



Central Spine

NEWSLETTER OF THE
CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2019



Our featured plant of the month is Ferocactus. This F. wislizeni is in spectacular bloom. In his informative article in this issue, Jim Elliott tells us what Feros can take full sun and which ones need afternoon shade. Photo by Sue Hakala.

Join Scott on February 24, at 2 p.m. at the Scottsdale Public Library for our program. Do not bring plants.

Last spring, I had the chance to tour the Baja California peninsula with Guillermo Rivera of Plant Expeditions and 10 other plant enthusiasts. We were on the road for over two weeks and covered the entire length of Baja from Tijuana to Cabo San Lucas. We traveled in a large van and made several stops along the way each day to see cacti and succulents, as well as other plants.

Baja California has a very large percentage of endemic and near endemic plants, one of the largest in the world. Many species of cacti and succulents are found nowhere else, or in limited areas on the Mexican mainland. This is due to its long isolation from the



rest of Mexico, allowing species to develop independently from their mainland relatives. A more extreme comparison would be the island of Madagascar.

The climate ranges from coastal Mediterranean in the north, to large areas dominated by fog, to hot dry deserts which are a continuation of

our Sonoran Desert. The climate at the very southern end is considered tropical, being bisected by the Tropic of Cancer. Many areas in the north were windy, being quite chilly in the evenings, while in the south the days were hot and humid with little breeze.

The landscape of Baja can seem much like our desert here, but with different dominant plants. Cardons and organ pipes replace saguaros, and in some areas boojums can extend as far as the eye can see. In other places, the landscape takes on a stranger look with lichen covering the plants in the fog zones, and *Jatrophas*, *Pachycormus*, *Fouquierias*, and *Burseras* growing in twisted shapes taking on a bonsai appearance.

MEETING DIRECTIONS: Be sure to follow the excellent map Nick Diomedede put together for us which was distributed at the January meeting. There is street construction around the library. Take the Second Street ramp to the lower level, turn right and go in the entrance that leads to the library Auditorium. There will be signs directing you.



LIBRARY BOOK RETURN

By Co-Librarians Nancy Mumpton and Wendy Barrett

Due to the February and March club meetings being held in the auditorium at the Scottsdale Public Library, we will not be displaying and checking out library books. If you have books to return, we WILL have a marked bin available for you to return them. Thank you for your cooperation.

The Ed Group is excitedly working on several activities with a focus on improving new member retention, and increasing general plant knowledge among our membership.

In November, we hosted our first new Member Meet and Greet in Sue Hakala's garden. The goal of this event was to provide new CACSS members with a pressure-free environment to ask questions and make meaningful connections with more experienced members. The event was a success with 12 new members in attendance. Everyone left with their questions answered, and plenty of free plants! We are currently planning an additional Meet and Greet event in March and April.

The Plant of the Month program is also well under way. For each month in which a regular meeting is planned, the Education Group will focus on one cactus or succulent genus. We will be providing an informative color handout, newsletter article(s), example plants at the meeting, and Facebook/Instagram posts. When possible, we will coordinate with that month's speaker. If you have a plant request, please let us know!

INSTAGRAM Did you know that in addition to an information filled website and a conversation packed Facebook page, CACSS also has an Instagram account? Check us out at @centralarizonacactus for announcements, photos and more. Tag us in your cactus and succulent related post so we can all enjoy photos from your latest project, adventure or plant acquisitions.

DESERT BOTANICAL GARDEN CLASSES

Register at 480-481-8171 or

dbg.org/dls

- *Agave* and *Yucca* in the Landscape, April 17, members: \$30/non-members: \$38
- Creating Shade, May 1, \$30/\$38
- Hot Pots, May 11, \$89/\$111
- Succulent Monogram Wreath, April 6, \$78/\$98
- Strange Succulents for Unique Gardens, April 18, \$30/\$38

Be sure to visit CACSS on the web at:
centralarizonacactus.org the Society's website
Facebook Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society
CACSS Swap and Shop, a place to connect with members

PEG POINTS: The Latest from the Propagation Education Group Photos and Text by Tristan Davis

The January 12, 2019, PEG meeting was a huge success! Over 100 plants of over 50 species were given away. This year, attendees not only learned about *Agaves*, but were introduced to *Agave* relatives. This included some little known species that we encourage others to give a try when planning landscapes or the next potted beauty.



Tristan Davis addresses the PEG Group. Attendees with plants below.

In addition to the genus, *Agave*, we discussed and had a show and tell of plants of the genera *Furcraea*, *Beschorneria*, *Manfreda*, *Polianthes*, *Yucca*, *Hesperoyucca*, *Hesperaloe*, *Beaucarnea*, *Calibanus*, *Nolina*, and *Dasylyrion*. I really enjoyed sharing information on these poorly known gems, and hearing from many in attendance that they hadn't even known these beauties existed before the PEG meeting.

