



DESERT BREEZE

Newsletter of the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society

May 2012

May 3, 2012 at 7:00 PM 2012

“Natural History Observations of *Coryphantha robustispina*, a jackrabbit cactus”

Presented by Bob Schmalzel



their natural history, including pollination, seed dispersal, seedling growth, causes of mortality, life span, and fecundity. Even today, the population sizes of most rare cacti have not been estimated. With small grants from Fish and Wildlife Service in the late 1990s, he set up a number of permanent plots to monitor growth and survival of Turks Head Cactus in the Waterman Mountains and on the Tohono O’odham Reservation. Since 1997 and as opportunity permitted, he has set up a number of plots to monitor Pima pineapple cactus in the Santa Cruz and Altar valleys. With the assistance of AmeriCorps, he set up about 15 80-acre Pima pineapple cactus plots in the Altar Valley in 2001-2003. He is wrapping up a study in the summer of 2012 on how the seeds of Pima pineapple cactus are dispersed. He continues to be interested in the spatial distribution of this plant, its pollinators, and herbivores.

Bob will cover pollination by the cactus bees, fruit dispersal by jackrabbits and cottontails, seed burial by termites, and several other interactions with insects and mammals in southern Arizona.

Robert spent the early part of his career studying the seasonality and harvest of pollen by honey bee colonies in southern Arizona (USDA Honey Bee Research Center, Tucson) and western Panamá (Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Balboa). Upon returning to Arizona in 1993, he soon discovered that for most species of cacti, even those listed by the state and federal governments, very little – or nothing - was known about

Be sure to mark your calendar and come enjoy a fun evening with an excellent program, good food, free plants and more!



Photos by John Durham

TCSS Program Presentation

June 8, 2012

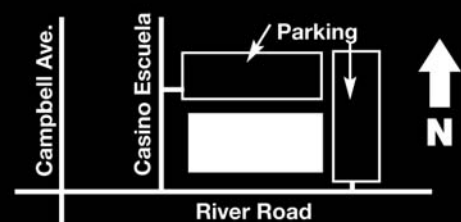
To be determined

Free Plants

Thelocactus bicolor

Suitable for full sun or lightly filtered light, this species is noted for stunning showy flowers all summer long with regular watering.

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month.



Junior League of Tucson, Kiva Bldg.
2099 E. River Road



President's Message

Sonoran IX Sonoran IX Sonoran IX
Sonoran IX Sonoran IX

There is not much more I can say. This has been the predominant activity and thought process for the last couple of weeks. Now it's here and now let enjoy this special week-end. I hope you have signed up for some activity or at least be sure to come and help out at the show or sale.

We have a great selection of vendors that the rest of the country would die for. They are all here right in our backyard. You need to support these folks who do so much for our hobby. We will also have our best selection of rescued plants in quite a while. The wonderful people at The Silverbell Mine really care about the environment and have allowed us to have two special rescues in an area that will be mined in the near future. If you want saguaros we have them. We also have the golden spined, *Echinocereus nicholii*. This is a beautiful plant.

This is also your opportunity to acquire books at a very special price. Don't miss this opportunity, it will only happen this one time. We also have these authors introducing 3 new books which are not part of the sale but you will have the opportunity to purchase or order these. "Pricklypears Commonly Found in the United States and Northern Mexico" by Cheryl Green (TCSS Life Member) with Dave Ferguson and text edited by Matt Johnson will be available to order at a special price. Jon Rebman our Saturday evening speaker has a new book "Baja California Plant Field Guide". Greg Starr workshop leader and vendor will have a few copies of his new Agave book before the big release in May. These are three must have volumes.

There is a great line up of speakers and workshops. Check at the Sonoran reservation desk for last minute availability to take advantage of this weekend opportunity. We have made it possible for you to sign up for one workshop or lunch and a speaker at a reasonable price. We will also have tickets available for Saturday and Sunday morning speaker events.

If you are a member of TCSS, I hope you don't miss out on the Saturday evening dinner and our speaker Jon Rebman. The cost for this is only \$10.00.

