President’s Letter ——— November 2004

We did it! We had our first CACSS Cactus Rescue on October 10th. The idea was submitted to the membership at the February General Meeting. It was decided that we should follow in the footsteps of our sister organization, The Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society, and create a Cactus Rescue Program for the Phoenix area.

After doing the necessary ground work, we were ready to approach the development community. DMB, one of the valley largest developers (think DC Ranch), listened to our idea and immediately saw the benefits. Once the details were ironed out, we were given permission to rescue plants on fifty acres of the Verrado project.

This would not have happened without the total support of the TCSS, especially Chris Monrad, the co-founder and chairman of their Rescue Committee. He made an incredible presentation to DMB and did the follow-up calls. Our club owes him a debit of thanks for the time he invested with us. Also, the TCSS provided the insurance coverage which was necessary before DMB would agree to let us on their property.

The day of the rescue, we had 24 people ready to save plants. Ten were from the Tucson Society. They made the long drive because they are dedicated to saving the desert and they loved the opportunity to dig different species of barrel and hedgehog cacti.

My hats off to the adventurous folks from Phoenix. They included Doug Dawson, Celeste Gornick, Cynthia Robinson, Janet Orr, Laurence Garvie, Joseph Orazio, Phil Ruttenbur, Jim Maddy, Michael Gallagher, Jackie Brems, Kathy Butler, and Sundee Helm.

According to the TCSS tally, the number of cacti rescued was 491 including 25 Saguaro, 71 Hedgehogs (Echinocereus engelmannii), 200 Barrel (Ferocactus cylindraceus), and 195 pincushions (Mammillaria grahamii). Many of these plants went home with the volunteers who dug them (for the price of the Ag Department tag). Our club took 45 barrels, 5 hedgehogs and about 100 pincushions which we now have in inventory.

DMB has agreed to allow us to rescue plants on an additional 300 acres starting in mid November. If you are interested in participating in the CACSS Cactus Rescue Program, be sure that I have your email address. The notification that we can begin the rescue may come with short notice. Email is the fastest way to let everyone know. Send your address to me at ccss.information@cox.net.

Thank You Jeff & Muriel!

The CACSS owes a huge THANK YOU to Jeff Stinebiser and Muriel Beroza for their donation to the CACSS Cactus Rescue Program of the proceeds from their October 17th plant sale. Members of the CACSS helped them sell close to $2500 worth of plants. In addition, a truck load of plants was given to the Rescue Committee to sell at a future date.

This generous donation will really help the Rescue Committee get off the ground. It will be used for equipment, brochures, insurance, and the cost of permits for future rescues.

The only thing the Rescue effort needs now is people, people who want to save cactus plants from the developers bulldozers. Let your friends know about our Rescue Committee. If you or they are interested, call Lee Brownson at 480-951-9494 or send an email to ccss.information@cox.net.

Happy Holidays to our CACSS members & families.

Central Spine will be back In January 2005
OFFICERS
President - Lee Brownson
480.951.9494
lsbrownson@cox.net
Vice President - Gard Roper
602.996.9745
Secretary - Elaine Tressler
480.860.6388
phoenixet@aol.com
Treasurer - Tom Ballen
480.502.8639
tballen@aol.com
Past President - Scott B. McMahon
480.657.7786
scottmcmahon1@cox.net

DIRECTORS
Carol Clapp (December 31, 2005)
cactusnews@earthlink.net
Celeste Gornick (December 31, 2005)
602.938.9590
hheaven77@aol.com
Leo Martin (December 31, 2005)
602.852.9714
leo1010@attglobal.net
Doug Dawson (December 31, 2004)
480.893.1207
doug.dawson@gcmail.maricopa.edu
Ray Daley (December 31, 2004)
Sue Daley (December 31, 2004)
623.876.0060
daleyspudbud@aol.com
Richard Greenberg (December 31, 2004)
623.979.5078
CSSA Representative - Henry Triesler
480.946.1122
Librarian - Paul Schueneman
602.381.9859
schue888@aol.com
Newsletter - Agave Xpressions
602.266.2976
nick@agavex.com

Calendar
All CACSS meetings held last Sunday of each month at 2:00 PM
at Dorrance Hall in the Desert Botanical Garden unless noted.

October 31, 2004 2:00 PM (Sunday)
CACSS: Silent Auction: Gigantocactoanomical Silent Auction of
members plants. Wildflower Pavilion. Open to the Public! We accept
cash and local checks. All plants must be carried off the day of the
sale by purchaser; no mail orders.

November 21, 2004 2:00 PM (Sunday, not last Sunday of month)
CACSS: Woody Minnich, proprietor of Cactus Data Plants. TBA

December 12, 2004 12:00 PM (Sunday, not last Sunday of month)

Events of Interest in the Southwest Area
October 31, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM (Sunday)
TCSS: Rescue cacti sales at the annual Rescued plant sale at the Pima
County Country Fair located at the Lew Sorenson Community
Center, 11100 E Tanque Verde Road (east of Houghton road).

