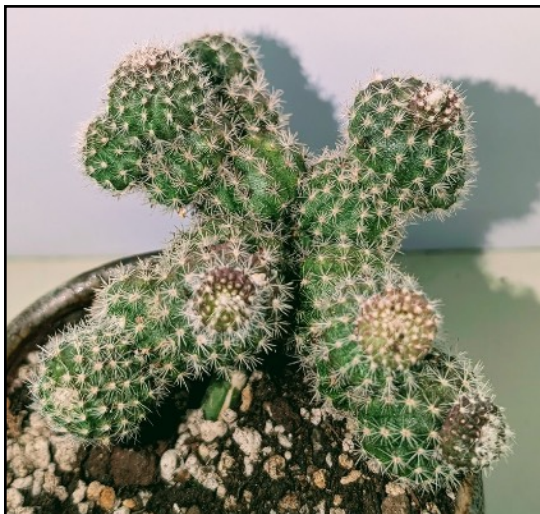
HAAGEOCEREUS TENUIS ‘FUZZY GRAPES’ Photos and text by Texas Ron

As a teacher, summers have often been a time where I find myself eager to explore the world. Over the years, I have traveled to Peru twice, where I spent time hiking through the Andes, exploring small mountain towns and cities, and experiencing landscapes unlike anything I had seen before. Waking up to massive *Trichocereus pachanoi* stands in the wild, with the Andes’ snow-capped peaks towering in the background, completely took my breath away.

On one of these trips, I began researching cacti native to Peru and stumbled upon a very special species: *Haageocereus tenuis*. It is a cactus on the brink of extinction in its natural habitat. It immediately caught my attention and sparked my interest in growing the species from seed. With very limited suppliers out there, I successfully imported seeds and got to work. I grafted some of the seedlings to *Pereskopsis* sp. and let the rest grow on their own root systems.

One seedling started to show a bit of funk. At first, I thought there was tip damage due to thrips, and the plant decided to abort the tip growth for new pups. As time went on, this plant continued to grow with a unique “stacking” growth that today is known as ‘Fuzzy Grapes.’

Mutations like this are a reminder of how unpredictable and rewarding seed grown cactus cultivation can be. From a species fighting for survival in its natural habitat came a one-of-a-kind plant. ‘Fuzzy Grapes’ stands as both a conservation effort and a celebration of the strange.



Left, side profile highlighting stacked growth pattern. Right, top down view of plant structure and symmetry.

EUPHORBIA QUIZ By Eva Allen

Here's a little bit of entertainment for our succulent brains. It is courtesy of Eva Allen, newsletter editor, Kansas City CSS, and brought to you by Mike Rupe, newsletter editor of the Austin Cactus and Succulent Society's newsletter, *The Cacto-Files*. (Answers are found in the newsletter.)

1. Members of the Euphorbiaceae family are commonly known as:
 - a. plantains
 - b. spurge
 - c. nettles
 - d. purslane
2. Approximately how many species of *Euphorbia* are there?
 - a. 1,200
 - b. 8,000
 - c. 3,500
 - d. 1,800
3. Are any *Euphorbias* classified as true cacti?
 - a. yes, the ones that have spines
 - b. all *Euphorbias* are cacti
 - c. no, none are cacti
 - d. *Euphorbias* native to Arizona are cacti
4. Which of the following is NOT a *Euphorbia*?
 - a. pencil tree cactus
 - b. stonecrop
 - c. poinsettia
 - d. crown of thorns
5. Do all *Euphorbias* have white, toxic sap?
 - a. yes, they all have it
 - b. no, only about two-thirds of *Euphorbias* have it
 - c. no, some actually have sap that is pinkish in color
 - d. they all have white sap, but it is not an irritant (toxic)
6. The flowers of *Euphorbias* are unique because:
 - a. they are large and showy
 - b. they smell like carrion to attract flies as pollinators
 - c. all *Euphorbia* flowers are female
 - d. each flower has only one organ, a stamen (male) or pistil (female)

continued

7. Which of these is NOT a *Euphorbia*?
- a. castor bean
 - b. Medusa's head
 - c. dragon bones cactus
 - d. snow-on-the-mountain
8. Which of these is most important to remember in *Euphorbia* care?
- a. these plants are drought tolerant, so water sparingly
 - b. *Euphorbias* enjoy partial to full sun, but beware of sunburn
 - c. the white sap can be nasty, so protect eyes and skin as needed
 - d. ALL of these are important! Enjoy your *Euphorbias*!



