

CENTRAL SPINE

March, 2002

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Elsewhere in this issue Cathy B thanks those of us who helped out at the Desert Botanical Garden Spring Plant Sale Festival. I'd also like to thank you, Cathy, for helping to maintain the good relationship between the DBG and the CACSS.

Our Show and Sale approaches. Show schedules, rules, and entry cards will be at the March 24 meeting. See me to get your entry number and entry cards. I will show you how to fill them out. If you can't be there but want to enter, call me on the telephone because my E-mail is not working now.

Let's have as many of you as possible enter! Just 5 plants per member will fill Webster Auditorium. Entries will be accepted Wednesday, April 3, from noon to 7 P.M. Judging will be Thursday, April 4, and the show will be open to the public Friday through Sunday, April 5-7.



*Last Year's Award for Most Blue Ribbons to
Scott McMahon*

The plant sale (as of this writing) will feature more than twice as many vendors as last year. There will be a single checkout line staffed by CACSS members, and through the courtesy of the Garden we will be able to accept credit cards this year.

We will need volunteers for the show: the most help is needed on Wednesday, entry day, with only a few volunteers needed on Thursday, judging day. Friday through Sunday we will need volunteers to staff Webster Auditorium and to help with the sales checkout line. Please contact Jo D to volunteer.

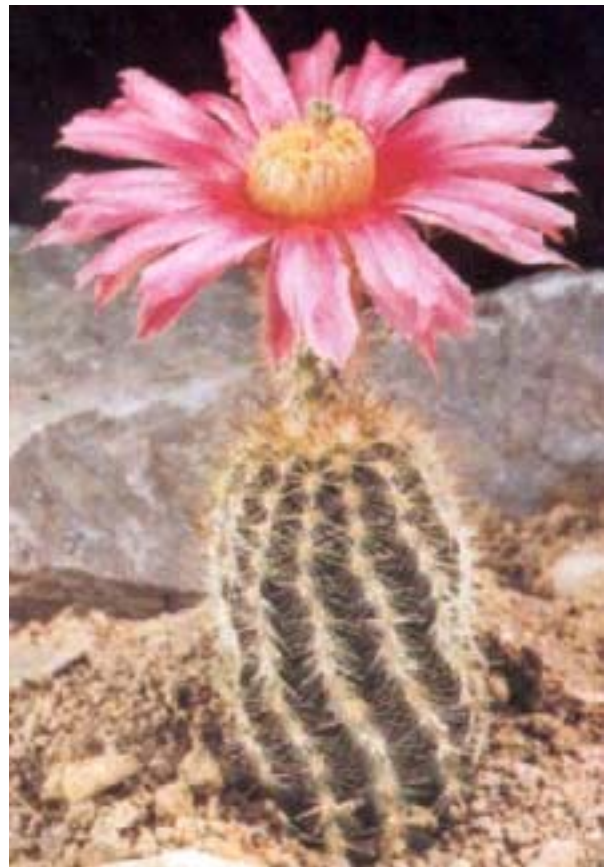
The Garden has asked us to leave our show in Webster Auditorium until Monday, April 8, so the members of the International Organisation for Succulent Studies may view our show at the opening reception. We are also welcome to attend this reception. The cost is \$19 per person and includes hors d'oeuvres. For reservations contact Pati Wilson at the Garden at 480-941-1225.

The San Diego nursery trip is planned for the first weekend in August, departing very early Friday the 4th, and returning in the evening of Sunday the 6th. We need 25 people on the trip. Contact Cathy B.

The **Sonoran IV Conference** in Tucson will be sponsored by the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society on May 3-5 of this year. For more details call Dick Wiedhopf at 520-885-6367.

Leo A. Martin

PLANT OF THE MONTH—HEDGEHOGS



Echinocereus fitchii

Echinocereus, meaning "spiny candle," was described by Georg Engelmann in 1848. Our local *Echinocereus englemannii* is named after him. Hedgehog cacti are

popular in cultivation for large beautiful flowers, spectacular stems and spines, and often easy culture.

Many form large clumps, but some cluster only sparingly and some are solitary. All flower in the spring to early summer with big, showy, mostly satiny flowers in yellow, green, brown, pink, or purple. *E. triglochidiatus* has heavy, waxy flowers of orange or red. The pistil at an *Echinocereus* flower's center is almost always green. Unique to the genus, emerging flower buds tear through the plant's skin above an areole, leaving a scar after fading, rather than arising from areoles or axils between areoles as in other cacti.



E. stramineus (Porcupine hedgehog)²

All come from predominately summer-rainfall areas, and they tend to be found in fully-exposed, dry microclimates such as vertical rock faces, slopes of scree, or arid flats. Root systems are smaller than in some other cacti. These are hints for successful culture: shallow, fast-draining mineral soil without organics; full sun; no winter water; and a drying out between waterings in the summer. Periods of most active growth are late winter through late spring, and fall through early winter; many rest during the hottest part of the year and don't need much watering.

