

Central Spine

June 2012

Newsletter of the Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society

An Affiliate of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

On the Web at www.centralarizonacactus.org

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**CACSS Meeting June 24,
2 p.m. Dorrance Hall
Desert Botanical Garden
Bob Webb: *Aloes***

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Veltheimia capensis bulbs in bloom

Photo taken by Doug Dawson in May, 2012 in the Northern Cape, South Africa, west of Steinkopf

President's Letter

It is one week since the San Diego bus trip. What great memories I have of that trip! There are nice memories of the nurseries, of Balboa Park and of several nice restaurants. The best memories, however, are of the camaraderie, cooperation and positivity of CACSS members. Everyone maintained a great attitude on the long bus trip there and back. It was wonderful to see the group laughing and socializing, even at the end of a long third day (Sunday).

Spectacular plants were seen (and purchased!). Those that were purchased were carefully stored under the bus and on empty seats--we hired an extra-large bus for just that reason. Once again, all survived the trip without damage. Members' collections were significantly enhanced by this expedition.

We timed the trip to coincide with the San Diego Club's Summer Show and Sale--they have one in the winter, too. We saw some amazing plants

grown by their members and had the chance to buy from the group of 38 vendors! We spent the remainder of our time there in Balboa Park, an absolutely beautiful venue both botanically and architecturally.

The next trip will be in two years, so if you missed this one, be ready in 2014!

On another note, hot days and nights are approaching. Keep an eye on your plants. Some need a little more shade during this time. Those that are not summer-dormant might want a little extra hydration, but be careful about watering in those black nursery pots when the sun is directly on them. The temperature can get to over 140 degrees on the surface, and this can steam the roots. This applies to many other pots as well. Enjoy you plants, and see you at the meeting.

Steve M.

2012 CACSS Show and Sale

A complete report on the successful April 2012 event will be in the July newsletter.



Visitors talk with a Scottsdale Artist League member painting a picture of a plant. Photo by Jean Andrade



Nancy Mumpton, left, Rita Gosnell and Wayne Whipple share stories at Gard Roper's Thank You Party for Show and Sale volunteers. Photo by John Crummey



Visitors look at the beautiful plants. One comment heard often when visitors were given a bean to vote for their favorite plant: "I only get one bean?"
Photo by Jean Andrade



Photo by Sue Hakala

**A special thank you
to**

Jo Davis

for all that she did to make the 2012 bus trip to San Diego go easily. She helped us all just when we needed her. Jo is always behind-the-scenes assisting and helping in any way needed. Thank you, Jo.

By Sue Hakala

CACSS Trip to San Diego June 2012

By Jeanne Ann Brush

Tony Bennett may have left his heart in San Francisco but 38 club members left their hearts and cash in San Diego on the June 2012 bus trip to California.

This was a first-time trip for many in the group. We boarded a huge bus at DBG at 6 a.m. Friday, without a suitcase in hand, wondering why we needed such a large bus. Overnight bags were stashed in the compartments above our seats. Now there was time to get to know our fellow bus mates and to enjoy Cindy Capek's and Karen Whipple's homemade cookies, as well as a bag of treats provided by Jo Davis.

We were soon to learn that this was not just a shopping trip (although most of us proved in the end to be very capable shoppers). We would have opportunities to see new, unusual specimens, to ask questions, learn from expert growers about their growing and propagating techniques, and how they manage a large wholesale nursery or small retail business. Just as important was the time we would have to make new friends and to share our experiences with one another.



Rita, Tom, Debra, Wendy & Dennis

Photo by Sue Tyrrel

Once in the San Diego area, our first visit was to Rancho Soledad Nurseries, Inc. in Rancho Santa Fe, California. This 25-acre nursery, established in 1954, is owned by Jerry Hunter, a wholesale grower. Jerry's daughter, Heather May, owns Rancho Tissue Technologies, Inc., an on-site tissue culture laboratory and a 40,000 square-foot greenhouse. New plants are developed by Jerry Hunter and Kelly Griffin and put into tissue culture just for Rancho Soledad. Kelly, who led a tour of the nursery, is one of the leading hybridizers of succulents in the U.S.

The nursery was breathtaking. The varieties of plants grown there include agaves, aloes, bamboo, bromeliads, cycads, palms, yuccas and other succulents and tropical plants. The size and scale of the specimens on their grounds make every section of the nursery a photo-op. The nursery also has a palmetum with a collection of large palms under greenhouse protection.

It was here, with a six-page list of available plants, that we began our hunts for those elusive, had-to-have plants. What a selection! Those of you who were not able to take this trip can take an armchair tour of the nursery on-line at ranchosoledad.com.

Later that afternoon we arrived at the Lake San Marcos Resort ready to find our rooms for the weekend. Check-in brought some surprises and good laughs when members discovered that the hotel staff had assigned some club members to creative sleeping arrangements!

It was a treat to discover that dinner that evening could be either a short walk to the resort restaurant or a short bus ride to Old California Restaurant Row where we found a selection of 18 restaurants. It was great to end the day sharing a meal of very fine food with new friends.

