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# ❖ DESERT BREEZE ❖

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TUCSON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

OCTOBER 1995

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## OCTOBER ACTIVITY

OCTOBER 5

We will gather to view videos of convention presentations, which many of us who were THERE, missed!

SEPTEMBER 10 was our  
TCSS SILENT AUCTION -  
and figures are still coming in.

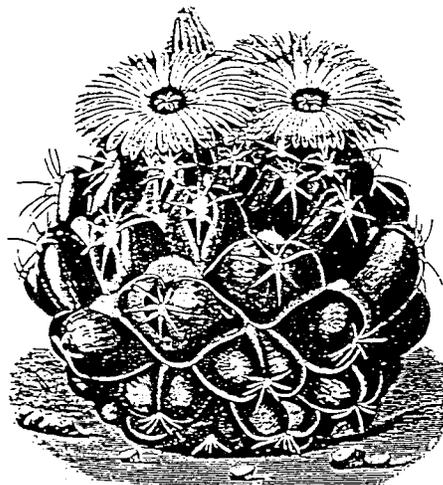
PLEASE,

I want everyone to feel free to submit problems, solutions, culture articles, cartoons, quips, etc.

JUST DO IT!!!

Every year at this time, we select officers for the coming year and three directors for 3 year terms. If you are interested in a nomination, share this information!

NOVEMBER 2nd WE VOTE !!!



## NEIGHBORS

by les & dale sloan

This month's neighbors are Cottontails and Jackrabbits. Long thought to be members of the order rodentia, they have now been placed in an order of their own called lagomorphs. Lagomorph can be loosely translated as "Kiss your ornamental cactus and succulents Good-bye". Well, actually it means "hare-form", or shaped like a hare. (Clever lot, those taxonomists!)

First of all, a bit of explanation... Jackrabbits aren't actually rabbits at all, but hares. Rabbits are born hairless and blind and don't leave the nest nearly as soon as hares which are born with fur and able to see, and can get around on their own rather quickly. The "jack" part of jackrabbit refers to the long, jack-ass ears.

Both groups are superb desert dwellers. The eyes, placed on the sides of the head, give peripheral vision the Shaq would kill for. And the ears make obviously excellent listening devices. But those enormous ears are also great radiators. As much as of one-third of a jackrabbit's body heat loss is through its ears. Yet the blood vessels into the ears can be constricted to slow heat loss in colder weather.

Arizona hosts two species of cottontails, the Desert Cottontail, *sylvilagus audobonii*, found in the Tucson area, and at higher elevations, the Eastern Cottontail, *sylvilagus floridanus*. While capable of a speedy getaway, rabbits usually resort to a zigzag run to confuse predators. And predators there are! For its size, the cottontail probably has more predators than any other animal -- to name a few, rattlesnakes and gopher snakes, hawks and eagles, owls, coyotes and gray foxes, bobcats, and, of course, humans.

continued on page 4

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# CSSA

FLASH111

CHUCK HANSON  
RESIGNS -  
RICHARD WIEDHOPF  
NOMINATED FOR  
CSSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS -

DECISION AT  
JANUARY CSSA MEETING



## POST-CONVENTION PONDERINGS

Where do we go from here?

We're famous! We can do  
ANYTHING WE WANT!!

But lets not let this go to our heads...How about a  
bus tour of local nurseries? We can visit them so  
easily, perhaps we never get around to it!

Share your thoughts with directors - numbers are  
listed on the cover.

## TCSS LIBRARY HOURS &amp; LOCATION

Plants For The Southwest  
9 - 5:30  
Wednesday - Saturday  
50 E. Blackledge  
628-8773

Librarian  
Myrtle Ethington  
887-4507

## DESERT BREEZE STAFF

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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS	LES & DALE SLOAN
	DAN BIRT
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*THORNY PROBLEMS.....  
POINTED ANSWERS*

This column is designed to help promote success with our plants. Everyone has a favorite fertilizer, trick, or tip they could share. What's yours? Call or write your editor by the 15th.

PROBLEM - How do I combat mealy bugs?

SOLUTION - Alcohol (any kind), rubbed on plants with a cotton swab, will kill mealy bugs. Repeat every 2-3 days for 7-10 days. Or, diazinon or malathion works if you have too big a problem to treat by hand.

PROBLEM - I have tried several Joshua Trees (*Yucca brevifolia*), but keep losing them. What's the secret?

