Join Jeff for an armchair tour of the Richtersveld . . . A place where daisies, mesembs, aloes, and other succulents abound in spectacular array.

Biography: Jeff Chemnick

Jeff Chemnick, born in San Diego in 1953, resides with his wife, Satie, on a five acre botanically diverse estate in Santa Barbara, CA, named “Aloes in Wonderland.” Jeff earned a degree in botany and zoology at San Diego State University and has been travelling to the tropics since the mid 1970’s to visit exotic habitats in order to bear witness to the world’s remarkable plants and animals. Though his chief passion are the cycads, in particular the cycads of Mexico, he is also an accomplished world birder, boasting a life list now approaching 5,000 species. Along with colleagues, he has written a book on the Cycads of Mexico, due to be published next year. In addition to operating a nursery specializing in cycads and other plants with radial symmetry such as aloes and agaves, Jeff is the owner and operator of Mexico Nature Tours and leads several trips a year taking people to see the botanical wonders of that fascinating country. Jeff and his colleagues have developed a biological field station in the Sierra Sur of Oaxaca offering young Mexican botanists and biologists access to primary habitat in order to conduct studies of the region’s biota (the animal or plant life of a particular region, habitat, or geological period). In addition to being a member of SERBO, a consortium of Oaxacan biologists, Jeff is a member of the IUCN’s Cycad Specialist Group.

Jeff and Satie met in Borneo while Jeff was birding in Asia and Satie was collecting data for her Ph.D. in tropical ecology. Since then they have visited all continents (except the cold ones) several times each. At least
once a year, Jeff and Satie manage to mount an expedition to destinations offering a rich biodiversity. Among their favorite trips were western Australia, Madagascar, Peru, and Indonesia. Their most recent field trip was a make-up honeymoon to northwestern South Africa and southern Namibia. They went on their honeymoon in 2003 but a complete lack of winter rains that year made the normally spectacular spring bloom a bust. So, they decided to try again in 2014 and this time the rains did their job! Jeff’s presentation will be the “greatest hits” from that trip to the winter rainfall areas of South Africa and Namibia.

Hesperantha vaginata

Cheiridopsis affin,pillansii

Jeff Chemnick

Crassula deceptor

Crassula columnaris
October 2015 Central Spine Deadline: October 3, 2015

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Plant Rescues Open Position
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Monthly Speaker-Programs Diana Crumemey
Pumice Sales Gard Roper
Refreshments Kat Hanna
Show & Sale – 2016 Dan Smith
Website Beth Kirkpatrick

For questions, and to send articles and photos for the newsletter, contact the newsletter editor, Diana Decker: (602) 220-9825 dianadec@cox.net

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Telephone numbers, email addresses, and street addresses can be found in the CACSS Member List emailed periodically to members by Beth Kirkpatrick.
PRESIDENT’S LETTER
September 2015
Wayne Whipple

Just when we thought we were going to have a reprieve from the oppressive heat, August brought us excessive temperatures tying all-time highs. On August 14, the Valley recorded a record 117 degrees, tying the all-time record for the month. Also on that date, the low was 93 degrees, tying the warmest daily mean temperature on record for the month of August. Cruel August heat ravaged our plants, leaving us with black, mushy sadness. I just discovered this morning that one of my hearty golden barrels succumbed, probably because of the heat, which was followed by heavy rain.

Don’t despair! Our big-time auction on October 18 should cause rejoicing, as we will be able to replace those victims of the violent August heat with robust newcomers for our yards and pots. I am optimistic; so I expect our members will be generous in offering replacements. Mike Gallagher is again in charge, but needs our help not only in supplying items for the auction, but also helping out in many other areas, including facilities – arranging the area and then assisting with the cleanup afterwards. Make sure you have marked the date for this annual event in the Wildflower Garden Pavilion.

I am looking forward to our General Meeting speaker on September 27. Coming from Santa Barbara, CA, will be Jeff Chemnick, a research associate at Lotusland. He is an expert on aloes and cycads and also is an avid birder. You might want to find out more about Jeff by googling him on the Internet. So please attend and have your questions ready.

I trust you have reserved the date of Sunday, December 6 for the annual Holiday Party to be held at the Mountain View County Center, Scottsdale. Sue Glenn, along with her daughter, Emily Glenn, will be handling the details for this event. More details will be forthcoming.

