February is a wonderful time here in the Arizona desert each year. It is an ideal time to get out and do a bit of botanical exploring. I have already done one such trek this month: Three friends and I assembled ourselves together at 7 am on a cold Saturday morning and took off in two 4-wheel drive jeeps for a cluster of mountains WSW of Tonopah. None of us had ever been there before - the goal was the Eagletail Mountains. During 6 hours of driving with numerous exploratory stops not a single person or vehicle traversed our route. Only at the very end did we see one car parked and we never did see people. The clean fresh air, the beautiful *Ferocactus cylindraceus*, occasional Mami's, and finally some rare *Dudleya pulverulenta var. arizonica* were well worth the trip. And a few pretty rocks for making dish gardens didn't hurt.

The bug has hit me! I plan on doing at least one more exploration this month. Rattlesnakes are still scarce due to cool temps and that suits me. Why don't you consider a few treks this spring with other plant friends? You don't have to have the legs of a mountain goat, the stamina of superman, or a vehicle of HumV caliber - just a desire to get out and enjoy what so many cactophiles from around the world envy - our close proximity to the plants we love. I guarantee you will enjoy it and have surprises on each trip.

On another note, our major event of the year, the annual Show and Sale is only a couple months away (April 20-22). Please consider bringing in one plant from your collection at each of our next 2 general meetings so that those who have experience entering plants in the Show can give you tips on sprucing them up for presentation. For some, the draw to the Show is the competition and that's great. For me I do it because I want our many guests who come to see the show to be exposed to and allured by as many unusual plants as possible. This stirs an interest for our hobby and brings to us new members. By the way, some of the most interesting plants I've seen are entered by first-timers, so take the leap if this is new to you and commit yourself to entering a few plants. Many of us are here to help if you have any questions, just ask.
Local Calendar

February 25th, Sunday, 2 pm
Regular club meeting
Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden
Guest speaker Woody Minnich will speak on his trip to Bolivia.

March 8th, Thursday, 7 pm
Show & Sale planning meeting
Home of Ingrid Swenson
Interested club members are welcome to attend.

March 10th - 11th, Saturday & Sunday, 10 am - 3 pm
Flower Power Festival
Desert Botanical Garden
Volunteers will be needed for the CACSS table at this event. Contact Cynthia Robinson if you would like to volunteer.

March 16th - 18th, Friday - Sunday, All Day
Spring Plant Sale
Desert Botanical Garden
Volunteers will be needed to answer cactus and succulent related questions and provide information about the CACSS & CSSA.

March 22nd, Thursday, 7 pm
Board meeting
Home of Ingrid Swenson
Interested club members are welcome to attend.

March 25th, Sunday, 2 pm
Regular club meeting
Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden
Guest speaker Jerry Barad will speak on Stapeliads (tentative).

April 20th - 22nd, Friday - Sunday, 9 am - 5 pm
Annual Show & Sale of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America
Huntington Botanical Gardens
Los Angeles, CA
See pages 4-6 for more information.

May 20th, Sunday, 2 pm (Not the last Sunday)
Regular club meeting
Dorrance Hall, Desert Botanical Garden
Guest speaker Tom Van Devender of the Arizona-Sonoran Desert Museum (tentative).

Regional Calendar

May 25th - 30th, Friday - Wednesday, All Day
Cactus & Succulent Society of America’s 32nd Biennial Convention
Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport
Seattle, Washington
See pages 4-6 for more information.

July 5th - 8th, Thursday - Sunday, All Day
Annual Show & Sale of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America
Huntington Botanical Gardens
Los Angeles, CA

September 1st, Saturday, All Day
24th Annual Huntington Succulent Symposium
Join the Huntington in celebrating the centennial of the desert garden!
Huntington Botanical Gardens
Los Angeles, CA
**Dues are due!**

A new year is here and everyone knows what that means - time to renew your club membership.

* If you have not already renewed your membership, this will be your last issue of the Central Spine. *

Dues are $20 for a single or $25 for a family membership. Please legibly fill out a membership brochure (sent with the January 2007 Central Spine) and mail to the PO Box listed on the brochure, or bring your dues with you to the next meeting (February 25th, 2007).