Left, *Euphorbia obesa* crest, and right, *Euphorbia resinifera* grown by Jo Davis.

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THE FORGOTTEN BOTANIST: SARA PLUMMER LEMMON'S LIFE OF SCIENCE AND ART By Wynne Brown Reviewed by Sylvia Lee

Arizona's Mt. Lemmon is named for this woman. That statement alone should be enticing enough to make people want to read the book. Also, the Lemmons were the first botanists to study and write about the plants in many areas of Arizona, as well as other Southwestern states.

In the Introduction, the author writes, "This book contains many excerpts of Sara's letters ... A warning: Some of her descriptions and attitudes are disturbing to our modern sensibilities. Sometimes she comes across as a colonialist and extractive at best, and even downright racist at worst. I've had to remind myself to read her words while remembering the context and the fears, however unfounded, of the times. I hope readers will do the same."

One of the things I wanted to learn in this book was the meaning or definition of the word "extractive."*

It is always interesting to learn about how life was lived in the person's time, and how the person came to give impetus to the field of botany. The author also writes about history in general when describing the conditions under which botanists learned and lived in those early days. There are interesting surprises here and there, such as the following sentence at the bottom of page 51, "Perhaps Asa Gray's greatest gift to botany was building and nurturing a network of collectors and taxonomists—two of whom would be Sara Plummer and JG Lemmon." Sara was known to the greatest American botanist!

The book includes a long love story between two eminent botanists that eventually gave Sara the last name of Lemmon. For their honeymoon in the spring of 1881, the newlyweds decided to botanize the Santa Catalina Mountains in southern Arizona, an area which no botanist had yet explored (because Apaches had recently still roamed the area). On the north side of the mountain range, they met a homesteader named Stratton who provided pack and riding horses and led them to the tippy-top of the mountain. On page 98, Brown writes a quote from Stratton's writings. "We christened it Mount Lemmon," wrote Stratton, "in honor of Mrs. Lemmon, who was the first white woman up there." Come to think of it, naming the top of the range Mount Lemmon honors both Sara and JG, doesn't it? And what does the word "extractive" mean?

Sara and JG went on to be the first botanists in many parts of the Southwest in spite of the fact that some Apaches refused to stay on the newly created San Carlos Reservation and plagued non-Native Americans. There are many adventures throughout the book, and misadventures. There is a lot of botanical information in between the adventures. On page 196, there is a paragraph explaining why Sara's brother wrote a letter in which he called the Lemmons' botanic enterprises "perfect nonsense." Great scientists have been misunderstood across all the centuries. This

book is a great read about two people who loved identifying and protecting plants so much that they devoted their lives to learning and teaching about our living greenery.

Eventually, the Lemmons homesteaded 160 acres just outside Los Angeles. If I understood the author, that plot is now part of Hollywood Hills and home to mansions. If I misunderstood, please inform me.

*I never did learn the meaning of the word “extractive” as used in the introduction to this book.



AWARD-WINNING PLANT: *Bursera microphylla* 'Bonsai Forest Planting'

AWARD: Best Succulent of the 2026 Show

GROWER: Tom Gatz

PLANT NAME: These *Bursera microphylla* are from the Waterman Mountain population in southern Arizona.

PURCHASED: I bought these seedlings in 2012 at Desert Botanical Garden.

POT: I purchased this shallow ceramic oval bonsai pot from Joan McCarter, Phoenix Bonsai Society.

FERTILIZER: I've used different formulas, anything with low nitrogen, about four times a year. Right now I am using Bougain 6-8-10 slow release granules.



POTTING MEDIUM: I used 2/3 small grain scoria (lava rock) and one third sifted potting soil to remove the largest chunks.

SUN EXPOSURE: It gets about six hours of full sun every day, year-round.

WATERING: I give it a good soaking once a week during summer, once or twice a month in winter if it doesn't rain.

FROST PROTECTION: I bring it into the garage for the few nights a year if it is predicted to go below 32 degrees.

OTHER NEEDS/COMMENTS: I pinch it back frequently to maintain a tight tree form and to promote more branching. In bonsai forest plantings we often stage the smaller trees toward the back to give the impression of looking into a forest, and no tree should be placed directly in front of another. Odd numbers of trees such as 3, 5, 7 etc. are best.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS FROM THE 2026 SHOW



Above, Agave mosaic by Michelle Schrade.
Right, hand knit cactus socks by Cathy Hopfner.
Below, handbuilt succulent planter by Deb Dutra.