November 4, 7:00 PM (Thursday)
TCSS: Matthew Johnson will do part II of his talk on information and
pictures from his new book Cacti, other Succulents, and Unusual
Xerophytes of Southern Arizona.

November 6, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Saturday)
TCSS: Arid Lands will be holding a big sale on a wide variety of
interesting succulent plants. Call ahead.

Interested in one of the name badges you see
other members wearing? You can have one also.
Send check in the amount of $7.50
(payable to Jo Davis) to:

Jo Davis
2714 W. Monte Ave, Mesa, AZ 85202

Publication of the material in the Central Spine does not imply agreement with
the ideas expressed therein by any portion of the membership of CACSS, nor
does it constitute an endorsement or support for any portion of such material
by CACSS, or the Central Spine, regardless of any position or office held by the
author(s). All such material represents a comment and/or personal opinion of
the author(s).
NEW BOOKS: We recently had two books donated to the CACSS Library by some of our members. Leland Smith gave us Columnar Cacti and Their Mutualists. Monte and Cynthia Crawford gave us Gardens of the Sun. Leland, Monte, and Cynthia, thank you very much!!! The books are described below.


Theodore H. Fleming is Professor of Biology at the University of Miami and the author of The Short-Tailed Fruit Bat: A Study in Plant-Animal Interactions. Alfonso Valiente-Banuet is head of the Community Ecology Laboratory and of the Department of Functional and Applied Ecology of the Institute of Ecology, UNAM. The book summarizes the current knowledge about the ecology, evolution, and conservation of columnar cacti and their vertebrate mutualists to show that the very survival of these cacti depends on animals who pollinate them and disperse their seeds. Ranging from the Sonoran Desert to the northern Andes, these studies explore aspects of geology and evolution that have forged this relationship, review findings in anatomy and physiology, and discuss recent research in population and community ecology as well as conservation issues.


Gardens of the sun can’t be planted just anywhere; Nottle describes a “Mediterranean climate” as one where the summer temperature averages about 70 degrees and the winter temperature averages about 50 degrees. The author has created three gardens of his own in the Mediterranean-like climate of Adelaide, South Australia. He gives practical advice on rainfall and wind (how much is good, how much is bad), soil, watering, pruning, and garden design; discusses the use of walls to enclose a garden, the functions of orchards and water gardens, and the uses of paving materials, such as stones and bricks; and considers the importance of shade and light. This lavish book, with 100 color photographs, is pleasurable reading for gardeners in any climate. George Cohen

BOOK SUGGESTIONS: Read or browse any good cactus or succulent books lately that you think might be good additions to our library? We’ve already had 2 great suggestions and the CACSS has approved purchasing both. Contact me for your ideas (see contact information below).

HOW DO I CHECK OUT CACSS BOOKS? To see a list of the books we have please see our catalog. Paul Schueneman, the CACSS librarian, can email you a copy of the catalog (see contact information at the end of this article). Or, you can pick up a catalog from him at a CACSS meeting. Or, there’s a copy of the catalog on the CACSS website: www.centralarizonacactus.org/liblist.htm. When you would like to check out books or journals, contact Paul at least a couple of days before the CACSS meeting and he will give the books to you there or he will go with you to Webster Auditorium (our books are shelved there) after the meeting and you can browse/check out books.

BINDING: Several of our older books, particularly the paperbacks, are starting to fall apart. Some of the books cannot be replaced (eBay, Alibris, etc. do not have them). Does anyone know how to bind books or have the equipment they could loan me to do it? Professional bookbinding is beyond the library’s budget.

NEED HELP? Contact the CACSS librarian, Paul Schueneman:
(W) 602-381-9859 ~ or ~ (H) 480-706-1672 ~ or ~ (W) paul.schueneman@ndchealth.com ~ or ~ (H) schue888@aol.com

DESERT PLANTS SALE - (please call first.)

Cacti and other succulents for landscaping: there will be cuttings of columnar cacti (some uncommon, some rooted) and a variety of agaves, aloes and other kinds...at least several varieties each of cereus, stenocereus, trichocereus and unusual opuntias...also myrtillocactus. monvillea, portulacaria, etc.

Location: 64th Street (Invergordon) and Luke (1 mile north of Camelback Road). Call for specific plants you may be interested in. Bob Torress 480-994-3868.
CACSS to the Rescue

From top left, clockwise:
- Phil Rutenbur finds fantastic Ferocactus
- Sundee Helm and her sister, Jackie Brems, mark South on the cactus
- Joseph Orazio after digging his first Saguaro
- Kathy Butler takes a well deserved breather
- Amazing Ferocactus with 13 heads growing from one root
Where Does Our Money Go?

