



# DESERT BREEZE

Newsletter of the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society

June 2019

Thursday, June 6, 2019 at 7:00pm

## All Hail the Queen: Rescuing the *Peniocereus greggii* var. *transmontanus*

Presented by Jessie Byrd

*Peniocereus greggii* has a lifestyle strategy unique from most cactus in the Tucson area that makes rescuing this plant from development sites a special challenge. Learn how to spot the plants in habitat, the correct approach to digging and how to care for wild plants in cultivation.

Jessie Byrd is the Native Plant Nursery Manager for Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, which specializes in growing and salvaging native plant species for public projects. Jessie believes that using native plants in urban landscapes can help encourage biodiversity while also significantly reducing long-term maintenance inputs. She earned a Master of Landscape Architecture from the University of Arizona and a BA in Biology from Bryn Mawr College. She is the president of the Tucson Chapter of the Arizona Native Plant Society and Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society board member.

This will be an excellent presentation that everyone will enjoy. Please come and make some new friends, talk with members and guests, have some fun, check out our library books and be sure to enjoy the great refreshments. Also, be sure to stay until the end of the meeting and get your free plant offered to you by the Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society.



### TCSS Program Presentation

Thursday, July 11, 2019 at 7:00pm

Chemicals from Cacti and Other Succulents

Presented by Dr. Art Friedman



Sky Islands Public High School • 6000 E. 14th St.

## June Meeting Refreshments

Those with family names beginning with X - G, please bring your choice of refreshments to the meeting. Your generous sharing will be greatly appreciated and enjoyed!



## President's Message

Chuck Hanson passed away in May.

I first met Chuck in the 70's. He was the curator of large animals at ASDM but more important he was growing and selling African succulents (Euphorbias, Aloes, Haworthias, Gasterias, all kinds of cactiforms and more) but no cacti. He founded Arid Lands Greenhouses in 1978 and ran it until 2007. He opened a retail shop on Tanque Verde Rd. real close

to where we were moving and that was great. I still have a few plants that I purchased in the early days of that store.

Chuck traveled extensively in Africa, Madagascar and other succulent habitats and used that experience to grow fabulous plants in the Tucson climate. A group of like-minded individuals formed the Xerophyte Society (I think that was the name) that was more plant science than hobbyist. He published a number of articles with members of that group especially on Adeniums.

In the early 1990s, Chuck became a board members of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) and bid for the 1995 Convention to be in Tucson. He convinced most of the Xerophyte Society to join TCCS including changing the name from The Tucson Cactus and Botanical Society to The

Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society. He served as TCSS president from 1993-95. Our paths crossed again with a phone call I received from Chuck urging me to take an active role in this upcoming convention since I was one of the few left from the 1977 CSSA convention in Tucson. I said NO! His response was simple and direct. I will bug you every day until you change your mind. Obviously, he prevailed. His determination was to make the 1995 convention the biggest, most interesting, educational, and profitable that the CSSA had ever had. It was that and more. I could write pages on what his ideas were and how they were carried out by the convention committee. It changed our society forever.

We were so pumped up after the convention that we had to do something and that is how the Sonoran Conference was started. Chuck left his leadership role in TCSS to me as vice-president at the time and also left the CSSA Board. He focused on his nursery business, and a life with his wife Karen. They transitioned to Iowa, Ecuador and Sonoita, Az and he expanded his interests to include cacti, orchids and other strange succulent plants.

Chuck was awarded Fellow status of CSSA which recognized his contributions to the world of Cacti and Succulents.

Thank you for your contributions and support of our hobby.

Dick Wiedhopf, President

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## Summer Internship

Pima County Native Plant Nursery and The Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society have joined together to provide a summer student internship program. The first intern is Rebecca Johnstone. Rebecca will be completing her Masters of Landscape Architecture at the University of Arizona in this next year. Upon completion of this summer program, TCSS will provide \$2,000 towards Rebecca's tuition.

Jessie Byrd, manager of the Pima County Native Plant Nursery will supervise her. Jessie and other NPN professional staff will provide "real world" experiences to support conservation and horticultural education. With the interactions and feedback, Rebecca will experience problem solving in a professional nursery.

There will also be activities with Pima Prickly Park and we are delighted to have Rebecca as our first intern.

## Educational Outreach Coordinator

Below are excerpts from Caryl's resignation letter to the Board. There is no way that we can express our appreciation and congratulation for the outstanding job except to say THANK YOU! I am sure that finding a new coordinator will demonstrate to Caryl how meaningful her contributions to TCSS education are.