Remember seating is limited and you must have a ticket for speakers, meals and workshops.

Enjoy the plant show, participate in the silent auction, buy plants from our vendors and spend some time helping out. Enjoy!!!!

Thanks as always for your support.

Dick Wiedhopf, President

A Successful March Garden Tour

TCSS had a very successful garden tour March 31. 148 members and guests toured the 5 gardens of Lee and Wendy Goldberg, Dick and Sue Hildreth, Rowena and Larry Matthews, Chris and Cliff Mann and Caryl Jones and Barry McCormick.

A big thank you to the garden owners and all the volunteers that made this possible.

Watch for the details about our Fall tour.

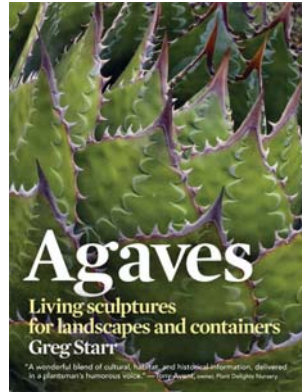
Library Update

Epithelantha 2011 by Davide Dwonati Carlo Zanovello
Describes the various species of the genus.

Arizona Gardener's Guide by Mary Irish
Covers various plants that can be used in Arizona landscapes, with graphical pics that informs not only the culture, but if the plant is

Agaves: Living Sculptures for Landscapes and Containers

By Greg Starr



Gardeners and garden designers are having a love affair with agaves. It's easy to see why—they're low maintenance, drought-tolerant, and strikingly sculptural, with an astounding range of form and color. Many species are strikingly variegated, and some have contrasting ornamental spines on the edges of their leaves. Fabulous for container gardening or in-the-ground culture, they combine versatility with easy growability.

In "Agaves", plant expert Greg Starr profiles 75 species, with additional cultivars and hybrids, best suited to gardens and landscapes. Each plant entry includes a detailed description of the plant, along with its cultural requirements, including hardiness, sun exposure, water needs, soil requirements, and methods of propagation. Agaves can change dramatically as they age and this comprehensive guide includes photos showing each species from youth to maturity—a valuable feature unique to this book.

April Pima Prickly Park Progress Box

- The Desert Garden Club has awarded us a second grant, this one is for a huge Palo Verde nurse tree for Saguarohege. This will provide cover for a couple of dozen small to medium saguaros.
- Pima County installed water lines and 5 hose bibs for spot watering of new plants.
- The Hoop House shade structure covering has been installed and the potting of small plants and cuttings has begun. A mother Gambel's Quail has occupied the enclosure and is sitting on a dozen eggs.
- The first berm in the Agave Garden has been planted with 35 Agave palmeri of various sizes.
- About 130 Cactus Rescue Crew plants including 4 clumps of Bear Grass, *Nolina microcarpa*, 4 large Sotol, *Dasyliroa wheeleri*, 7 *Yucca schottii* and one huge Hedgehog, *Echinocereus nicholii*, with 50 plus stems have been added to the park.
- Detail Designs are being finalized for the Parking lot islands and Saguarohege.
- Details being defined for an information collection and management system for plants in the park.
- A special web section has been developed just for the park, see www.PimaPricklyPark.org
- An email distribution list has been created for those who would like to be notified of committee meetings and park work in progress. Please send an email to us to be added to the list: Park@TucsonCactus.org and park work in progress.

Sonoran IX Conference Event Schedule

April 27, 28 & 29, 2012

Hotel Tucson City Center InnSuites Conference Suite Resort • 475 N. Granada Avenue, Tucson, Arizona