SOLUTION - Large specimen plants are difficult to transplant successfully. Since they take a long time to die, it is often hard to pinpoint the cause. Propagated plants, although younger, are a better choice than legally collected ones, for that reason.

Tips from Gene Joseph, Plants for the Southwest.

## JERI's GEMS

Due to time constraints, figures for the Silent Auction are unavailable at press time.

As I write, days are JUST BEGINNING to cool off - I know I'm glad!! Maybe as I compose the next newsletter, I'll actually be wearing LONG SLEEVES?!?! By the way, anyone who is interested in being secretary/newsletter editor, please say so! No experience necessary - this is a learn -as- you -go experience! TCSS owns a computer, including windows and publisher software, to help get the job done.

FALL PLANT SALES  
OCTOBER 7 & 8

DESERT SURVIVORS  
1020 W 22  
SATURDAY 8 - 4  
SUNDAY 19 - 4

TUCSON BOTANICAL GARDENS  
2150 N ALVERNON  
SATURDAY 10 - 5  
SUNDAY 12 - 5

remember  
TCSS  
drag table



## neighbors continued

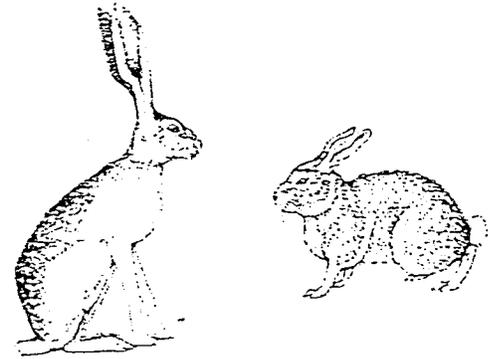
To compensate for this plethora of predators, the cottontail is profoundly prolific. Litters of 2-6 are common, four or more times a year, so 20 - 30 young a year is not unusual.

Jackrabbits, on the other hand, are a bit less fecund. Of our two principal species, one breeds annually and the other up three times a year. I say principal species because, depending on your source, you may find up to five species listed for the Arizona desert.

The two we'll consider are the black-tail (or black-tailed) jackrabbit, *lepus californicus*, and the antelope jackrabbit, *lepus alleni*. Of course, the black-tail has, yup, a black tail. But then, so does the antelope. The black-tail has black tips on its ears, and the antelope has a white rump patch, like a pronghorn antelope. Therefore, whether it's coming or going, you can pretty much tell which jackrabbit you're looking at. And when it is going, the antelope jackrabbit puts on quite a show. He uses the same zigzag movement as the cottontail when fleeing, but adds an interesting twist, literally. As it changes directions (from zig to zag), it uses muscles to pull the white fur on its hip around to the side facing the pursuer. This is called "flashing" and is used to confuse the pursuer. Considering that an antelope jack can hit 35 mph on open ground, such tactics might seem unnecessary. But the predators, especially coyotes and Harris hawks, have a strategy that meets with some success. They work in teams, eventually wearing the jack down. For most of us humans however, a fleeing jackrabbit just seems to lope along with a you'll-never-catch-me-in-a-million-years attitude.

In the course of my research, I was surprised to find one source which lists only 44 species of lagomorphs - rabbits and hares - in all the world. Considering the vast numbers of rodent species (over 260 species of squirrels alone) this seems rather small. But then, several individual species cover large ranges. The "eastern" cottontail covers much of North America and ranges down to Venezuela. The

"desert" cottontail ranges up into North Dakota and Montana. But then I suppose when your family is growing that fast, you need room to spread out. Now, if I could only get them to spread out of my garden.



This newsletter is published monthly except in summer. Submit material by the 15th of month preceding to Editor:

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TUCSON, AZ 85716 (520) 321-9484

I appreciate feedback (all kinds). Please help me to correct phone/address errors, also. Membership meetings (free and open to the public) are held at Tucson Botanical Gardens, 7:30 pm, first Thursday each month. No meeting in August. September & December are special - see current newsletter for details. Dues are \$20/family, \$15/individual, payable at meetings or send check to:

TUCSON CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY,  
c/o TUCSON BOTANICAL GARDENS  
2150 N ALVERNON WAY  
TUCSON, AZ 85712 326-9255