Would you be interested in receiving the full-color, PDF version of the Central Spine through your email? If you are interested, please indicate so on the membership brochure and also indicate if you would like it in addition to or in place of the printed version. You can also fill out the newsletter preference form at a monthly meeting.

**CACSS 2007 Show & Sale**

Did you know that YOU, as a CACSS member, are one of the most effective advertisers for the Annual Show & Sale? You may wonder how this is possible... The answer is simple - come to the meeting and take a handful of the eye-catching postcards that have been printed to advertise the Show & Sale. Distribute them to your friends, family, neighbors and co-workers. Take an extra handful and drop them off at your local garden center. Most are more than happy to keep them near their registers where customers can easily spot them. Some will even go as far as giving one to each customer with their receipt. The Show & Sale committee has ordered 10,000 postcards, so don’t be shy about taking some.

This year, I would like to encourage each member to bring at least 5 plants to enter in the Show. Many new classes were added to the show schedule last year, so you should not have any problem finding 5 plants within your collection that you would like to show off. Don’t forget that there are 3 levels of competition; novice, advanced and master, based on cumulative (lifetime) blue ribbons won.

The Show can be a lot of fun, and our President couldn’t have said it better when he said “I want our many guests who come to see the show to be exposed to and allured by as many unusual plants as possible.” Whether it be the *Adenium obesum* covered in hundreds of pink flowers, the *Aloe porphyrostachys* with the crested inflorescence, the massive *Euphorbia abdelkuri* or the *Pseudolithos cubiformis* that you wouldn’t want to get any closer than 10ft when in flower, I am continually amazed by the new plants that are brought in each year. Why not bring in at least a few of your plants, and while you’re at it, donate a few hours of your time and talk with the public on how growing cacti & succulents can be so rewarding. Pick up a show schedule and entry cards at an upcoming meeting so that you can start picking out your show plants today.

For new and old members alike: If you’ve got a plant you’re just not sure about entering in the Annual Show this year, bring it to the next general meeting! Steve Plath, from the show & sale committee, will spend a few minutes offering tips and suggestions of how to display those plants you’re just not quite sure about. They don’t have to be potted into their show container (though if you have one you’re thinking about, bring it along too!) and they don’t have to be perfectly groomed either. This will be a fun and constructive critique of how to show off those plants you’re so proud of! Beginners are particularly encouraged to participate.
CSSA Promotional Article (2007 No. 1)  Bob Barth

The next big CSSA event will be the biennial convention in Seattle, Washington, May 25-30, 2007. While Seattle is not exactly in cactus country, there are a number of other features of the area that make Seattle an attractive venue for our upcoming convention. I will mention some of the convention highlights here, but you will be able to obtain much more information by accessing the CSSA website (http://www.cssainc.org) and clicking on “convention.” As in the recent past, the convention will consist of four days of programs (two on succulents and two on cacti), with a day of field trips in between. You can register for the convention on line or print a registration form from a PDF file and mail it with payment to Mindy Fusaro, Convention Registrar. Of course, you have to be a member of CSSA in order to attend the convention, but you can join CSSA via the Convention Registration Form.

We will be welcoming back favorite speakers from past conventions including Sheila Collenette, John Lavranos, Graham Williamson, and as Banquet Speaker, Graham Charles. Other speakers well-known to CSSA members include Jon Rebman of the San Diego Natural History Museum, CSSA Board members Joe Clements & Leo Martin, former editor of the CSSA Journal Myron Kimnach, and our immediate past President Dan Mahr. Finally, we are happy to welcome first-time CSSA Convention speakers Urs Eggli, Peter Gammarano, and Nick Heiting.

Two trips are being offered on fieldtrip day, one for the dedicated cactophile to Yakima, Washington, to view *Pediocactus* in habitat and the other for the rest of us, to the Weyerhaeuser Rhododendron Garden and Bonsai collection and to the Seattle Conservatory, which houses a fabulous plant collection.

A major draw for conventioneers is always vendor sales and the upcoming convention will be no exception. So far, there are up to nine plant vendors, some familiar, some unknown to me, at least one pottery vendor and one book vendor, Rainbow Gardens. Evening activities include the opening banquet, the CSSA Convention Auction, and the closing Banquet with the promise of spectacular entertainment.

Please note: we are always looking for donations for the Auction, plants or plant-related items. Funds from the auction support succulent plant research grants and other CSSA activities. Anyone who’d like to make a donation should contact your truly (see below).