Day and Time	Event	Location
Friday, April 27		
8:00 am to 8:00 pm	Set-up Registration	Front Lobby
	Set-up All Signage	All Areas
	Set-up Book Sales, Art Sales, Art displays	Gold Room
	Set-up Plant and Pottery Sales	Outdoor Sales Area
	Set-up Plant Show	Silver Room
	Set-up Speakers and Meals	Copper Room
	Set-up Silent Auction and Plant Raffle	Front Lobby
	Set-up Workshops	Assigned Rooms*
	Set-up Displays	Silver Room
6:00 PM	Dinner for Volunteers	Hospitality Room
Saturday, April 28		
8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Registration	Front Lobby
8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Books, Plants, Pottery and All Other Sales	Gold Room and Outdoor Sales Area
8:00 am - 6:00 pm	Plant Show	Silver Room
8:00 am - 5:45 pm	Silent Auction Bidding	Front Lobby
9:00 am - 10:30 am	Guest Speaker - Lucas Majure - "The Opuntias in the Eastern United States"	Copper Room
10:45 am - 12:15 pm	Workshops Session 1	Assigned Rooms*
12:15 pm - 2:15 pm	Lunch and Guest Speaker - Cheryl Green & David Ferguson - "Pricklypears Commonly Found in the United States and Northern Mexico"	Copper Room
2:30 pm - 4:00 pm	Workshops Session 2	Assigned Rooms*
5:45 pm	Silent Auction Ends - Bid winners plant collection 5:45 to 6:15 PM	Front Lobby
6:15 pm - 9:00 pm	Dinner and Guest Speaker - Jon Rebman - "The Diversity of Baja California with an Emphasis on the Opuntoids"	Copper Room
Sunday, April 29		
8:00 am - 12:00 noon	Registration	Front Lobby
8:00 am - 1:30 pm	Books, Plants, Pottery and All Other Sales	Gold Room and Outdoor Sales Area
8:00 am - 3:30 pm	Plant Show	Silver Room
9:00 am - 10:15 am	Guest Speaker - Peter Felker - "Opuntia Hybridization and Selection for Choice Fruit Production"	Copper Room
10:20 am - 11:50 am	Workshops Session 3	Assigned Rooms*
12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Workshops Session 4	Assigned Rooms*
1:30 pm - 3:30 pm	Lunch and Guest Speaker - Raul Puente - "Spiny Giants: Arborescent Prickly Pears of Mexico and Guatemala"	Copper Room
3:30 PM	All Conference Events End	All Areas

*Assigned Workshop Rooms: Buckley, El Conquistador, El Dorado, MacArthur and St Augustine

Sonoran IX Workshop Schedule

Date	Time	SESSION	ROOMS	NAME	TITLE
Saturday, April 28, 2012	10:45AM-12:15PM	Session 1	Buckley	Mark Dimmitt	Growing Non-Cactaceous Succulents: Potting, Watering, Feeding, Pruning, and Reviving
Saturday, April 28, 2012	10:45AM-12:15PM	Session 1	El Conquistador	Barry McCormick	Finding the Greenhouse in Your Yard
Saturday, April 28, 2012	10:45AM-12:15PM	Session 1	El Dorado	Norm Dennis	Cactus and Succulent Seed Planting Techniques
Saturday, April 28, 2012	10:45AM-12:15PM	Session 1	St. Augustine	Greg Starr	Growing Agaves in Containers
Saturday, April 28, 2012	2:30-4:00PM	Session 2	Buckley	Jim Hastings	Cooking with the Natives (plants), These are Not Your Mama's Nopalitos
Saturday, April 28, 2012	2:30-4:00PM	Session 2	El Conquistador	Barry McCormick	Finding the Greenhouse in Your Yard
Saturday, April 28, 2012	2:30-4:00PM	Session 2	El Dorado	Gene Joseph	Rocks, Pots and Plants; Decoratively Potted Succulents and Cacti
Saturday, April 28, 2012	2:30-4:00PM	Session 2	St. Augustine	Scott Calhoun	Cactus and Succulent Garden Design and Implimentation
Sunday, April 29, 2012	10:20-11:50AM	Session 3	Buckley	Jim Hastings	Cooking with the Natives (plants), These are Not Your Mama's Nopalitos
Sunday, April 29, 2012	10:20-11:50AM	Session 3	El Dorado	Norm Dennis	Cactus and Succulent Seed Planting Techniques
Sunday, April 29, 2012	10:20-11:50AM	Session 3	MacArthur	David Ferguson	Opuntioid Identification and More!
Sunday, April 29, 2012	10:20-11:50AM	Session 3	St. Augustine	Greg Starr	Growing Agaves in Containers
Sunday, April 29, 2012	12:00-1:30PM	Session 4	Buckley	Mark Dimmitt	Growing Non-Cactaceous Succulents: Potting, Watering, Feeding, Pruning, and Reviving.
Sunday, April 29, 2012	12:00-1:30PM	Session 4	El Dorado	Gene Joseph	Rocks, Pots and Plants; Decoratively Potted Succulents and Cacti
Sunday, April 29, 2012	12:00-1:30PM	Session 4	MacArthur	David Ferguson	Opuntioid Identification and More!
Sunday, April 29, 2012	12:00-1:30PM	Session 4	St. Augustine	Scott Calhoun	Cactus and Succulent Garden Design and Implimentation
	Available Rooms:				Workshop titles may change slightly but this schedule will remain constant until updates are provided.
	Buckley				
	El Conquistador				
	El Dorado				
	MacArthur				
	St. Augustine				