The Board of Directors of the CACSS will meet at 11:00 A.M., before the General Meeting at 2 pm on September 27 in the Farrington Conference Center. Members are always welcome to attend Board Meetings.

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.
Please help with the Desert Botanical Garden’s Fall Plant Sale

CACSS Club members are needed to help share information and help direct customers during our Fall Plant Sale, Oct. 9, 10, and 11. Hours: 7 am - 5 pm Friday and Saturday, 9 am – 5 pm Sunday.

Be sure to wear your CACSS badge and just show up and check in at the volunteer tent. Our busiest times are on Friday and Saturday mornings, and many customers will have questions about cultivation of cacti, agaves and other succulents, and even how to plant trees and shrubs.

If you don’t know the answers, there is also an information booth, and if you can simply help people find plants on their lists, it will take a lot of pressure off the staff. Even if you’re not a DBG member, you are still entitled to a 10% discount off plant purchases, so remember to display your badge at checkout. We greatly appreciate your help during this important event!

Scott McMahon

Boyce Thompson Arboretum Fall Plant Sale

Begins Friday, October 9, at 8:00 am. It will run through October 25. We always carry lots of trees, shrubs, cactus and succulents. If it’s a hot weekend, keep in mind we are about five degrees cooler than the Valley! Boyce Thompson Arboretum is an hour’s drive east of Phoenix on Hwy 60 at milepost 223. Take a stroll around after you make your plant purchases and enjoy the shade.

Cathy Babcock

NOTICE:

A beautiful large 10-1/2" x 4-1/2" pot was left at the CACSS Show & Sale in April. I have it at my home and am looking for the owner. If it is yours, please contact me, Nancy Mumpton, at nancy.mumpton@gmail.com

CACSS NEW MEMBERS

Diane Chidlaw
Barry Feinberg
Monique Mumaw
Pamela and Jonathan Shim
Laura and Thomas Pach

Membership Chair:
Beth Kirkpatrick
LIBRARY NOTES:

BOOK CARRIERS
Currently we have five members who are carrying some of our library books to the meetings each month. We are looking for one more CACSS member to help us with this monthly task. If you attend most meetings (you can miss one once in a while) and are willing to carry a group of our library books with you each month, contact Wendy Barrett (wbarrett@cox.net; 602-971-5345) or Nancy Mumpton (nancymumpton@gmail.com; 480-649-1558). One nice advantage is that you have the books at home to read until the meetings.

CSSA JOURNAL
We have our copy of this periodical for July-Aug. with our very own Sue Hakala's article on Ferocactus in the Usury Mountains Regional Park in Mesa. Also, her beautiful image of one of these spectacular cacti was selected as this issue's cover photo.

SEPTEMBER SPEAKER
Jeff Chemnick will be giving us an armchair tour of the plants of the fabulous Richtersveld area of northwest South Africa and Namibia. Our library has several beautiful books covering this topic: *Succulent Flora of Southern Africa*; *Richtersveld, the Enchanted Wilderness*; and *Southern African Wild Flowers, Jewels of the Veld*. We also have two copies of Aloe Magazine that devoted an entire issue to "The Succulent Riches of South Africa and Namibia" by Ernst van Jaarsveld.

Nancy Mumpton
Provide Adequate Shade for Cactus and Succulents in the Early Fall
By Tom Gatz

Cactus and succulents that enjoyed filtered shade under our trees all summer long are often exposed to more intense sunshine when branches or trees blow down during monsoon storms or in the early fall when the sun moves lower in the sky, peeking below the tree canopies in our yards, while mid-day temperatures remain high. Be prepared to provide supplemental shade if needed this time of year.

Sunburn can quickly occur in just one afternoon on a scorching day, so keep some shade cloth on hand for emergencies. In a pinch, you can even provide shade using the white frost cloth sold in nurseries. Some folks invest in shade umbrellas like those sold for pool decks to protect sun-sensitive plants from the hot afternoon sun.

*Agave ovatifolia* can be acclimated to almost full sun. However, this specimen is shaded by a wall all winter long and it never gets a chance for its new leaves to adjust to the sun before summer hits. Therefore it benefits from 20-30 percent shade cloth in the summer.