The convention venue is the Double Tree Hotel, very conveniently close to the Seattle Tacoma International Airport. It’s a very attractive hotel with ideal facilities for our convention. Rooms are available for conventioneers for the special rate of $99 per night for up to 4 persons.

The local committee (members of the Cascade Cactus and Succulent Society) has arranged a number of day trips to local points of interest for non-cactophile spouses.

Finally, the CSSA Field Trips Committee has arranged a post-convention tour to Baja California. This trip is basically a repeat of the Baja tour held after the San Diego Convention in 1997. As a participant on that trip, I can report that it’s an absolutely fabulous trip, which I highly recommend to anyone interested in the very special flora of that part of Mexico. Details of the trip are available on the CSSA website and also in a recent (November-December 2006) issue of the CSSA newsletter, *To the Point*.

Good Growing,

Bob Barth, Publicity Chair  
CSSA Board of Directors  
602 Terrace Mountain Drive  
Austin, TX 78746  
Tel (512) 327-1173  
E-mail: b.barth@mail.utexas.edu
Friday, May 25, 2007:
3:00 pm - 6:00 pm  Registration
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm  Dinner on your own
7:30 pm - 9:00 pm  Welcoming reception
7:30 pm - 9:00 pm  Raffle ticket sale for early entry to sales area

7:00 am - 8:00 am  Sales area open to all
8:00 am - 5:00 pm  CSSA Silent Auction open to all
8:00 am - 5:00 pm  CSSA Silent Auction open to all
9:00 am - 9:30 am  Welcoming Remarks
9:30 am - 10:30 am  Sheila Colleenette - Succulent euphorbias in Saudi Arabia
10:45 am - 11:45 am  John Lavranos - Madagascar
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm  Lunch on your own
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm  Peter Gammarano - Secrets of a Windowsill Garden
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  Graham Williamson - Part one of "Kuene to the Karoo" Kaokaland in Namibia to Richtersveld and Bushmanland in South Africa
3:45 pm - 4:45 pm  Urs Eggli - Succulent Plants - An Inside View
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm  Panel Discussion
7:30 pm  Welcoming Banquet with special guest speaker Graham Charles - "Highlights of South America - A Compilation of 16 Visits!"
9:00 am - 9:30 am  Welcoming Remarks
9:30 am - 10:30 am  Sheila Colleenette - Succulent euphorbias in Saudi Arabia
10:45 am - 11:45 am  John Lavranos - Madagascar
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm  Lunch on your own
1:15 pm - 2:15 pm  Peter Gammarano - Secrets of a Windowsill Garden
2:30 pm - 3:30 pm  Graham Williamson - Part one of "Kuene to the Karoo" Kaokaland in Namibia to Richtersveld and Bushmanland in South Africa
3:45 pm - 4:45 pm  Urs Eggli - Succulent Plants - An Inside View
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm  Panel Discussion
7:30 pm  Welcoming Banquet with special guest speaker Graham Charles - "Highlights of South America - A Compilation of 16 Visits!"
A Presentation of Awards will follow.

8:00 am - 5:00 pm  Sales area open to all
8:00 am - 5:00 pm  CSSA Silent Auction open to all
8:30 am - 9:30 am  Myron Kimnach - Moroccan Adventure
9:45 am - 10:45 am  Peter Gammarano - Plant Giants of the Succulent World
11:00 am - 12:00 pm  Graham Williamson - Part two of "Kuene to the Karoo"
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm  Lunch on your own
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm  John Lavranos - The Yemen
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm  Sheila Colleenette - The Plants of Jabal Shada
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm  Dan Mahr - Succulent Trees (including cacti): Part 1
5:00 pm - 5:30 pm  CSSA President: Dick Wiedhopf - Open Forum for All CSSA Members
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm  Dinner on your own
7:00 pm  CSSA Auction

Monday, May 28, 2007: Daytime Field Trips.
All day Sales area closed
Morning Depart for Field Trips
Trip 1 A trip to Yakima, Washington to view the outdoor garden of Ron McKitrick then on to view the native Pediocactus in the hills surrounding Yakima with Ron as our guide.
Trip 2 A peregrination to Weyerhaeuser Rhododendron gardens and world famous Bonsai collection, a visit to the Ballard locks and the English garden at that location, and a visit to the Seattle Conservatory, which has a wonderful collection of all different types of plants including cacti, succulents and everything in between. We are planning to have lunch at this location outside on the lawn (tents will be set up if the weather requires it).