Growing in the Desert Series: *Caralluma russelliana*: The King of Stapeliads

by Mark Dimmitt

Of the many species of stapeliads in cultivation, *Caralluma russelliana* is the most massive (Figure 1). The four-angled, blue-green stems are up to three inches thick and two feet tall. Plants branch freely and form a rather large shrub, creating a sculptural marvel that looks more like a sea creature than a land plant. Tennis ball-sized globes of small reddish-black flowers appear sporadically on stem tips throughout the warm season (Figures 2, 3). Like most stapeliads, the flowers stink of carrion, but the odor does not waft more than a few inches. The species is widespread in the arid lands of East Africa and the Sahel. Synonyms include *Caralluma retrospecticiens*, *Desmidorchis acutangula*, and other combinations of these names.

This species loves heat and sun. However, stems will sunburn in our desert in full summer afternoon sun. They are intolerant of cold. While they can survive near-freezing temperatures, the stems are prone to develop unsightly brown blotches when nights are below 50-55 F. Keep the plants dry in winter to avoid root rot.

Seedlings grow very fast. They can attain full size in two or three years if planted in large pots and watered and fed generously. This is safe if the medium is fast-draining. The roots are prone to rot if the medium stays wet for a few days. Plants seem to be short-lived. Growth slows greatly after the first few years, and few plants survive 10 years in good condition.

The massive stems are heavy and rather brittle, especially where the thin base merges with the roots. Plants can be supported by planting them deep, or using several inches of rock top dressing. Even so, it is best to avoid moving them once they become large.

Considering how ornamental this species is, there is very little information about it on the web except for numerous articles about its chemistry. The stems contain pregnane glycosides that are being investigated for possible medicinal properties.



Figure 1. These three *Caralluma russelliana* plants are just two years old, and one is beginning to flower.



Figure 2, 3. The capitate inflorescence of *Caralluma russelliana* bears over 100 small flowers. They last about a week. Plants bloom several months a year.



Hotel Tucson City Center InnSuites Conference Suite Resort, located at 475 North Granada Avenue, Tucson, Arizona. This hotel is just off of Interstate 10 near St. Mary's Road in downtown Tucson, Arizona.

The Sonoran IX conference program presentations will focus on the family Opuntioideae. The Tucson area is blessed with a great climate and also has a number of native *Cylindropuntia* (cholla) and *Opuntia* (prickly pear). The number of *Opuntia* species grown within

Tucson and the surrounding areas would astound you! The TCSS has gained a great asset to growing and protecting these fantastic and amazing plants with an agreement with Pima County, Arizona to establish, manage and maintain a 9.4 acre garden in Tucson that we have named "Pima Prickly Park"! This park will be dedicated to the Opuntioideae but will also include many other varieties of cacti and other succulents.