Saturday, June 2, was a full day with three nurseries on our schedule. Our first stop was at Tammy Larkin's Valley Center Cacti, Valley Center, California. At this wholesale nursery we were free to roam through greenhouses filled with a large variety of adeniums, aeoniums, aloes, and many varieties of smaller succulents perfect for designing container gardens. Cactus hunters managed to find some good specimens among the vast array of succulents.



Mike & Kelly at Solano Succulents Photo by Sue Tyrrel

After leaving Valley Center Cacti, we headed to Oasis Water Efficient Gardens, a wholesale-retail nursery specializing in cacti and succulents in Escondido. Here we found another stunning setting with beautiful demonstration gardens and row upon row of gorgeous succulent plants and container gardens for sale. This was also a good place to buy small-scale pots for use with all those succulent plants we were buying. They have a beautiful website: oasis-plants.com.

Our last trip of the day took us to Solana Succulents in Solana Beach. At this smaller-scale, walk-in retail nursery owned by Jeff Moore, there were specimens for the collector of rare succulents and bonsai succulents. Once again, our members discovered and purchased armloads of unusual plant specimens. It was a challenge to walk to the bus with some of the heavier treasures.

On Sunday morning, June 3, we headed to Exotic Gardens Nursery in East San Diego. This small, retail nursery, owned by Carl Dykema, had great prices and a good variety of plants, including tillandsia, which captivated a number of people with its small, light, airy and unusual forms. It also seemed like a good one to pack into the bus, which was now overflowing with purchases. And we had not yet been to the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society's show and sale at Balboa Park. Exotic Gardens had some accessories for sale, including manzanita wood, decorative rocks, planters and petrified wood for enhancing the display of our plants and gardens.

The remainder of the day was spent at Balboa Park where we could take our time to visit the San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Annual Show. Once again we faced temptation while visiting 38 vendors who were selling plants, pottery, books and other plant-related items. For veteran members of the club, it was a chance to catch up with friends attending the event from other areas. For the newer members it was just plain amazing. Here was our chance to view over 700 show plants on exhibit, each one prize-worthy.

In addition, there was a chance to walk through Balboa Park's Desert Garden to see large specimens growing and thriving in a natural setting. It was only a small sampling of what one could do in the country's largest urban cultural park. For the eclectic gardener, there is a rose garden, a Japanese Friendship Garden and a wood lath Botanical Building containing over 2,100 tropical plants on permanent exhibit. Sounds like a reason for a return trip.



Beth, Joe, Kitty, Wendy, Rachael, Mike & Sue pack the bus with plants. Photo by Sue Tyrrel

By departure time our members had purchased even more plants to add to our nursery in the bus storage compartment. Thanks to Steve Martinez's skill in packing, along with Sue Glenn's and Sue Tyrrell's talents, every single plant got loaded into the luggage area or assigned a seat onboard the bus. Now we first-timers finally understood why there is a "no suitcase" rule for club trips!

On the return drive, Rita Gosnell took a survey to learn our reactions to the trip. Here are a few things she heard: "first trip, want more;" "appreciated our group's collection of brain power willing to share their knowledge;" "great prices, great quality;" "exposure to lots of plants;" "well-organized."

A trip of this size doesn't just happen without a lot of work. To all those who gave so much time and put forth so much effort to make this summer trip a success for our entire group we owe a very big THANK YOU.

Thanks to Steve Martinez for all his efforts in organizing, planning, and keeping everything running smoothly. He put together an excellent mix of nurseries so we could shop with our own budgets in mind. Thank you to Jo Davis for her pre-trip reminder phone calls, for the snack bags filled with goodies and a pen and notecards for recording information. Jo made sure we were all supplied with apples, water and granola bars.

Thanks, too, to Gard Roper and Rita Gosnell, for their behind-the-scenes help and support, making arrangements and gathering and getting information out to all participants. Thanks to all who helped with little things along the way, sharing knowledge, taking photos and helping one another out when needed.

The extra-large, comfortable bus we enjoyed riding in was arranged through Joe Barnes' and Jo Davis' collaborative efforts. Our bus driver Daniel was excellent, got us all there and back safely, and made sure we made it on and off the bus without falling on our faces with our loads of plants. He also handled some tricky driving situations in San Diego calmly and skillfully. The Society provided a tip for Daniel which was supplemented with additional donations from club members who wanted to show their appreciation.

I think all would agree that this truly was an exceptional experience. The fun of making new friends, sharing stimulating educational experiences, and just enjoying being with other plant people were the best parts of the trip.

Now that you know how much fun we all had, don't miss a chance to sign up for the next trip. Here's a hint: There just might be one coming soon.

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 e-mail Diana Decker, *Central Spine* editor. (See contact information on page 2.)

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 Aloes, Haworthias, Columnar Cacti, and *Turbinicarpus*.

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Specialization in softwood stem cuttings, plant division and seed starting (rooting cacti, agave and aloe)

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Specializations include General Propagation and Desert Revegetation, *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*, *Cyphostemma*, *Echinocereus*, *Fouquieria*, *Thelocactus*, .

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Specializations include Desert Landscaping, Unusual (including Rare Fruit) Trees and Shrubs, Aloes, Agaves, Columnar Cacti, *Trichocereus*, and *Opuntia*.

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