Monday, May 28, 2007: Continued
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm  Dinner on your own
7:30 pm - 9:30 pm  Meeting for Certification of CSSA Judges

Tuesday, May 29, 2007: Cactus Day 1.
8:00 am - 5:00 pm  Sales area open to all
8:30 am - 9:30 am  Dan Mahr - Succulent Trees (including cacti): Part 2
9:45 am - 10:45 am  Jon Rebman - Succulent Flora of Baja California
11:00 am - 12:00 pm  Nick Heitling - Cacti and Succulents, an Introduction to Living Plant Art
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm  Lunch on your own
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm  Joe Clements - Chile: Cold, Dry, Beautiful
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm  Myron Kimnach - Cacti of the West Indies, Costa Rica, and the Andes
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm  Leo Martin - Cacti From Seed, Indoors, Cheaply, in a Small Space
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm  Dinner on your own
6:30 pm  Affiliates' Meeting Select the 2011 CSSA Convention Host City,*
7:30 pm  Newsletter Editor’s Meeting
8:30 pm  cacti_etc Meeting

8:00 am - 5:00 pm  Sales area open to all
8:30 am - 9:30 am  Urs Eggli - Understanding the Cacti of Chile
9:45 am - 10:45 am  Jon Rebman - Baja California Succulents
11:00 am - 12:00 pm  Leo Martin - Cacti of the Valley of the Río Huaura in Perú
12:00 pm - 1:00 pm  Lunch on your own
1:30 pm - 2:30 pm  Joe Clements - Southern California Hot Spots
2:45 pm - 3:45 pm  Jon Rebman - Baja California Succulents
Research and Resources
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm  Nick Heitling - Desert Islands, Magic Mountains, Hanging Gardens
7:00 pm  Closing Banquet with Spectacular Entertainment

Plant Vendors
California Succulents - succulents - Naomi Bloss - 831.722.14
Xerophytic Design Inc. - succulents - Thomas Park - 602.231.9728
Rare Succulents - succulents - Wolfgang Werk
Rio Grande Cacti - cacti & succulents
Fleetfoot & Foulweather - cacti & succulents - Doug Anderson
Peter Liekkio - succulents on lava rocks - 206.542.8666
Peter Gammarano - cacti & succulents - 206.546.2196
Courting Frog Nursery - insect-eating plants - 360.629.9612
J&J Cactus & Succulents - Joyce Hochtritt - www.jjcactus-succulents.net

Pot & Book Vendors
Mike Cone - 623.215.7692
Rainbow Gardens Bookshop - Kevin and Helen Barber - 866.577.7406

Make your reservations today at the Convention Hotel.
Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport
18740 International Boulevard
Seattle, Washington
United States 98188
Tel: +1-206-246-8600
Fax: +1-206-901-5923

Be sure to mention: The Cactus and Succulent Society of America
2007 CSSA Convention Registration – Seattle
May 25 through May 30, 2007

Name: ____________________________ Spouse/Partner: ____________________________
Address: __________________________________________
City: ____________________________ State/Province: ____________________________
Postal/Zip: ____________________________ Country: ____________________________
Phone: ____________________________ FAX: ____________________________
Email: ____________________________ CSSA Membership # ____________________________

If you're not a member, you may join now! This convention is for **MEMBERS ONLY**.
Already a member – Skip to “Registration”

**Qty**

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**Registration**

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**Trip #1** will be a trip to Yakima, Washington to view the outdoor garden of Ron McKitrick then on to view the native Pediocactus in the hills surrounding Yakima with Ron as our guide.

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Total included: $ _____

Cancellations prior to May 25 will require a $50 fee – No refunds will be given after the convention begins!