The Opuntioideae subject will feature 5 excellent program presentations from some very well known professionals. Professionals for this conference will be, **Peter Felker**, presenting "Opuntia Hybridization and Selection for Choice Fruit Production," **Cheryl Green** and **David Ferguson**, who will be introducing the new *Opuntia* book with a special program presentation, "The Pricklypears of the United States and Northern Mexico," Lucas Majure from the University of Florida who will present his research and findings about "The Opuntias in the Eastern United States," **Raul Puente** from the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, Arizona who will give us an exceptional look at the "Spiny Giants: Arborescent Prickly Pears of Mexico and Guatemala," and **Jon Rebman** from the San Diego Natural History Museum who will share his expertise on "The Diversity of Baja California with an Emphasis on the Opuntioids." If you register for the conference you will get to attend all the speaker presentations as well as 4 workshops of your choosing from 8 excellent workshop selections. Our 8 workshop program leaders will be **Scott Calhoun**, **Norm Dennis**, **Mark Dimmitt**, **David Ferguson**, **Jim Hastings**, **Gene Joseph**, **Barry McCormick** and **Greg Starr**. Please visit our web site for more details about the workshops.

All registrants will also receive 2 buffet lunches and the banquet dinner on Saturday evening. Please see the event schedule on our web site for further details on the conference.

TCSS BOARD

Officers

President: Richard Wiedhopf opuntia@comcast.net

Vice President: Vonn Watkins
cactusdude1@yahoo.com

Secretary: Dave Moyer
davidandsusan_1@msn.com

Treasurer: David Newsom
dnewsom42@yahoo.com

Board of Directors: (Ending Dec. 31, 2012)

Chris Monrad
Dale Johnson
Keimpe Bronkhorst

(Ending Dec. 31, 2013)

Linda Bartlett
Cyndi Garrison
William (Bill) Hicks
Thomas Staudt

(Ending Dec. 31, 2014)

Ed Bartlett
Rob Romero
Joie Giunta
Bill Salisbury

CSSA Affiliate Rep:
Bill Holcombe (2013)

Cactus Rescue
cactusrescue@tucsoncactus.org

Cactus Rescue: Chris Monrad/Joe Frannea

Education:

John Swarbrick swarbrick@earthlink.net

Free Plants: Chris Monrad ferowiz@comcast.net

Librarian: Joie Giunta joietgo@yahoo.com

Prickly Park: Jessie Byrd jessie_byrd@hotmail.com

Programs: Vonn Watkins cactusdude1@yahoo.com

Refreshments: Patsy Frannea frannea@earthlink.net

Technology: Kevin Barber kevin@Barberit.com

Research: Doug Rowsell dougraz@msn.com

Editor: Karen Keller runbunny@cox.net

Deadline for copy: Thursday, May 17, 2012

TCSS Web Page:

www.tucsoncactus.org

Webmaster: Keimpe Bronkhorst

For additional information call: (520) 256-2447

Everyone is Welcome!

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

May Refreshments

Those with family names beginning with Q, R, S, T, U, V,
and W please bring your choice of refreshments to
the meeting. Your generous sharing will be greatly
appreciated and enjoyed!



Cacti Rescued 287 Rescues Accomplished

Please see our Website Calendar for the next
rescued cactus sale. They are scheduled at various
times during the year based on our inventory.

TCSS Club Members receive a 10% discount

May 2012

Saturday and Sunday April 28 and 29

Sonoran IX at the Hotel Tucson City Center InnSuites
Conference Suite Resort

Thursday, May 3, 2012 7:00pm

Monthly Meeting, "Natural History Observations of
Coryphantha robustispina, a jackrabbit cactus"
Presented by Bob Schmalzel

Tuesday, May 8, 2012 7:00pm - 9:00pm

Board meeting at the U of A College of Pharmacy



Acknowledgement of Contributions

The names below represent the Tucson Cactus & Succulent
Society members and friends whose donations helped make
this year a success. We extend our sincere thanks for your
support.

General Fund

Joyce Walsh
Douglas C. Jones
Alene Hall

Education

Bill Vicky Hall

Prickly Park

Desert Garden Club