SEDUM MULTICEPS: A VERY SPECIAL STONECROP By Kathleen M. McCoy

When I was wandering through the annual sale of the Phoenix Bonsai Club, a charming little plant with mint-colored bonbons got my attention. Look-alike clumps of leaves were clustered near the top of an almost vine-like woody stem like tiny heads. This one-inch wonder, anchored in an equally diminutive ceramic pot, captured my imagination and piqued my curiosity.

Looking a bit like a miniature Joshua tree, take heed Linnaeus, its looks can be deceiving, and have led to misnomers for this plant like pygmy Joshua tree or baby Joshua tree. This lilliputian marvel does not belong to the family *Agavaceae*, but is an upstanding member of the *Sedum* clan known as *Sedum multiceps*. Also identified as stonecrops, *Sedums*, in general, are reputed to be second only to rocks in terms of the amount of care needed and longevity. This thought probably was derived from the fact that they are often found in rocky and steep geographic areas where no other plants have dared to root.

When spreading its charm in the wilds, *S. multiceps*, a winter-growing plant, is often found in very dry, hot to temperate, semi-arid locations. Well-draining rocky or sandy soil in full sun or partial shade is ideal, but the humble *S. multiceps* even prospers with poor or sandy ground. Overly rich terrain can cause leggy growth, and soil with too much moisture is a sure invitation to fungal disease.

The fast-growing *S. multiceps*, a perennial succulent sedum, belongs to the *Crassulaceae* family. This widespread group of relatives boasts of approximately 30 genera and 400 species of herbs. Many species, including *S. multiceps*, are welcomed guests in rock gardens and as house plants. A less colorful but more apt label for *S. multiceps* has been provided by botanists: *Sedum* in the land of Latin means "to sit." The tiny *S. multiceps*, when not in bonsai formation, multiples rapidly with others of its kind to sit upon the land much like a brilliant green carpet.

When left to their own devices, these plants can create low-growing mats approximately three inches tall and as wide as the space permits. The sprawling covering is an ecological plus in arid lands. *S. multiceps*, with a drought resistant superpower, creep and crawl creating a kind of protective living green overlay which provides a seat belt for stabilizing soil and reducing erosion. With a voluminous root system, *S. multiceps* aids with climate control by discharging oxygen and absorbing carbon dioxide.

Animals also benefit from *S. multiceps*. *Multiceps*, which means "many headed," acknowledges the multiple balloon-like bunches of leaves at the end of its branches. These globes throw out a lifeline to food-insecure invertebrates like bees and butterflies, offering shelter and nourishment in an otherwise barren locale.

S. multiceps has a few tricks in its drought deciduous lifestyle. Their stems and very thick egg-shaped fleshy leaves store moisture by means of a water-catching rosette

pattern like *Agaves* or *Aloes*. The leaves are so small that the rosette is likely to be overlooked. The stems also have another desert survival trick, again difficult for the unaided eye to see. At the base, the hairy stems are covered with their own dead leaves ranging up to 0.4 inches in length and one inch wide. The dead leaves provide a canopy to protect the living leaves from the sun and drought conditions encountered in harsh desert lands.

A floral Fourth of July comes during the summer's end and early fall when the *S. multiceps* puts on a flashy show. Bright yellow star-shaped flowers erupt like fireworks emerging against the resplendent green foliage. Unless a massive grouping of *S. multiceps* is available, you may miss the show. The diameter of these five- to seven-petaled golden blossoms is only about 0.5 inches.

SANSEVIERIA By Editor Sue Hakala

A number of members have expressed interest in obtaining information on growing *Sansevieria*. The articles below were found on the club website, centralarizonacactus.org under Newsletters, All Plant Index. There's lots of plant info to be found here. Just click on the link below (the underlined part), and it'll take you directly to the newsletter with the article in it.

- [Sansevieria](#) by Phyllis Flechsig, 4/91, page 5
- [Sansevieria pinguicula](#) by Wendy Barrett, 9/23, page 8
- [Sansevieria Planting at Koko Crater Botanic Garden Honolulu, Hawaii](#) by Ed Eby, 4/91, page 5
- [Sansevierias](#) 7/19, page 4
- [Smitten by Sansevierias](#) by Sue Hakala, [4/24](#), pages 13-16; [10/00](#), page 1
- [The Genus Sansevieria](#) by Wayne MacDonald, 12/23, pages 11-12

HARVESTING AND PROCESSING PRICKLY PEAR FRUIT By Editor Sue Hakala

Someone recently asked me if I knew how to process prickly pear fruit. I don't. I did find the article below. Click on the weblink (the underlined part), and it will take you directly to the newsletter with the article in it.