This form should be filled in and printed before sending with payment to:
Mindy Fusaro
PO Box 2615
Pahrump, NV 89041-2615, U.S.A.
Fax: 775.751.1357
Tel: 775.751.1320

Credit Card Type: Visa MasterCard (no others accepted)
Card Number: ____________________________ Name on card: ____________________________
Expiration Date: ____________________________
Agaves - The Good, The Bad and The Ugly  
Tom Gatz

(Modified from an article originally printed in “The Gathering”,  
the newsletter for volunteers at the Desert Botanical Garden)

THE GOOD: I love agaves. I can’t imagine a desert garden without them. In fact, I spend almost every Wednesday morning at the Desert Botanical Garden (mostly leaning on my shovel) watching agave horticulturalist Chad Davis and volunteer Chris Jagmin nurture them. Agaves contrast wonderfully with softer, leafy desert plants and they add bold, architectural statements to our southwest landscapes that our northern gardener friends would kill for. I especially like the symmetry of their rosettes. It calms me just looking at them. They come in all sizes and vary in color from deep green to almost white. Some of my favorites for the landscape are Agave macroacantha (small); A. parryi var. truncata and A. colorata (medium); and A. salmiana (large). I also like to showcase A. bracteosa, A. ocahui, A. deserti, and A. victoriae-reginae in interesting groupings of pots.

THE BAD: The stout terminal spines and leaf margin teeth on some species can hurt you. Ken Compton volunteers at the DBG on Fridays helping Chad with agaves. Ken’s wife Joan jokes that if he isn’t bleeding when he gets home, she thinks he wasn’t working! The pamphlet “Desert Accent Plants”, available in the DBG gift shop, actually ranks each agave specie’s threat level: not offensive (A. bracteosa, A. vilmoriniana), injurious (A. utahensis), or dangerous (A. americana). SOLUTION: Stick with one of the inoffensive softer-leafed agaves for those high traffic areas and plant the armored ones away from areas where children play or people walk. Wear eye protection and gloves when working with them. I often use welding gloves to protect my forearms as well as my hands. If you have to move a larger agave, it is safest to first nip off the tips of the terminal spines.

Just when they grow up and look perfect in that spot, they send up a flowering stalk and die. The octopus agave (A. vilmoriniana) may hold the record for shortest agave life span; sometimes it reproduces and dies within 5 years (but almost redeems itself by providing you with hundreds of bulbils if you chose to continue to have short-term, serial relationships with individuals of this species). SOLUTION: Select some of the longer-lived varieties such as Agave victoriae-reginae, A. ocahui, A. pelona, and A. macroacantha (A. utahensis may hold the record at almost 60 years) and be sure to save a few pups or bulbils for replacement purposes if you have a variety that produces them. CACSS member Jim Elliot points out that witnessing the “big bang” of agave flower stalk production should be considered a highlight, rather than a disappointment, of growing agaves. Enjoy the show; it’s really incredible to watch!

Some agave species seem to multiply faster than rabbits in a botanical garden (often in difficult to extract areas) and threaten to overtake your landscape. Agave americana and A. lophantha are among the worst offenders; others to think twice about are A. lechuguilla, A. schottii, A. murpheyi, A. funkiana and A. angustifolia unless you are looking for a good security barrier planting. SOLUTION: Plant agaves that don’t produce pups much or at all. Chad compiled this helpful list of more or less solitary agaves for DBG Desert Landscaper School students (cleverly entitled “pup-ulation control” by DLS coordinator Rebecca Senior): A. bovicornuta, A. colorata, A. geminiflora, A. harvardiana, A. multifilifera, A. ocahui, A. pelona, A. ovatifolia, A. schidigera and A. vilmoriniana. You will thank them.

Continued on page 8...
Agaves - The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

THE UGLY: Two words: agave snout-weevils. We often get calls on the DBG plant hotline in late summer asking why big agaves in front yards have suddenly collapsed into a rotting, smelly mess with just the center point sticking up. Unfortunately, they had been infested with weevils in the spring and at this point they cannot be saved.