"I have had the pleasure of serving the TCSS and Tucson Communities for over a decade. In that time, we have been able to work with Pima County Parks and Recreation, Pima

County School Superintendent's STEMAZing program and a multitude of local and southern Arizona schools.

Our focus in education is ..... education! We endeavor to promote conservation and the basics of cactus life and survival that will inspire students to become curious junior rangers.

Our best loved "lessons" include the Build-a-Cactus kit and for the past several years, our realia O&A table. We have completed over 200 events in these years that include:

- community, classroom and school events
- school garden grants
- SARSEF Science Fair and Innovators Night
- TCSS Novice events

We have engaged the participation of over 50 TCSS members as volunteers. This includes the training and communication to these valued volunteers. There is no question that the program must go on with newly selected leadership. TCSS Educational Outreach Coordinator will strive to meet the ongoing needs of our community.

TCSS President will secure a person for this position. Selection of a new coordinator is your opportunity to look for change and progress for our organization.

Sincerely,

Caryl Jones

## FROM THE FLORILEGIUM

Of all the naturalists who traveled with the United States–Mexican Boundary Survey expedition, George Thurber (1821–1890) was the only plant collector to botanize in western Sonora, and the only one to thoroughly explore and collect on the Gila River and the California desert. It was on the Gila River that he collected the previously unknown parasitic flower, *Pilosyles thurberi*, (described in last month’s “Desert Breeze”), and it was in northern Sonora that Thurber found the organ pipe cactus, *Stenocereus thurberi*.

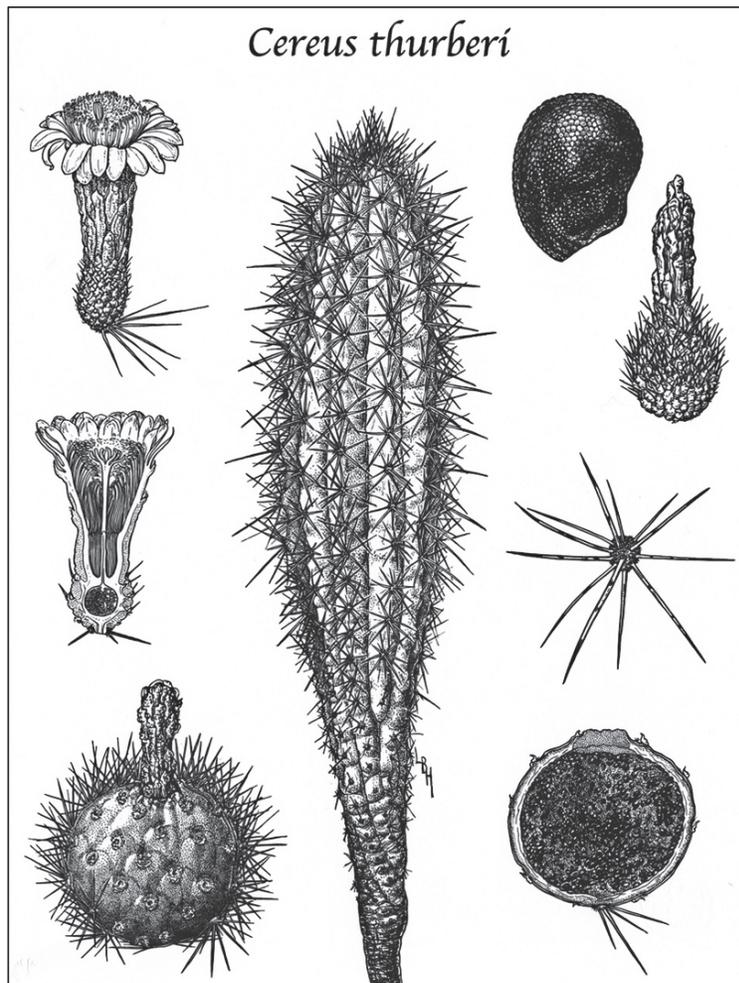
In May of 1851, Thurber’s party, led by the roving Boundary Commissioner John Russell Bartlett (“Desert Breeze” July 2014), passed through a steep canyon between the towns of Bachuachi and Arispe on the Sonora River. Here, in a pass that was “brilliant with the intensely scarlet flowers of a fine *Erythrina*”, they found a new species of *Cereus*, the organ pipe cactus. In 1854, this cactus was described by George Engelmann based solely on Thurber’s field notes and a single flower that he had collected. Engelmann named the cactus *Cereus thurberi*, to honor the collector. After enduring a few cumbersome renamings, the cactus was finally given the name *Stenocereus thurberi* by Franz Buxbaum, in 1961.

