



Desert Breeze

Newsletter of the Tucson Cactus & Succulent Society

March 2005

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Deadline for copy: 18th of each month

TCSS Web Page: www.tucsoncactus.org

Next Meeting

Thursday, March 3, 2005.

Junior League of Tucson

2099 E. River Road

Tucson

March Refreshments

Those with family names beginning with
N to S, please bring your choice of
refreshment to the meeting.

Everyone is Welcome!

Bring your friends, join in the fun,
and meet the cactus and succulent
community.

Thursday, March 3, 2005

7:00 P.M.

Jane Evans – Winter Growing Succulents

Have you ever seen beautiful blooming Aloes around town and wondered how do they do that?

Have you ever grown Lithops and had them turn to mush overnight?

Are you a winter visitor wishing you could have flowers while you're here but you don't want all pansies and petunias?

Well...come find out answers to these and other questions when Jane Evans talks about growing cool season plants in Tucson.

Jane and Gene Joseph are the owners of Plants for the Southwest here in Tucson. Jane has a BS in Horticulture from the University of Arizona, and has been interested in growing these types of plants for the past 25 years.



Thursday, April 7, 2005

7:00 P.M.

Tim Metcalf – What's in Your Pot?

There's more to the dirt you grow plants in than meets the eye. Join Tim Metcalf, Director of the Botanical Conservatory at UC Davis and find out how important this is to your growing success.

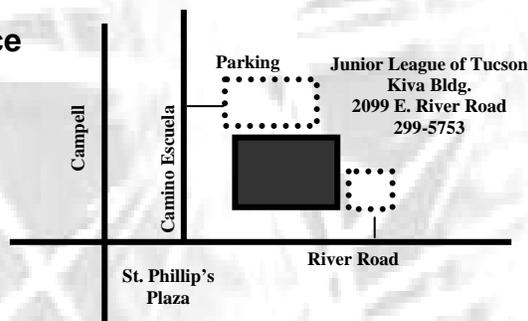
Thursday, March 17, 2005

7:00 P.M.

Workshop

Gene Joseph - General Cultural Practices

Meeting Place



President's Message



Three things I thought about these last few weeks of February:

**Wow! It's almost Spring.
Wow! It's Raining.
Wow! I have the Flu.**

Two of the three are good and one is not so good.

Spring is almost here and that means there are a lot of things to do to get ready for the long growing season. You should already have super-bloomed (high middle number fertilizer) your early bloomers, especially Echinocereus. This is also a great time to plant cactus seeds.

I hope all of you who went to the workshop on seed growing are starting lots of plants from seed. Plants are breaking dormancy. Winter bloomers are still colorful. No matter how much I want to ignore it, I know the last hard freeze is still coming. This winter has been super for aloes and it seems every plant has more blooms than I can remember. Of course, I know that the one that I really want to see will get frosted just as it's ready to bloom or set seed. As I look around the yard I see all the work that needs to be done before the really warm weather starts, but I know that I won't start it 'till it gets to be 100. Maybe almost spring is not such a good thing.

I can't believe that it's raining again. When can I spray for weeds? They seem to have a deal with the rain gods. I spray, and the rains wash off the weed killer, and I spray again, and new weeds pop up everywhere. It's too wet to dig or transplant and all I do is track mud around. The last thing the drowning plants want is more water with fertilizer in it. I hate going to a nursery with an umbrella. It doesn't seem appropriate for Tucson. Drought is more convenient!

Fortunately, I don't have any allergies, but I feel sorry for all of you who do. This is going to be the awful result of all this rain. Everything will be blooming, pollen will be filling the air, and many of you will be

suffering. I, on the other hand, will be delighting in the desert bloom.

I decided that it would be a good thing to get a flu shot this year. Of course this was the year when the flu vaccine was in short supply and I was not in the critical group. Thus, no flu shot. So, I got the flu. It lasted for seven days. The first day was the warning of things to come; slight chills, fever headache etc. The next couple of days I hardly maintained an upright position for more than a few minutes. Certainly, I couldn't go to work and spread my flu to others that might deserve it more, so I was destined to stay home all week. After four days of daytime TV, I found strength to go outside and view the garden. The rain and spring-like weather create wonders, especially when you not well enough to do any work and can just enjoy the sights.