[Harvesting and Processing Prickly Pear Fruit and Making Prickly Pear Lemonade Punch](#), by Chris Ginkel, 5/16

THELOCACTUS HEXAEDROPHORUS SUBSP. HEXAEDROPHORUS AND THELOCACTUS HEXAEDROPHORUS SUBSP. DECIPIENS

Photos and text by Elton Roberts

Thelocactus hexaedrophorus subsp. *decipiens* is a plant that I do not want to be without. In the past, I have had plants 20 cm in diameter. The plants differ from *T. hexaedrophorus* subsp. *hexaedrophorus* in that they have a dark green body and also produce beautiful pink flowers. The *T. hexaedrophorus* body is light blue gray to dark gray. The flowers are mostly white or with a light pink mid-stripe up the petals.



Photos 1 through 3 are of *Thelocactus hexaedrophorus* subsp. *decipiens*. It is easy to see the green of the body. Photos 4 through 7 are of *Thelocactus hexaedrophorus* subsp. *hexaedrophorus*. It is very easy to see the bodies are different shades of gray. I have thirty-six different plants, and each one is a hair different shade of gray. The bodies of *T. hexaedrophorus* subsp. *decipiens* are for the most part naked. That is except for the areoles and spines. I said mostly naked, but here and there, there is a microscopic growth of a puff of wool.

The thing that is giving the color to *Thelocactus hexaedrophorus* subsp. *hexaedrophorus* is millions of these microscopic puffs of wool. When we look at photos 4 through 6 we can see the difference in the plants and the amount of these

microscopic puffs of wool. The plant in photo 5 has millions of these puffs of wool, but there are minute spaces between them allowing the green of the body to show through.



The plant in photo 5 has a lot less spaces between the puffs of wool, so it's blocking most of the green of the body from coming through. The plant in photo 6 has such dense puffs of wool that there is very little if any of the body showing anywhere except around the areoles now and then. Photo 7 shows the beautiful flowers.

When seed is taken from any of these plants you never know how white or how gray the plants will be. If you have a hundred seedlings, you are usually going to have almost 100 different shades of colors. The different shades are from the number of minute puffs of wool the plant grows and how close together they are. Every so often, there will also be a plant with a dark green body. Now and then, you will also get a variegated plant.

GROWING CACTUS AND SUCCULENTS By Sue Hakala

Many people who have purchased, or received cuttings, of my plants have asked me to describe how I grow them. After growing cactus and succulents for over 53 years, here are things I've learned that work for me.

NEW PLANT INTRODUCTIONS TO THE COLLECTION

When I get a new plant, I isolate it for at least a week to be sure there are no problems and allow it to adjust to its new home. I treat EVERY new plant with a soil drench insecticide and continue to isolate it for another week. (I learned this the hard way by introducing mealy bugs to the whole collection!) Next, I repot and find a place for it. I never grow in the existing potting mix as my conditions are different than at the nursery.

POTS

Know if your plant needs to dry out fast or more slowly, and choose pots accordingly. I use terra cotta, glazed or plastic, but nearly all my plants are in terra cotta. Have a new or clean sterile pot to plant in. After unpotting a plant and washing out the pot, I allow the pot to solarize by putting it in the brightest sun for 3-4 days. This helps to kill anything that might be lurking. To sterilize after solarizing, use 1 cup bleach to 5 gallons of water. Soak for about 2 hours, then scrub inside and out with a scrub brush. Rinse and let air dry before using.

SOIL

Over the decades, I've tried many different mixes. I use one part cactus mix (Black Gold brand available at Ace Hardware) and one part small grind pumice that the club sells. This mix has overall been the most successful and what I currently use for everything. It's mixed thoroughly while wearing a really good tight-fitting mask (KN95) or respirator with the right filter so I don't breathe in the bad stuff. I store it in a tightly sealed container...so nothing can get in and lay eggs (been there, had that). I use a five gallon bucket with a tight-fitting lid.