In addition to the numerous *Agaves* given away, we also had members-only drawings for eight special give-aways: *Beaucarnea stricta*, *Furcraea foetida*, *Hesperoyucca whipplei*, *Leuchtenbergia princeps*, *Manfreda sileri*, *Hesperaloe tenuifolia*, the exquisite *Agave pelona*, and the much sought after *Agave albopilosa*.

After the meeting, we did a quick tour of some of the *Agaves* and relatives in the garden, including a gorgeous *Furcraea cahum* that was in the middle of blooming.

On top of all this, we had record attendance with 52 enthusiasts showing up for the meeting. We have room for plenty more, so I hope everyone that didn't make it to this meeting can make it to the next one. I'm working on a very special topic for our March meeting, so stay tuned!



I look forward to our attendance at PEG meetings continuing to grow in 2019. See you there!

The genus *Ferocactus* has something for everybody. For me, it is the knowledge that I am not the only thing in the desert during late summer. For some people, it can be enjoyment of the very large members of the genus, such as *F. diguetii*, *F. emoryi* and *F. wislizeni*. While it can be a miserable time of the year, it tends to secure exclusive time to enjoy the plants. Others will like the genus members that are excruciatingly slow—*F. chrysacanthus* comes to mind—so it will not outgrow the space of potted collections.



Ferocactus acanthodes with pink spines.

Those of us who grow cactus in the ground really appreciate the Feros that take full sun, headed up by our familiar fish hook barrel *F. wislizeni*, and several varieties of the fire barrels like *F. acanthodes*. If any of these are given several months to acclimate, they are quite sun hardy. They have the additional grace of being frost hardy, so they give you a really carefree cactus. Add in the reliable flowering of every plant that attains soccer ball size, and they are indeed jewels in a desert setting.

My personal favorite is the fish hook barrel (*F. wislizeni*) which was part of my neighborhood growing up in NW Tucson. They are substantial, even becoming enormous given enough time (decades). I have seen several approaching eight feet tall. Surprisingly, the biggest threat for these giants (other than deranged humans) are tiny ground squirrels.

The squirrels value the fruit of the barrel, but really treasure the sanctuary they provide for their dens. These barrels often grow in rather flat lands without rocky soils, so the squirrels have very few other truly secure sites to dig their bolt holes. It takes a very determined coyote, badger, etc. to dig them out from under a large barrel cactus. So long as the squirrel lives, the relationship is on firm ground. However, once the tenant becomes someone's dinner, the abandoned burrow becomes a liability to the host cactus. Inevitably, the soil loosens becoming successively weaker, and begins to fall into the open spaces. With one final heavy rain, the burrow dissolves and ceases to

hold up the plant. Thus, an animal weighing a few ounces will cause the huge barrel to topple after standing its ground for decades.

Another surprising feature of the barrels I grew up with is their stealth qualities. Bursage is often the dominant plant in these rich deserts, and somehow a 2 foot barrel rather thoroughly hides behind a 2 foot bursage! Unlike hedgehogs that have rather bright spination, the demure barrel just stays still, and I have walked right by them many times.



Sue Hakala with Ferocactus acanthodes.

With blooms ranging from yellow through orange to red, Feros offer a wide palette for the garden. These cactus are very unforgiving with their hooked spination, so do not place them immediately adjacent to traffic areas. The pollinated blooms will eventually ripen and grow to form a second bouquet of bright yellow fruit. Don't be in a hurry to pick them off so you can enjoy their 'second bloom' all winter.

The species grouped into fire barrels are usually smaller in size, but make up for it with brilliant spines of red or yellow. They are among the hardiest of our cactus, taking sun and frost with equal ease. They tend to grow in rockier areas. I often see them blazing away in their full red glory on bare rocks in western Arizona, with no shade in sight. Their blooms are less variable being generally yellow, or yellow, or more yellow!

I was startled when a fire barrel I received from Damon Billings' collection bloomed a light green. Wow! What happened there? I called Damon and found out it was from the Anza Borrego area of California. Further research revealed that fire barrels in California normally bloom green, and transition to yellow as the family moved east to Arizona. I am continually humbled by my lack of knowledge. Actually, it was far more exciting when I had a rarity instead of just a lack of knowledge. Sometimes ignorance is a good thing.

The *Ferocactus* family has a lot of species that are worth growing in spite of needing shade to some degree. I would recommend *F. chrysacanthus*, in either its red or gold spination, as an exciting plant that you can enjoy for years and years. My experience is that they do better in a pot than in the ground.

F. latispinus is another smallish barrel that blooms purple or white and can be happy in a pot for a long time. The really massive wide spination is sensational as an added bonus.