Echinocereus pectinatus variety *rigidissimus*, the Arizona rainbow cactus, grew throughout the Valley of the Sun and east to Superior before cattle were introduced by Europeans. Central and southern Arizona was covered then by grasslands rather than desert, and all the washes were perennial streams. The rainbow needs more summer water than most other species. It lacks the beautiful pink and purple spines

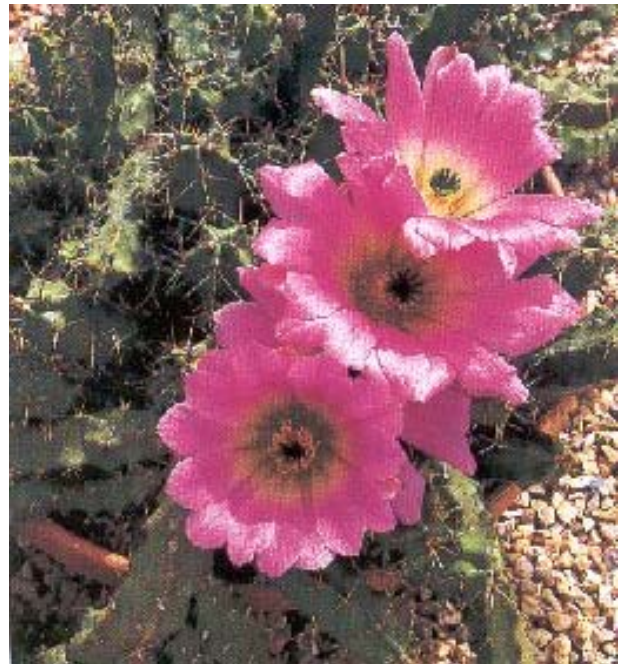
when grown in less than full sun or when planted in soils containing much organic material.



E. rigidissimus v. *rubispinus*³

Other popular species are:

- ☉ *E. dasyacanthus*, with mostly solitary stems and large up-facing flowers;
- ☉ *E. engelmannii*, a confirmed clumper with long spines and pink flowers;
- ☉ *E. pentalophus*, a profuse clumper with long narrow stems and huge magenta flowers that looks good as a ground cover or a hanging basket;



*E. pentalophus*⁴

- ☉ *E. pulchella*, with its greyish-green solitary body, small spines, and huge pink flowers.

Leo Martin

¹ Photo from *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Cacti & Other Succulents*

² Photo from *The Complete Book of Cacti & Succulents*

³ Photo from *The Complete Book of Cacti & Succulents*

⁴ Photo from *The Ultimate Book of Cacti & Succulents*

⁵ Photo from *The Ultimate Book of Cacti & Succulents*

From the Garden

Many thanks to all the volunteers from the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society for helping stage another successful Plant Sale Festival last weekend. These are very important events for the Garden and your help is remembered.

Cathy Babcock

Editor's Apology to Cathy Babcock

For omitting her name for authorship of her article on "Beaucarnea recurvata – Ponytail Palm" in the January issue.

Office Changes

Librarian

Muriel Beroza, our librarian for several years, is asking to be replaced. She finds she is working each Sunday afternoon and is not able to deliver the service she would like.

The Librarian is in charge of our book collection and circulation, and:

- 🕒 keeps the catalog of our books
- 🕒 catalogs new books as they are acquired
- 🕒 handles purchasing of new books from the library fund
- 🕒 circulates the library fund contribution can at each meeting
- 🕒 keeps track of the library fund
- 🕒 makes suggestions of books to buy, as well as takes suggestions from members
- 🕒 takes calls from members wishing to check out books
- 🕒 brings requested books to the next meeting
- 🕒 tracks books checked out, and reminds members with books to return them at the upcoming meeting

Central Spine Editor

Jim Davis, our Newsletter Editor for this past year or so, is asking for a replacement (temporary or permanent). The job requires computer publishing skills or the desire to learn them. (It is not hard for anybody who can use a computer.) The Editor:

- 🕒 receives the articles via E-mail, US mail, or in person
- 🕒 assembles the newsletter on computer with a publishing program, such as Microsoft Word
- 🕒 finds and inserts plant and other photos
- 🕒 sends the newsletter computer file to the proofreader for corrections
- 🕒 sends via e-mail final copies of issues to members who want to view issues in color

Please contact Jim or Muriel for more information; their contact information is listed elsewhere in this issue. Neither of these jobs is that difficult (and both can be a lot of fun).

OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Deadline for insertion in the next issue of the **Central Spine**: May 5, 2002. Send insertions or communications to Jim Davis at: pantenor@earthlink.net or to him at P O Box 2875, Peoria, AZ 85380 (or via 623.583.3901)

NOTE: There is no newsletter for April. An April/May issue includes member names and plants for all ribbon winners and trophies awarded at the show.

Central Spine is the newsletter of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society. All opinions are those of respective authors. Publication herein does not imply that CACSS or any CACSS members agree with any statements published.

Changes of address: contact our Treasurer, Pam Bass, with any changes of address.

CALENDAR

March 24	Leo Martin talking on the Flora of Veracruz and Oaxaca, Mexico
April 3–7	Annual Plant Show

April 20 Wallace garden tour, 9 A.M.–Noon
May 19 Show Awards & Plant Auction
June 30
July 28
August 25

Meetings are at 2 P.M. in Webster Auditorium,
unless otherwise noted. All meetings include a
question and answer session on growing plants.

C.A.C.S.S.
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SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85252-8774 USA



*Echinocereus viridiflorus*⁵