Doug Dawson

Each year when we join or rejoin the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society, we pay $20 for an individual or $25 for a household. Where does that money go? Let’s do a few calculations. If we add the dues collected, we arrive at approximately $3700.

From this, we need to support the monthly newsletter, speaker expenses at several of our monthly meetings (often includes transportation, hotel, and a small honorarium), and a respectable donation to the DBG since they graciously allow us to meet there throughout the year and provide space for our annual show:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter and postage</td>
<td>$1100+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speakers and Programs</td>
<td>$1900+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donation to DBG</td>
<td>$1000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$4000+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wow! The total is greater than the amount we receive from dues.

In addition, we incur other expenses throughout the year such as partially subsidizing educational trips for the members, purchasing books and periodicals, institutional memberships to some other botanical groups, annual show costs, incorporation papers, and other operational costs. How can we cover all of this since the above total exceeds our dues collection? We have 3 other sources of potential income:

- Sales at our annual show in April brings in money. This year we cleared $1787
- Small silent auctions throughout the year bring in approx. $500
- Our yearly LARGE silent auction at the Oct. meeting (Last Oct. it netted us about $1000.)

The above three sources require hundreds of hours of volunteer help by us members. This year, it all seems to be working well, but as you can see, it requires a careful balance of resources.

Last of all, this is a good opportunity to remind members of our October 31st LARGE silent auction and its important contribution to our finances. Please take some extra time to rummage through your collection and bring in several plants, cuttings, pots, or gardening materials. Also plan to bid on plants and other items so we can once again bring in over $1000.

October Meeting Silent Auction

Our October meeting is devoted ENTIRELY to a L- A - R - G - E SILENT AUCTION.

The October Silent Auction is big!
We have over 10 tables of plants and other items.
Bring a box or two or three to carry home your new finds!
Members will be given 5 minutes to peruse all the tables without bidding.
The President will set a secret timer for each table, and hide it under a flower pot. The times are staggered so each tables’ timer will sound at a different time.
Then, the bidding begins!
When a timer goes off, bidding on that table is closed.
The highest bidder on each item has won.
But - There are more tables!
When the last timer has sounded, all bidding is over.
Pay the Treasurer and take your plants home!
At the end of a Silent Auction, any items not attracting bids may be bought by anybody for the price of the opening bid.
Any items remaining unclaimed after all plants have been paid for will be taken home by the person who brought them. This person does not have to pay for the items.
All items must be removed after the auction.

CSSA 2005 Convention
Connoisseur's Corner: Pelargonium crithmifolium

by Carl Frederick (San Anselmo, Ca.), San Francisco C&SS

Pelargonium crithmifolium is one of the pachycaul members of the genus with fat green branched stems. Leaves are deeply divided like carrot top greens. The flowers are small and white but with pretty streaks of red-purple on the petals, borne on a branched inflorescence. Like many pelargoniums, this one has a habit of branching sympodially, which means that stems typically emerge from a central meristem until an inflorescence develops, replacing the meristem. Since the inflorescence does not continue to grow after flowering is complete, the plant is forced to branch. Sympodial branching is nice for producing compact, manageable and attractive plants. Plants that don’t branch in this manner grow linearly tending toward leggy or lanky habits. Many horticulturists have resorted to various methods of “killing” the meristem to induce branching. The most obvious is to pinch the meristem of soft-tissue plants. For others, the meristematic region can be severed or scorched with a red-hot nail to minimize scarring. If your aim is precise, the nail need not be too thick since the meristem is just a single cell! Usually it’s better not to resort to these measures to get a plant to branch since it probably doesn’t want to anyway and can result in an uncharacteristic plant. With regard to P. crithmifolium it is particularly nice to allow the plant to flower and branch on its own since the inflorescence is so beautiful. As I write this, my seed-grown plant is nearing the end of its flowering. The inflorescence of P. crithmifolium is much different from that of the other species that I grow, being a thickly-branched, beautifully red structure. The flowers are unique too in that the male parts are somewhat cryptic. On most of my pelargonium species flowers the female part develops first and as this retreats it is replaced with very obvious stamens, anthers and pollen. Last year my P. crithmifolium plant did flower though very sparsely and no seed pods were produced. With the much larger inflorescence this year I got my camel-hair brush and was ready to pollinate. Each flower’s stigma appeared as I expected and I waited patiently for the stamens to develop so I could self-pollinate (most pelargoniums are self-fertile). No stamens appeared. Suspicious, I got out my hand lens, a most useful tool, and had a look at the flowers up close. What I saw was that there were indeed stamens surrounding each stigma but they were much reduced in size from what I was expecting and there was very little pollen evident. I tried pollinating right away. So far it’s a bit early to tell how well it has worked because I have only one seedpod obviously developing after a relatively short time. This plant, with its spectacular branched inflorescence, is certainly special but the other pellies all have their charms. Once again, I must play my broken record and recommend that you grow them.