You can also use shade cloth to gradually acclimate nursery-grown plants that can eventually take full sun. I've had good luck starting with 50% shade cloth and reducing it to 30% shade cloth after a few months (or an entire summer), and eventually removing it altogether, provided that the succulent plants do not begin to turn yellow. A yellowing cactus or succulent can be restored to its healthy green color, but once it turns white or brown, it is permanently scarred. Purple or red is a natural response of many cacti, aloes, agaves and some other succulents to strong sun or other stressors and is usually not a concern. Another option is to use multiple layers of 20 or 30% shade cloth to either increase or decrease the amount of shade desired.

Unfortunately much of the shade cloth sold at garden centers provides 70% shade or more. This is way too much for many desert plants and they may never acclimate to full sun with this much shade. You can find shade cloth of varying densities by shopping around online or locally from Arizona Bag Company (602-272-1333, 2530 W. Buckeye Rd., Phoenix).
If you just can’t stand the look of shade cloth cloaking your plants like a shroud, try cutting a few boughs from a mesquite tree and draping them over the plant needing protection. As the leaves dry, shrink and eventually drop off, the plant will gradually get more and more sun and, hopefully, acclimate. If it looks okay, remove the branch. If it begins to yellow again, add some fresh branches. Most sun-sensitive succulents can be safely uncovered by early November, just a few weeks before we have to start thinking about providing frost protection!

Thanks to Scott McMahon and Chad Davis for helping me with an earlier version of this article.

CACSS 2015 Meeting Schedule

Sunday, October 18 – Annual Show

Sunday, November 22, 2:00 to 5:00 pm – Leo Martin - Topic: Species and Raising Cycads from Seed

Sunday, December 6, 1 pm – Annual Party

Photos of the August 30 CACSS General Meeting by John Crummey

Enthusiastic bidders look closely at plants.

Jason Eslamieh addressed members and guests.
What’s Going on with the Propagation Education Group

- NEXT PEG MEETING: 10am-Noon, Saturday, September 19, 2015, in the DBG Whiteman Conference Room in Webster Center

Anyone that has been to the last few monthly meetings of the CACSS has heard about PEG and has also heard about how it is becoming more and more popular. Our bimonthly meetings typically now have between 15 and 20 enthusiastic participants.

Part of the enthusiasm for PEG has been our involvement in a project for the 2017 national convention of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA). Several members at the last CACSS meeting in July proudly brought their seedlings being grown for the project to the meeting; across the board, everyone that is participating is having some great results and learning how to grow cacti and succulents from seed with very little investment in time, money, and space. Everyone is discovering that anyone can grow from seed! And, it is extremely rewarding.

A batch of over 200 seedlings just under one month old including seedlings for the CSSA convention project

To further educate and encourage our CACSS members to grow cacti and succulents from seed, PEG has recently received a "thumbs up" from the CACSS board to implement another project that we feel will be enthusiastically received by our members: our very own Seed Depot.

The CACSS Seed Depot - What’s it all about?

**Goal:** To encourage CACSS members to propagate cacti and succulents by seed by providing a readily available source of a variety of species at extremely low cost. Additionally, the Seed Depot will serve as a revenue stream for the club.

**Sourcing the Seeds:** Members will be asked to donate seeds to the Depot. We already have over 30 species donated to kick-start the depot! A list of current seeds available follows at the end of this article; a revised Seed Depot List will be provided in each monthly issue of the *Central Spine*. PEG members will store the seeds for the CACSS.

**Costs:**

- 1 packet of 20-25 seeds = $1
- 1 packet of 20-25 seeds = 50¢, if you donate a packet of 20-25 identified seeds of any cactus or succulent species
- All proceeds from Seed Depot sales will become property of the CACSS.

**How will it work?**

- A PEG member will volunteer to store the Seed Depot at their home and bring the supply to each monthly CACSS meeting and each bimonthly PEG meeting.
- An up-to-date Seed Depot List will be included in the monthly issue of the *Central Spine* with contact information for requesting seeds (see below for the first list).
- Seed requests may be made by email or in person at the monthly CACSS or the bimonthly PEG meetings.
- Delivery of seed requests will be at the monthly CACSS or the bimonthly PEG meetings (seeds will not be mailed).
- **NOTE:** *Only paid CACSS members will be allowed to purchase from the Seed Depot.*

**Anything else I need to know?** Each Seed Depot envelope will be clearly labeled with genus and species; if the requester requires additional data, they can contact the PEG member in charge of the seeds and inquire
about any additional data associated with the seeds that might be available (for example, seed source, collection locality, pollination history, etc.).