### PLEASE NOTE -

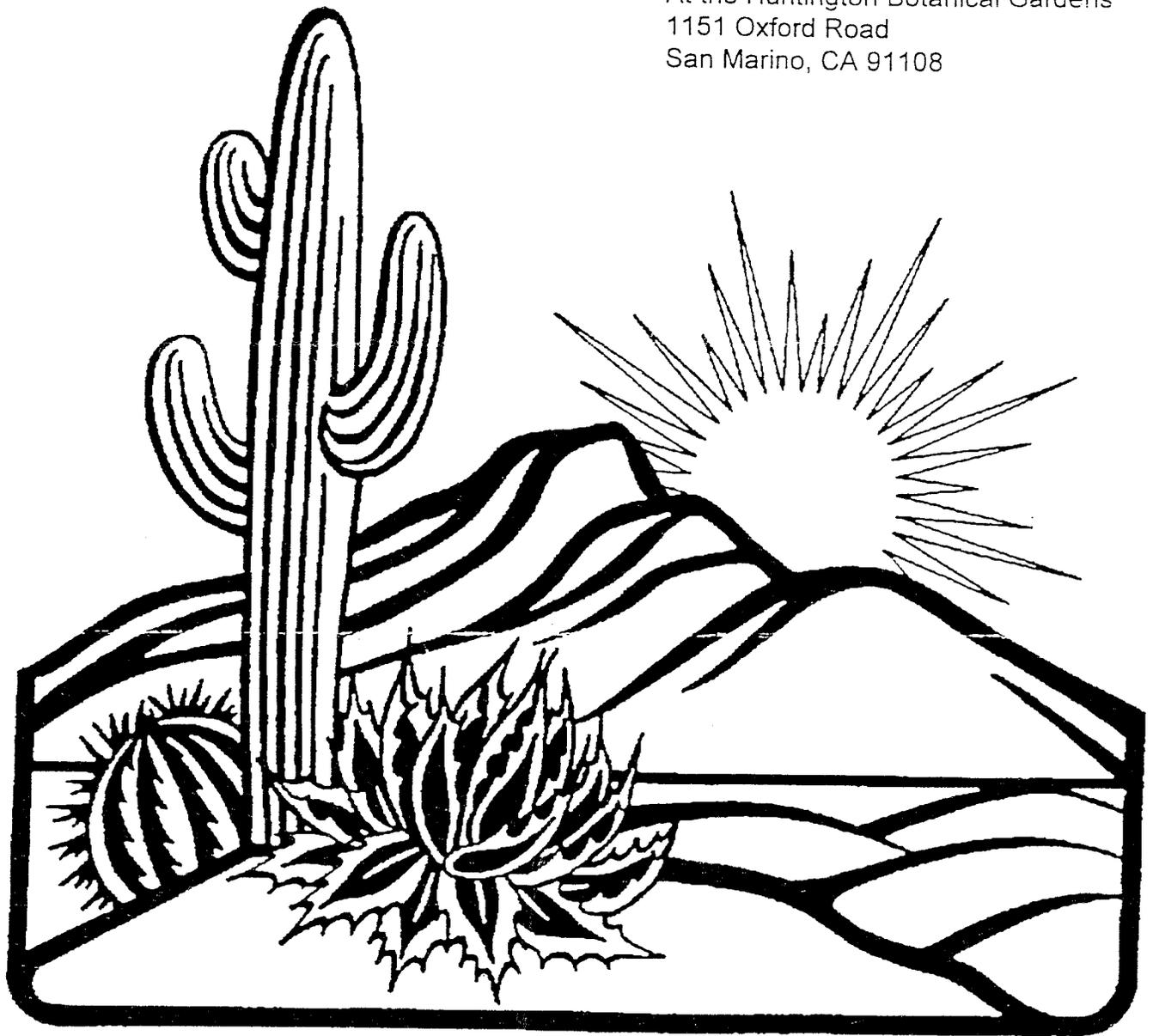
*If you ever wanted me to print something in  
DESERT BREEZE  
& give YOU credit,  
now is the time!  
Copy deadlines are  
October 15 and November 15.*

7  
San Gabriel Valley Cactus & Succulent Society Present the

*20th Annual*  
**Winter Show & Sale**

Saturday & Sunday, October 14th & 15th, 1995

10:30 am to 4:30 pm both days  
At the Huntington Botanical Gardens  
1151 Oxford Road  
San Marino, CA 91108



Information: David Tufenkian 818/794-3082

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