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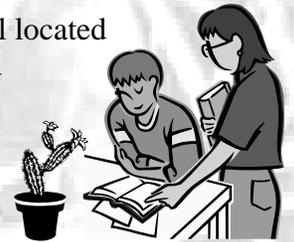
Dick Wiedhopf, President

TCSS Provides Technical Assistance

Lulu Walker Elementary School located near River Road and La Canada recently received one of our Outreach School Grants.

Teacher Jen Powers volunteered to help refurbish their outdoor Cactus &

Succulents garden but needed some assistance to help identify plants that had died or lost their ID tags.



The garden is located under mature native trees and surrounds a wonderful water garden feature which



will come to life once warmer weather shows up. Vonn Watkin's expertise was called into action to help identify over fifty plants that were originally planted in the garden. Suggestions were given for relocating some, others needed replacing, and some needed trimmed back a little as they had overgrown their allotted space.

The Cactus Rescue Crew donated a Compass Barrel, Fish-hook Barrel, Hedge Hog, and Pincushion to be sure our common Tucson area cacti were represented in their garden. These were planted in the garden as Vonn worked with Jen to help her identify plants and update her list.

Joe Frannea

Cactus Rescue Committee



The rescue committee has started off the year with a vengeance! Despite having to work around all the wonderful rain and attendant mud that we have had, we have harvested thousands of plants. Our inventory is in fine shape as we start into our aggressive schedule of sales. See the letter by Chris Monrad in the insert for details.

Expo 2005

Planning and work continue on the Expo 2005 scheduled for April 30 and May 1 at the Junior League. We are planning for expanded exhibits and displays and an increased number of vendors. There will be plenty of opportunities for members to participate; we would like to have even more members take part than we had two years ago.

Increased Committee Participation

Members who indicated particular interest in society committees should expect to be contacted soon by various committee chairmen. The fantastic growth of our society and the increase in programs and activities has made it plain that we need more members actively participating.

Rainbow Gardens Bookshop will have a one day "We are now in Tucson" Open house and sale on Saturday, March 12th, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. 10% off everything in the shop. See <http://www.rainbowgardensbookshop.com/> for details and address.

Upcoming Schedule

- March 5, 2005. Wildflower bus trip to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. The trip is sold out.
- March 17, 2005. Third Thursday Workshop: General Cultural Practices, Gene Joseph. Reservations Required.
- March 20 (10:00 am to 4:00 pm) - Pima County Country Fair at the Lew Sorenson School on Tanque Verde Road (East of Houghton).
- April 3 (9:00 am – 4:00 pm) – Hacienda Del Sol Guest Ranch Resort - Second Annual Spring Plant Sale - Several other local specialty nurseries of note will also be in attendance, offering a diverse selection of aesthetic cacti and succulents from the Americas, Africa, and Madagascar.
- April 7, 2005. General Meeting; Tim Metcalf – “What’s in Your Pot?”
- April 30 & May 1 – Tucson Cactus & Succulent Society Exposition and Plant Show at the Junior League on River road (near intersection of Campbell). This biennial event will feature a show of members Cactus and succulents as well as over a dozen local cactus and succulent nurseries..
- May 5, 2005. General Meeting: Bob Webb – “Travels in Arabia and Africa.”
- June 10 (5:00 pm to 7:00 pm TCSS and TBG members only pre-sale) June 11 (8:00 am to 12:00 pm – open to the public) – Weird Plant Sale at the Tucson Botanical Gardens. This huge, annual event will include over a dozen local nurseries with a very large selection of interesting plants. This is an event not to be missed for the succulent plant lover in Tucson.
- October 23 (10 am – 4:00 pm) – Pima County Country Fair at the Lew Sorenson School on Tanque Verde road (east of Houghton). TCSS Rescued plants.
- December 11, 2005 Holiday Party.





TCSS Rescue Cacti for Sale

Lots & lots to choose from.....

Barrels - from 2" to 14" diameter (about \$1 per inch)

Hedgehogs - from 1 to 20 heads (about \$1 per head)

TCSS Club Members receive a 15% discount

Call Joe or Patsy if interested 575-7126



New Member Listings and changes are in the 2005 Roster

Photos by Joe Frannea. Logo Artwork by Vonn Watkins

Don't Forget!

Bus trip to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument

Extraordinary Wildflower Displays

Date: March 5, 2005

Departure Time: 6:00 am at the College of Pharmacy Parking Lot west of College off of Cherry Ave. Bus will start loading at 5:30 am.

