Travels in Africa and Arabia IX: Euphorbias and Monadeniums
Bob Webb and Toni Yocum, Arid Lands Greenhouses, Tucson, AZ

Euphorbia atrispina  Photo by Bob Webb
The genus *Euphorbia* contains about 2000 species worldwide, with 500 of these being succulent plants. Monadeniums, which some consider now to be part of the genus *Euphorbia*, are another 73 species, many of which are geophytes. *Euphorbias* have a general reputation among collectors for being spiny and dangerous, and many avoid them for those reasons; but while there is some truth to those problems, two attributes make this genus more desirable in the warmer parts of Arizona. Many species, particularly those from South Africa and Namibia, are spineless and frost-hardy in typical Tucson winters; some withstood the extreme freezes of 2011 and 2013. Many are adapted to hot, dry climates and are especially suited to the conditions of the Arizona monsoon.

Bob Webb and Toni Yocum are the owners of Arid Lands Greenhouses in Tucson, which was established in 1978 and is world famous for its collection and cultivation of *Euphorbias* and monadeniums. In addition to being nursery owners since 2006, Bob and Toni have traveled extensively in Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and Baja California looking for succulent plants, including euphorbias and monadeniums. They have expanded the world-class collection of euphorbias in particular and have become quite proficient in their propagation and cultivation.

This presentation will offer a survey of these two genera, showing the wide range in form and habitat. Euphorbias range in size from tiny geophytes to extremely large trees, and these forms vary across Africa. Highly desirable spineless forms occur in Africa and Mexico, and these range from Medusoids to shrubs. Monadeniums are spectacular in cultivation and, although some are intermediate-sized trees in habitat, most are small plants well suited for container cultivation.
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Show & Sale – 2013 Sue Tyrrel  
Website Beth Kirkpatrick, Leo Martin

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

2013 Meeting Schedule

July: Sunday, July 28, 2 p.m.  
Dorrance Hall  
Presenter: To Be Announced  
August: Sunday August 25, 2 pm  
Dorrance Hall
This month we are saying good-bye to two of our most active and dedicated members both of which served on our Board of Directors. Debra Life, a board member until last year, has moved to South Carolina where she will be united with family. By the end of June, Joe Miracle, a current director, will have moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico. We will sincerely miss both and wish them much happiness in their new journeys. We will all remember their beautiful gardens, which they opened up for us to visit last March. Thank you, Debra and Joe, for being such supportive members.

Congratulations to all the trophy winners who received their awards earlier this month at a presentation emceed by Scott McMahon. The trophies were presented to the outstanding plants in many categories that were exhibited at our recent Show & Sale.

The Show & Sale is the highlight of the year for many of our Society Members. Success requires the dedication of many members – last April the Show & Sale relied on nearly 70 volunteers. All of us look forward to this major event for the Society. But in order to continue with the Show & Sale, we need someone to be the General Chair and then we need another group of members to chair the subcommittees. Sue Tyrrel was our hardworking leader for the most recent Show & Sale, and we need another society member to step up to the plate in order to experience the fun.

If you are interested or know someone who might be interested in being the General Chair for the Show & Sale, please contact me. The earlier the better as preparing for the 2014 Show & Sale will take a fair amount of time. You can never be too early in getting started with this big event.

Please Wear Your Name Tag at Monthly Meetings

Board Member Jo Davis asks members to wear their name tags at monthly meetings and other club events. Members then can more easily spot guests and talk with them about the guest’s interests and CACSS. If you need a lanyard to hang the name tag around your neck, see Jo at the meetings.
If you are wondering where you are going to place all those plants you purchased at the last DBG plant sale or club bus trip, or just have a corner of your yard that you would like to make over into a more appealing landscape, here are some tips I have gleaned from the experts over the past 20 years. Many of these ideas are from landscaping lectures and classes I have taken from the Desert Botanical Garden’s excellent.
horticultural staff and during workshops offered by Master Gardeners and the City of Phoenix. I have also picked up many of these tips from Judy Mielke, Carol Schuler, Carrie Nimmer, Ron Dinschak, and Kent Newland.

• Add elevational relief and improve drainage with low, gently sloping mounds.
• Use one large year-round focal point (a large columnar cactus, for example) or a few seasonal focal points (large shrubs that flower at different times of the year).
• For a more natural and aesthetically pleasing look, repeat two or three primary accent species of shrubs and cacti instead of the cluttered look of a collector’s garden with one of each species (my biggest challenge!).
• Similarly, use several individuals of the same species or genus of tree.
• Mimic nature by clustering groups of the same species and boulders together, using uneven numbers (3, 5, 7) of each.
• Irregularly space clusters and individuals, leaving some open areas and meandering paths between planting islands.
• Bury your boulders about 1/3 deep to eliminate the “just fell off truck” look (or select flat-bottomed boulders to reduce cost and weight and only bury them a few inches).
• Use plants with contrasting shades and shapes (examples: plant low gray foliage plants in front of taller, green foliage plants).
• Add movement to your landscape with native bunch grass accents.
• Soften the cacti, agaves and rocks by interplanting with leafy desert shrubs. For example, try a prickly pear and a native fairy duster together.
• Add architectural exclamation points by using specimen plants in large pots, especially in transition areas near patio, entryways and walkways. Again, cluster them.
• Use one or two species of low shrub or perennial to knit the entire landscape together (such as bursage, desert marigold, or creosote).
• Use gravel, rock mulch and boulders of the same color for a natural look.
• To combine higher water shrubs with low-water succulents, place the plants that need less water and better drainage higher on a raised area and the leafy plants at the base of the raised area where the water will collect. The elevational relief will also allow the higher succulents to make more of a statement.