The illustration here is a lithograph by Edward Hamilton of a pen and ink drawing by Lucretia Hamilton of *Stenocereus thurberi*. Between 2008 and 2010 Edward Hamilton, Tamarind Master Printer and owner of Hamilton Press in Venice, California, made lithographs of 15 of the drawings that his mother had prepared for Lyman Benson’s *The Cacti of the United States and Canada*. Hamilton hand colored eight of the lithographs and donated a set to the Florilegium Program, in 2012. Hamilton also donated a set of the 15 uncolored lithographs to the University of Arizona Herbarium.

George Thurber’s interest in botany began when he worked as a pharmacist in Providence, R.I. This led him to make the acquaintance of the botanists John Torrey and Asa Gray, and when his interest in studying plants broadened into an ambition for botanical exploration, Torrey and Gray recommended him to serve on the Boundary Survey Commission. He was hired as botanist, quartermaster, and commissary, travelling primarily in the company of Commissioner Bartlett. Thurber amassed an impressive collection of new plants that Gray eagerly published, in 1854, as “*Plantae Novae Thurberinanae*”, knowing that the completion of the final boundary survey report with illustrations of the plants would require several more years (1859).

With his desire for exploration satisfied, Thurber went to New York where he was appointed to the U.S. Assay Office, and a few years later he lectured on botany at the Cooper Union and the New York College of Pharmacy. In 1859, Thurber was hired as professor of botany and horticulture at the Michigan Agricultural College, becoming the country’s first professor of horticulture. Four years later, the Orange Judd Company hired Thurber as editor and contributor for the “*American Agriculturist*”, a Boston periodical that occupied him for the next twenty-two years.

Thurber wrote on a variety of topics for the magazine. His recurring columns included “The Doctor’s Talks”, instructional articles for children on a wide variety of scientific subjects; and “Humbug”, a very popular series intended to debunk the claims



*Stenocereus thurberi*, Organ pipe cactus

© 2009 Edward Hamilton: lithograph prepared from a pen and ink drawing by Lucretia B. Hamilton, ca. 1982

of hucksters and charlatans, whether medical or agricultural. Near the end of his life, his column “Notes from the Pines” described his life at his home on the Passaic River in New Jersey where he maintained a wild garden and encouraged his readers to do likewise. He made revisions to several important horticultural publications, and, for the Orange Judd Company, he edited and wrote books on horticulture and agriculture.

Graminology was Thurber’s particular field of expertise, and he worked for many years on a monograph of American grasses. Unfortunately, he was unable to complete the project in his lifetime. Upon his death, Charles Sprague Sargent wrote in “*Garden and Forest*” magazine that Thurber had been the most accomplished horticultural writer that America had produced. He continued, “Dr. Thurber was a man of great knowledge and of the broadest sympathies, kind, faithful and true, generous to a fault, simple in the ways of the world, and always more interested in the welfare of others than in advancing his own interests.”

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**Deadline for newsletter text or photos:  
Thursday, June 27, 2019**

**TCSS Web Page:**

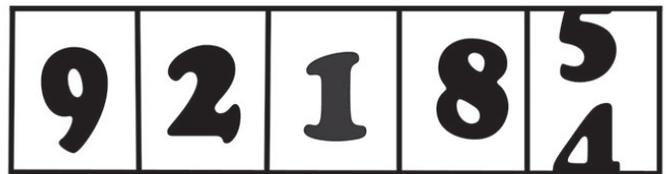
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**For additional information call: (520) 256-2447**

**Everyone is Welcome!**

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



**Cacti Rescued - Since 1999**  
**416 Rescues - 32,866 Volunteer Hours** (updated 12/22/18)

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**

We need your "Eyes and Ears" to help us find new Cactus Rescue sites. Please email us as much information as you can from new project signs or from other sources to **Site@TucsonCactus.org**. Attach a photo of the sign if you can. Note, we do not remove plants from residences.

## June 2019

**Thursday, June 6, 2019 at 7:00pm**

All Hail the Queen: Rescuing the Peniocereus greggii var. transmontanus  
Presented by Jessie Byrd

**Tuesday, June 11, 2019 at 7:00 pm**

Board meeting, Ward 3 Council office at  
1510 E Grant Rd. Tucson, AZ

## 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.

### Unrestricted General Fund

Noe' Mayotte & Family

Sandi Kilkuts & Family

### Pima Prickly Park

William (Wild Bill) & Barbara Pickett

Tereasa Corcoran

## July Meeting Announcement

Because the first Thursday is July 4, the actual date for our July meeting will be moved to Thursday, July 11, 2019