Return: Approximately 6:30 pm

You might want to bring a folding chair to use at lunch time. The trip is sold out.



Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society

7510 E. Rio Verde Rd.

Tucson, AZ 85715-3537

Third Thursdays Workshops

The response to the workshops has been satisfying and overwhelming. We had a full workshop of twenty-five on January 20, and added a second session on February 10. The cacti and succulents from seed workshop was filled to capacity. The remaining workshop has more sign-ups than the planned capacity, but we will do all we can to accommodate all comers. So if you would still like to sign up check at the meeting. The workshops are restricted to TCSS members. There is a \$5.00 registration fee for each workshop, and participation is limited.

March 17 - . General Cultural Practices. - Gene Joseph - The workshop will focus on the basic aspects of growing succulents and cacti here in the arid southwest, which is distinctly different from where everybody else lives and where all of the books are written. I will address such topics as what kind of soil to plant in, what kinds of pots to use, how much sun the plants can take (and how much they need!), temperature needs and limits, both high and low and how to water your plants. We will all pot up some plants, looking at the roots, soil, stems and most importantly, finishing off with a hands-on demo of spine removal.

Gene Joseph

Introduction to Cacti and Succulents

Our first workshop on Introduction to Cacti and Succulents was very successful. A total of 56 members signed up for the workshop, so the Board decided to present two sessions. The workshops were held on January 20 and February 10.



The workshop started off with a survey of members' experience and interests, followed by a hands-on segment that took up most of the session. Topics included investigation of the unusual shapes found in our plants and why those shapes aid in living in deserts; anatomy and seed dispersal in Lithops; functions of spines and hair in cacti; benefits of the spiraling growth in Aloes and Agave; water storage structures in succulent plants; literature on cacti and succulents; and what scientific names mean. Finally, the evolution of cacti and succulents was discussed briefly, along with how to identify a cactus versus a succulent.

Attendees were instructed on making cuttings, how to repot, and what to look for when getting a new plant. Everyone received at least two plants to take home and add to their collections.

Many attendees are newer members, and were able to meet other folks in our society; look for them in our meetings, introduce yourself to a new member and ask them about their plants!



Thanks to Jane Evans and Gene Joseph, Dan Birt, and Mark and Margaret Sitter for supplying various plant materials, and to Joe Franea, Vonn Watkins and Marty Harow for helping out during the workshop. I enjoyed giving the workshop immensely, and want to thank all of the attendees for coming out and getting involved in our first workshop.

Norm Dennis

Cactus and Succulents from Seed

Sincere thanks to all the participants in the seed propagation workshop on February 17th. In this workshop I presented a short PowerPoint



to self pollinate your plants at home. I also briefly covered equipment, lighting, containers, soils, sources for seed, a few good books available and ways to extract and clean the seed. Free seed was available and I think most everyone enjoyed the workshop. This is a new and still improving educational addition for our members. Please let us know what you would like for future workshops.

Vonn Watkins



presentation that detailed flowers and fruit, the seed of a cactus, as well as some of the results that can be expected by growing your own plants from seed. I also tried to cover some of the ways to hybridize and

The illustrated email reproduced below was sent to our Rescue Partners and local landscape architects.

All,

The TCSS Cactus Rescue Program has had an amazingly productive 2005 so far, with nearly **THREE THOUSAND** plants collected in the last five weeks and over 18,000 since 1999.

Our rescued cactus inventory presently contains hundreds each of local pincushion cacti (*Mammillaria microcarpa*), barrels (*Ferocactus wislizenii*) and hedgehogs (*Echinocereus fasciculatus*), all of which are extremely well hydrated from our winter rains and are primed for spectacular blossoms this year.

Please forward this message to anybody who may need some high quality, native landscape materials or may be specifying cacti plant materials for installation in Southern Arizona. The plants are priced to sell quickly (pricing is about \$1.00 per stem for the hedgehogs and \$1.00 per inch of diameter for the barrels) and all plants are in excellent condition. We have more new projects looming in the near future, so we really need to make room for the new inventory.

You may see our current sales schedule at http://www.tucsoncactus.org/tcss_cactus_rescue_sales_2005.htm

or for large quantity sales, you may contact <franea@earthlink.net> to arrange for a viewing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Christian K. Monrad, P.E.