We hope everyone in the CACSS is as excited about this new membership privilege! So, go ahead and start planning your seed growing for the fall; check out the list below, and be sure to attend the next CACSS meeting and/or PEG meeting. Even if you have never grown from seed before, PEG members can help you out. We look forward to helping our members learn how to grow from seed!

PEG Seed Depot List (as of August 28, 2015)

**Seeds are in packets of 20-25 (sometimes more) unless otherwise labeled.
**Cost is $1 per packet; if you donate a packet of 20-25 identified seeds, you only pay 50¢ per packet.
**Seeds are only available at monthly CACSS meetings or at bi-monthly PEG meetings.
**If you would like to donate seeds or have any questions about the Seed Depot, please contact Tristan Davis (minime8484@hotmail.com).

Cylindropuntia ramosissima
Echinocereus davisi
Echinopsis ancistrophora
Echinopsis 'June Noon'
Eriosyce occulta
Escobaria cubanensis
Facheiroa cephaloimelana
Facheiroa cephaloimelana
Facheiroa squamosa
Ferocactus emoryi
Fouquieria macdougallii
Haageocereus decumbens x Echinopsis leucantha
Harrisia bonplandii
Harrisia eriophora
Harrisia fernowii
Harrisia fragrans
Hesperaloe parviflora
Hesperaloe parviflora 'Brake Lights' & 'Yellow'
Huernia zebrina
Islaya islayensis
Lophophora fricii
Mammillaria eriacantha
Mammillaria guminispa
Mammillaria grahamii
Mammillaria prolifera
Melocactus acunae ssp acunae (mais)
Melocactus acunae ssp lagunensis
Melocactus guitartii
Melocactus harlowii (pink fruit)
Melocactus harlowii (white fruit)
Melocactus holguicenis
Melocactus matanzanus
Melocactus nagi
Micranthocereus estevessei
Micranthocereus flaviflor
Neoporteria napina ssp lembckei var durispina
Neoporteria odieri ssp krausii
Pachypodium saundersii
Parodia borealis
Pereskiap sp.
Pilosocereus brookianus
Pilosocereus fulfilanatus
Pilosocereus magnificus
Pilosocereus sp.
Setiachinopsis mirabilis
Trichocereus chiloensis
Turbinicarpus lophophoroides
Turbinicarpus valdeizzly
Cylindropuntia ramosissima

Please Send Articles for Newsletter

For a more interesting newsletter, articles about plants and taking care of them are very important. Please send your articles or suggestions for topics to the editor: Diana Decker--dianadec@cox.net

Publication of material in the Central Spine does not imply agreement with the ideas expressed therein by any portion of the membership of the CACSS, nor does it constitute an endorsement or support for any portion of such material by the CACSS, or the Central Spine, regardless of any position or office held by the author.
All such material represents a comment and/or personal opinion of the author.
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, dianadec@cox.net; 602-220-9825. 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**
480-893-1207
dawsonlithops@hotmail.com
Specializations include Growing from Seed, Flora of Namibia, Lithops, other Mesembs, Melocactus, Miniature Cacti and Succulents of Arizona.

**MIKE GALLAGHER**
602-942-8580
mgallagher26@cox.net
Specializations include Aloes, Haworthias, Columnar Cacti, and *Turbinicarpus*.

**DEAN PATRICK**
480-759-0312
desertpatrick@cox.net
Specialization in softwood stem-cuttings, plant division and seed starting (rooting cacti, agave and aloe).

**STEVE PLATH**
623-915-7615
revegdude1@juno.com
Specializations include General Propagation and Desert Revegetation, *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytum*, *Cyphostemma*, *Echinocereus*, *Fouquieria*, *Thelocactus*

**DAN SMITH**
480.981.9648
smithdans@cox.net
Specializes in adeniums, raising adeniums from seed, grafting and adenium culture in general

**BOB TORREST**
480-994-3868
robertst9114@msn.com
Specializations include Desert Landscaping, Unusual (including Rare Fruit) Trees and Shrubs, Aloes, Agaves, Columnar Cacti, *Trichocereus*, and *Opuntia*.