CHEMICAL SOLUTION: Chad treats his susceptible larger agaves in early April and again in late May with the systemic insecticide Imidacloprid (trade names Marathon and Merit; usually available at Baker’s and Berridge nurseries). He prefers Marathon because it dissolves better. He recommends raking and watering in the granules around the base of the agaves where the roots can absorb the chemical and incorporate it into the plant. Some horticulturists treat all susceptible agaves while others caution against treating agaves about to bloom to prevent pollinators from being exposed to the systemic insecticide. You can usually tell when an agave is about to send up its flowering stalk when there is a marked increase in, and a narrowing and shortening of, the leaf bracts around the central bud. NON-CHEMICAL SOLUTION: Avoid the wide-leafed agaves, such as A. americana (AKA: weevil magnet) and A. weberi. Stick with the smaller, narrow-leafed species like those in the sub-genera Littaea such as A. bracteosa, A. schidigera, A. victoriae-reginae, A. geminiflora, A. ocahui, A. pelona and A. multifilifera; they are much less prone to weevil damage. It may also be somewhat of a consolation knowing that weevils often infest mature agaves that are likely going to bloom and die soon anyhow.

But don’t let those darn weevils scare you off. There are non-chemical options if you pick the right agaves and the chemical options should be safe if you apply them appropriately. If you don’t have any agaves, give them a try. They add eye-catching sculptural exclamation points everywhere you place them in your landscape. For more information on agaves see the book Agaves, Yuccas and Related Plants by Mary and Gary Irish available in the DBG library and gift shop. Thanks to Jim Elliot of Arizona Cactus Sales (they have a good selection of agaves too), Chad Davis, and Rebecca Senior for helping me with this article.

A Tour Through Part of Northern Mexico

Sanborn Tours (www.sanborns.com) has many tours throughout Mexico. When a trip we were looking forward to, “Oaxaca/Puebla” and through prime cactus country was cancelled because of political unrest after the election, we settled for the “Copper Canyon/Mazatlan” tour. So, starting on November 8th, we toured northern Mexico for 9 days, going from McAllen, Texas, across Mexico, through Monterrey and Durango to Mazatlan. Then North to Los Mochis to get the Chihuahua al Pacifico train up to Divisidero. After a night there on the edge of “Copper Canyon” at 7500ft., it was on to Creel and Chihuahua (4700ft.) and back to McAllen through Torreon and Saltillo.

On the way to Monterrey, the only cacti you see from the road are in service station plantings, but the large Yucca faxoniana are common. Overnight was in Parras near an attractive old winery. From Durango at 6200ft., the 200 mile road to coastal Mazatlan has some spectacular mountain scenery. At about 4000ft., you begin to see Agave bovicornuta growing on rocky outcrops in pine woodlands. Some of the plants were 5-6ft across. A. bovicornuta does well here, but the plants aren’t as large. There are all kinds of tropical plants in the hills above Mazatlan including Ceiba acuminata and Tabebuia. Going north to Los Mochis, you pass through farmland. The scenery gets interesting as the train begins to climb into the Sierra Madre above El Fuerte. Of course, there are Pachycereus pectin-aboriginum everywhere, and further along, you will see lots of Agave vilmoriniana (octopus agave) appearing to scramble up slopes or hanging onto nearly vertical rocky surfaces. At Divisidero, there were several very ornamental agaves planted around the hotel, but I’m not sure of the species.

After a long drive to Chihuahua, you wake up to see the Pancho Villa House and the main square and cathedral. Tours tend to get you into the next city with plenty of time to see the ornate churches and government buildings with their historical murals. The road into Saltillo is scenic, but you don’t see much of the interesting plants that grow in the region. In fact, it was only after I got home that the latest Abbey Garden plant list arrived and reminded me that Ariocarpus retusus and Ferocactus hamatacanthus grow around Saltillo (5250ft.) By the way, the hotels were all good and bottled water was everywhere.

The AAA Mexico Tourbook says “Mexico 16 connects Hermosillo to Chihuahua and cuts through the Sierra Madre range… The route offers breathtaking mountain scenery of canyons, cliffs, rivers and masses of vegetation.” Sounds good… Has anyone done that road?
January 20 – I was looking forward to writing about the flowering aloes which included some flowering for the first time, but on January 13th & 14th, we had a hard freeze. Even the warmest microclimate on our place; a south-facing adobe wall, had temperatures as low as 23F just a couple of feet away, and probably elsewhere the temperature was more like 20F. This was on 64th Street a mile north of Camelback Road, but even a little further north the temperatures were lower. So, lots of aloe flower stalks were frozen, with details to follow in the next article, along with damage to other kinds of plants. These rare hard freezes are a reminder of why you mostly see the same plants over and over again in landscaping - they survive. In particular, although there may not be many fans of opuntias and trichocereus in the CACSS, they are still there adding color and interest to the landscape after the hard freeze that seriously damaged or killed lots of other more “exotic” succulent plants that we like to grow. Of course, in general, agaves handle a hard freeze better than aloes, although some were damaged and they will be described briefly below.