When planting, I place a piece of drywall tape, cut to size, over the hole to keep soil from running out. I use a good 1/2" of granite gravel in the bottom of the pot to increase air circulation, which helps to keep out the bad guys. After planting, I top the soil with 1/4" of granite gravel to a depth of at least 2-3 rows of rock under the plant so it does not touch the soil. This provides for air circulation and cuts down on insects that might move in, especially mealy bugs (they hate air circulation).

As the pots get bigger, I add an extra handful of pumice and a handful of 1/4" granite rock to open up the soil more. It allows the soil to dry quickly, just like in nature.

If you use gravel from a natural wash, be sure to sterilize it in the microwave for 3-4 minutes. The one time I didn't sterilize it, I had super aggressive fungus growing out of the pots! I buy granite gravel from a rock yard and always rinse it before using as it has lots of rock dust that can compact.

TOOLS

Any tools used in potting are sterilized every time, before and after use. I bought a small spray bottle at the dollar store and use 90% alcohol. Why spray? Spray gets in the small places in all tools. Let dry before using.

WATERING

Know your plant's needs as to when it's dormant and when it has active growth. Keep written records to refer to. I wake my plants up slowly, depending on the night temperatures, in February. I wait for solid weeks of 50°F at night. Then, I just give one light watering to wake up the roots for plants in my heated plant houses. I wait until they dry out and water deeply 2 times through. Once a month, I water three times through to wash out the soil salts, and the plants all like it.

Depending on the plant (all *Mammillarias* love this, *Lithops* not), every third watering I water with acidified water (1 tablespoon white vinegar to 5 gallons of water), and Miracle-Gro Rose Food fertilizer at 1/2 strength. You can fertilize more, but I really try to grow my plants hard and to have slow growth so they stay healthy and have normal growth and great spines. It's all about patience.

When the worst of the summer is upon us, with high night temperatures and humidity, plants go dormant and watering all but stops. This is a tricky time when plants can rot very easily. When in doubt, don't water (depends on the plant of course).

As nights cool in the fall, watering is cut back. Plants get two treatments of fertilizer before early November. This gives them stored food for the winter and ensures stored food for early bloomers. You don't want them to start growing before winter as the sensitive new growth is most susceptible to freezing. I stop watering in early November, or maybe a week later, depending on the temperatures. They all go dormant for the winter (except winter growers) and enjoy a cool rest. The cool rest is necessary for their health and to get good flowering. If there is a week with warmer temperatures around New Year's, I give a very light watering (no water comes out of the pot) just to keep the roots happy. I do not water ground plants in winter.

PLACEMENT

Nearly all plants grown in pots here in the Sonoran Desert need afternoon filtered shade. After the summer of 2020, we've all learned the need for afternoon filtered shade. I give my plants the most sun exposure they can take which helps keep them healthy, well grown and with good spines. I'm lucky to have a shade house with 30% shade cloth on the roof, south and west sides. I have another house with a hard fiberglass roof and 50% shade cloth on the east, south and west sides only. This houses the plants that like bright shade and not much rain.

Some plants need full a.m. sun for good growth and spine formation (mature *Ferocactus* some *Mammillarias*), so I place them on the shelves that get sun until 1 p.m. Others go on shelves under my tree with morning sun until 11 a.m., then filtered shade from the

tree, or I add 30% shade cloth. Over 115 F, I use 50% shade cloth on top of the 30% only when temperatures are especially brutal.

I put all potted plants in heated plant houses during the winter. I use a heater and fan. Fans are on 24/7 in the winter, and in the summer, in the plant house that has the solid roof. Air movement does make a big difference to their health and cuts down on rot and insects.

RECORDS

I've learned to keep records on all plants as I can't possibly remember who needs what/when, when the last time it was repotted, winter temperature tolerances, where I got it and when, etc. It seemed excessive at first, but once I got it organized and updated now and then, I've been a more successful grower with healthier, happier plants (see example below).

BEING OBSERVANT

I'm continually on alert for stinkbugs which love my plants, along with spider mites and mealy bugs. I prefer not to use an insecticidal soil drench, unless I have a big problem. If you see/suspect bugs, isolate your plant immediately so they don't spread. Insects lay lots of eggs and will quickly venture to nearby plants. After treating, be vigilant as the eggs will hatch, and the party continues. If you have any kind of rot, investigate immediately. Cut until you get to clean tissue. Use a knife, sterilized with alcohol after each cut.