ALSO CONSIDER:
• Planting species like cholla and native bunch grasses where the sun will backlight them.
• Replicating natural associations like cacti/nurse-tree growing together.
• Think of flowers as a seasonal bonus instead of a year-round focus and depend instead on variations in shades of green and plant textures to provide year-round visual interest.
• A nice 3-way combination is the boulder/succulent/perennial combo. The perennial (penstemon, desert marigold, etc.) softens the boulder and provides seasonal color, while the succulent (cacti, agave or aloe) provides year-round visual interest with the boulder as a backdrop.
A corner of my garden with the sculptural forms of agaves, *Mammillaria* and prickly pear cactus of contrasting shapes, shades and sizes, softened seasonally with wildflowers and year-round with *Euphorbia* rigida (*E. biglandulosa*).

Photo by Tom Gatz
HARDSCAPE CONSIDERATIONS

- Walls, fences, walkways and seating areas provide a touch of civilization to a natural landscape and can complement or set off the plants.
- Pull from the architecture of the house for your hardscape (brick, tile, adobe, wood).
- Stone walls or rock veneer over cinder blocks look great with desert plants. Wedge old stockings filled with dirt to create planting pockets between rocks in the wall.
- 18” walls are the best height for seating.
- Add color by painting or staining boring, cinder-block walls. Be brave!
- Use old and/or interesting gates to add character.
- Use vine-covered arbors between areas of the garden to give the illusion of separate garden rooms.

Summer is a good time for planning and noting sun/shade patterns, while fall is the perfect time to establish new plantings in the low desert. Have fun!

40th Year Anniversary of CACSS

Remembrance from Dana Hiser:

Long ago, when I joined the DBG in the ‘80s, volunteering in the Plant Shop was easy. My mentors were Mary Irish and Frank Hennessey and these two talked all the time in their own language (Latin). All I had to do was try to hang on to everything they said, in the words that I could understand.

Mary made no apologies. Plant nicknames were bad. Frank was stuck with me for longer periods of time, since we had to work together. So, in the end, he had to spend more time explaining all of the plants that I wanted to like. He often tried to talk me into joining CACSS, but I was always too "busy," until a road trip organized by the Elliots (of course) materialized on the horizon. I joined the society in the spring of 1994.

My first trip was the Huntington show & sale, which also included the gardens and galleries along with the Lincoln exhibition, all in one day. I lived on fig cookies the whole day, no time for sitting down!

In those days, we were still flying, and Electra and Jim Elliot were pros at checking empty suitcases. Over the years, I have learned a lot about packing.

Dana Hiser

Wendy Barrett is collecting memories, recollections or stories that will be shared with the membership as part of our upcoming 40th Anniversary celebration. If you have something you would like to share, please send it to Wendy Barrett at wbarrett@cox.net. If you know the year you joined CACSS, please include that as well. If you have questions, email Wendy or call 602-971-5345.
Often visitors to Arizona purchase a cactus dish garden at a gift shop. What they don’t realize is that the dish garden seldom has a single Arizona cactus at all! The plants in those containers are usually from Mexico and South America.

Many people are only aware of the “giants” that grow here, such as the stately saguaro, barrels, and ocotillo. Arizona has many more species than those. Here is a list of plants brought in by members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Plant Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phil Ruttenbur:</td>
<td><em>Stenocereus</em> thurberii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gard Roper:</td>
<td><em>Agave</em> parryi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Whipple:</td>
<td><em>Ferocactus</em> emoryi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Plath:</td>
<td><em>Graptopetalum</em> rusbyi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Steve Mack:
Saguaro
*Cylindropuntia leptocaulis*
*Opuntia* basilaris
*Peniocereus* greggii
*Echinocereus* rigidissimus
*Echinocereus* engelmannii
*Echinocereus* boyce-thompson
Ocotillo
*Ferocactus* wislizini
*Opuntia* macrocentra
Senita
*Yucca* brevifolia
*Mammillaria* grahamii

Mike Gallegher:
*Cylindropuntia* acanthacarpa
*Agave* toum. bella
*Cylindropuntia* arbuscula

Dick Carter:
*Jatropha* cinerea
*Agave* deserti simplex

Doug Dawson:
*Dudleya* saxosa col.
*Dudleya* saxosa col. green form
*Dudleya* pulverulenta arizonica
*Epithelantha* micromeris
*Mammillaria* heyderi macdoug.
*Mammillaria* heyderi bullingtoniana
*Mammillaria* tetrancistra
*Escobaria* vivipera
*Sedum* griffithsii
*Opuntia* engelmannii

Tom Steuber:
*Agave* parviflora
*Coryphanta* missouriensis
*Coryphanta* robustispina
*Echinomastus* acunensis
*Escobaria* robbinsorum
*Pediocactus* peebestanus
*Bursera* microphylla
*Echinocactus* horizontalonius
*Coryphantha* alversonii
*Coryphantha* recurvata
*Echinocereus* triglochidiatus.
Recent Bloomers from the Desert Botanical Garden collection
Photos by Scott McMahon

Mammillaria baumii

Echinocereus websterianus
Hylocereus purpusii

Harrisia pomanensis
PLANT QUESTIONS??  WHOM TO CONTACT!!!

Many CACSS members have experience with different kinds of succulent plants. I hope they will add their names to the following list. Call or email Diana Decker, Central Spine editor. Find contact information on p. 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.

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