The last article went through November 20th and since then and before the hard freeze, there was lots of color in the foliage plants. Flowering continued for cascalotes, chorisia, Acacia aneura, cape honeysuckle, chuparosa, baja ruellia and desert aster. Clusters of colorful berries continued on the pistache, and colorful fruit on the citrus. Smaller citrus like mexican lime, limequats and calmondins are especially nice. It is always a surprise to see a ferocactus flowering at this time of year, but F. lattispinus is dependable.

Aloes put on a show in the winter. At the end of November, Aloe pruinosa (pink with pale green tips), A. elegans (bright yellow-green), A. divaricata hybrid (red) and A. kraptophliana were all at it. Flower stalks had formed on A. pirottii, A. petrophila and A. vaombe and there was the first cone tipped spike on A. fleurentiniorum. By early December, A. suprafoliata and A. cryptopoda were flowering and spikes had formed on A. rubroviolacea, A. kedongensis and the small A. jacksonii (red). Aloe globuligemma and a few A. secundiflora were getting started while A. ramosissima continued with its bright yellow spikes. By late December, there were flower stalks on Aloe cv. Rooikappe, A. aculeata, A. capitata, A. arborescens, A. vacillans and a few others. Then A. harlana, A. branddraaiensis and a few others. Aloe longistyla (from nearby and higher elevation Superior, AZ) was damaged.

Many of the agaves grown in the valley are from much higher elevations and have no problem with what we consider a hard freeze. Unfortunately, several that are used commonly in the landscaping here are frost tender and can be seriously damaged with temperatures in the low 20’s F. They include Agave attenuata, A. angustifolia (marginata), A. bovicornuta, A. dicipiens, A. desmettiana, A. guiengola, A. sisalana and A. tequiliana. The small colorful agave that used to be listed as Sp. FO 076 and is now often sold as A. titanota had lots of damage, while the “old” A. titanota, a large glaucous plant, did not. Even the 10ft flower stalks of A. murpheyi (from nearby and higher elevation Superior, AZ) were damaged.

Program suggestions

I am this year’s Program Chairman and I need your help. This is one of the hardest jobs the club has to offer. I have to find speakers for all of the meetings this year and into the first part of next year. I want to book interesting people who talk about things of interest to club members. Therefore, I would like to know who you would like to hear and/or what topic(s) you would like to hear about. I am open to all suggestions as long as the person is in the US.

• If you could pick one person, who would you invite?
• What topic would be of greatest interest to you, even if you don’t know who is an “expert” in that field?
• Would you be interested in attending evening Workshops if they were offered?
• What kind of workshops would interest you?
• What about field trips on non-meeting weekends? Any suggestions?

Any and all responses will be greatly appreciated.

Lee Brownson
**Plant Questions??**

Many CACSS members have experience with different kinds of succulent plants. I hope they will add their names to the following list (just call or e-mail Bob Torrest). For now, the list is simply alphabetical with principle interests. When more members add their information, the list will be cross-referenced by topic.

**DOUG DAWSON**  
Specialization includes Flora of Namibia, Growing from Seed, Lithops, other Mesembs & Melocactus.  
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**MIKE GALLAGHER**  
Specialization includes Aloes, Haworthias, Columnar Cacti & Turbinicarpus.  
602-942-8580  
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**STEVE PLATH**  
Specialization includes Ariocarpus, Astrophytum, Cyphostemma, Echinocereus, Fouquieria, Thelocactus, General Propagation & Desert Revegetation.  
623-915-7615  
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**CYNTHIA ROBINSON**  
Specialization includes Flora of Madagascar, Growing from Seed, Caudiciform & Pachycaul Succulents, Aloes, Apocynaceae, Burseraceae, Euphorbiaceae, Fouquieriaceae, & Succulent Bonsai.  
602-615-2261  
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**BOB TORREST**  
Specialization includes Desert Landscaping, Unusual (including Rare Fruit) Trees & Shrubs, Aloes, Agaves, Columnar Cacti, Trichocereus & Opuntia.  
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**Whom To Contact!!!**