Also, keep the area around your plants clean and tidy. This means the floor, shelves and plants themselves. Remove any foreign material that has a chance of introducing bacteria and pathogens or providing a home for insects. If you've been in the DBG greenhouses, you've seen that you could almost eat off of the floor; this is why. You may think, well stuff gathers around the plants in nature. It might, but the plant evolved with it. Anything in your yard is different.

RECORD SHEET

I keep a picture and name for each plant to make ID easier and not to have to worry about plant tags (see example below).

MAMMILLARIA SUPERTEXTA PURCHASED: BACH'S 2/19 coldest temp 50F



- IN PHOENIX, FULL A.M. SUN TO SLIGHT SHADE ALL YEAR
- ORIGIN: NORTHERN OAXACA, SOLITARY SLOW GROWING 5" H X 2" IN DIAMETER
- KEEP IN LEAN SOIL
- 2/19 REPOTTED
- STARTED FLOWERING 1/23/21 - 2/27/21

EXCERPTS FROM THE TUCSON CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY MAY NEWSLETTER: *DESERT BREEZE*

The Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society was out in full force this past March at the 2026 Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society (CACSS) Show and Sale. Held at Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix from March 27–29, this event is the state's premier showcase for desert flora. While the show featured over 700 plants, the real story for us was the incredible success of our own TCSS members who brought home some of the weekend's most prestigious awards. (They are also members of CACSS.)



Judge's Choice: Sarah Lewis



The trophy table featured "Judge's Choice" awards, which recognize unique creativity and master-level presentation. Our very own Sarah Lewis received a Judge's Choice trophy for her innovative entry featuring *Astrophytum asterias* (left) staged in a saguaro skin (reclaimed wood). This species grows in Texas and Mexico. Sarah's arrangement, titled, "The Living Grain," caught the judges' eyes for its natural, weathered aesthetic. "I had the wood laying around and it had these perfect pockets in it that just kind of sparked the idea," Sarah explained. "It's honestly just a spark of creativity that happened to work out. It's been planted for over a year now and the cacti and the wood are holding up well together."



Best Cactaceae of Show: Michiel Pillet



The top honor for a cactus entry, Best Cactaceae of Show, was awarded to TCSS member Michiel Pillet for his spectacular *Kadenicarpus pseudomacrochele*, (left) formerly in the Mexican genus *Turbinicarpus*, staged in a pot made by TCSS member Brooke Sykes. Michiel's specimen was recognized for its exceptional horticultural quality and pristine condition. This award is a testament to the skill and dedication required to grow show-quality plants in our desert environment.

A Heartfelt Thanks to CACSS

Beyond the competition, we want to extend a sincere thank you to the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society. As they graciously do every year, CACSS admitted all TCSS members to their Show and Sale for free. This reciprocal benefit is a wonderful way for our two societies to support one another and share our mutual love for these plants. Don't Miss Out Next Year! For those of you who missed the trip to Phoenix this year, put it on your calendar for next March! The CACSS show is a world-class event, and the free admission for TCSS members makes it one of the best membership perks of the year.

SAVE THE DATE

- July 11, 9-11 a.m. PEG (Propagation Education Group) in Dorrance Hall
- September 12, 9-11 a.m. PEG (Propagation Education Group) in Dorrance Hall
- November 1, 2 p.m., CACSS Mega Auction in Dorrance Hall

ANSWERS TO *EUPHORBIA* QUIZ:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. b. spurges | 5. a. yes, they all have it |
| 2. d. 1,800 | 6. d. either they are male or female |
| 3. c. no, none are cacti | 7. a. castor bean |
| 4. b. stonecrop | 8. d. all |



Be sure to visit CACSS on the web at: centralarizonacactus.org,
Facebook, Instagram and YouTube at: CentralArizonaCactus, and
members only at: CentralArizonaCactus Swap and Shop.



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SPECIALISTS TO CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS

- **Tristan Davis** Manages the Seed Depot. Specializations include plant propagation and heading PEG (Propagation Education Group).
- **Doug Dawson** Specializations include growing from seed, flora of Namibia, lithops, other mesembs, melocactus, and miniature cacti and succulents of Arizona.
- **Tom Gatz** Specializations include adenium, agave and growing succulent trees as bonsai (bursera, portulacaria, ficus, operculicarya, pachycormus, etc.).
- **Dean Patrick** Specializations in softwood stem-cuttings, plant division and seed starting, rooting cacti, agave, and aloe.



Desert Botanical Garden by Daniel Phillips.