F. macrodiscus has a beautiful pink bloom, but is a vexing species for me. I have tried to transition several to the ground with no success. They intrigue me so much that I always buy another when the club takes a buying trip and try, try again.



Ferocactus latispinus

I love extreme spination so *F. emoryi*, var. *rectispinus* is a favorite. For twisted spines, I have nothing but praise for *F. acanthodes* var. *tortulospinus*.

A very unusual clumping barrel is the *F. robustus*. It does require shade here in our climate, but is not difficult to culture. The dark green skin is quite glossy, and can become an enormously handsome specimen. The orange blooms are rather small, but by that time you are in love with the parent plant, so who cares.

Ferocactus are becoming more and more available from local nurseries, or from club members who will be glad to help a new collector become addicted. Don't worry about getting them all since there are several species I have never seen, let alone owned; *F. haematacanthus* for example. Some of the rarer species are disturbingly mediocre in appearance, so until you become rabid about collecting, it will not matter. It is always nice to have something more to add to your collection, so *Ferocactus* will give you several challenges.

While many of the CACSS library's general books on cacti and succulents have sections on *Ferocactus*, here are two specifically on this genus:

- *Genus Ferocactus: Taxonomy & Ecology: Explorations in the USA and Mexico* by George Lindsay
- *Ferocactus* by John W. Pilbeam and Derek Bowdery

On the club website, find this article under Newsletters by month and year: *Saga of Ferocactus Acanthodes* by Pearl S. Lemkull, 4/87

Pumice is a form of volcanic rock. As a growing medium, it has several key advantages for growing cactus and succulent plants: drainage, aeration, nutrient holding capacity, weight, stability, and durability. It is so important to your success as a grower that our club buys it in bulk. Retail nurseries, like Berridge, sell it for around \$20 a gallon. We sell it for \$5 for large grind pumice and \$6 for small grind per 5 gallon bucket. Quite a savings!

The idea of providing a wholesale source of pumice for the members of CACSS originated with Lee Brownson, then the director of the Wallace Desert Gardens. At the time, he worked with the only local source of pumice available, the Arizona Mining Company in Flagstaff who operated the White Vulcan Mine. They could provide what was needed inexpensively. The mine closed in 2001 due to a conflict involving the mine, Native Americans and the U.S. Forest Service.

After losing the local supplier, Lee could still get pumice, but had to bring it in by the truckload. That created the need for a larger storage space. To solve that problem, each load was split.

Half of the load went to the Wallace Gardens and Lee, while three others claimed the other half and stored it on the Brownson property. Club members came to Lee's house to purchase the pumice in five gallon buckets. Or sometimes, Lee brought the pumice to club meetings for sale in five pound bags.

Lee recognized the value of using pumice as a soil amendment, and for several years, made it possible for the club to take advantage of this supply. Lee showed the group how the bulk buying idea could work. When asked if he had a favorite soil recipe, he said, "I mix 50% pumice with 50% good dirt."

After providing the service for several years, another location was found in a residential area north of Camelback Road at the home of Chris and Ingrid Swenson, longtime members of the club. They offered an unused half-acre of their property to the club, but with the requirement that a fence be built to hide the pumice pile. It was not an easy feat to deliver. Eighty-foot trucks had to back into the space to offload. Pumice then was sold to club members at \$5 for a 5 gallon bucket.

Gard Roper has taken over management of the pumice supply, and has made the pumice available to club members multiple times a year for the last five years. He has given of his time to make the pumice accessible, and he makes sure that we continue to locate and provide pumice at the best price for the best product. He is looking for an apprentice to work with him who will eventually take over the pile tasks. Contact him at 602-996-9745 to become involved.

When the Swensons sold the house, a new location again had to be found. The pumice pile found a new home on the property of Jeff Miller, a longtime member of the club who had purchased a wholesale nursery. He now provides space for the delivery, storage and disbursal of the pumice.

Eighty-foot semi-trucks carrying sixty cubic yards deliver pumice from two locations. One pumice source in California provides us with a small grind pumice, good for small pots, at \$6 per 5 gallon bucket. The fine grind works better for small pots while the large grind works well in larger pots. Gard's recipe for soil success is equal parts pumice and Black Gold Cactus Mix, available at Ace Hardware.

Each time the pile is open, Gard estimates that 12-25 club members take advantage of the product. After material cost, a small profit is turned over to the club each year. Our members enjoy the benefit of a valuable resource at a wholesale price, thanks to the unselfish efforts of Gard and Jeff.

Our club benefited from advice of several Tucson nurserymen on product and suppliers: Dr. Mark Dimmitt, a Fellow of CSSA, retired director of Natural History in the Center for Sonoran Desert Studies at the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum; Dr. Danny Bach, owner of Bach's Greenhouse Cactus Nursery; and Gene Joseph, owner of Plants of the Southwest. Club members Doug Dawson and Sue Hakala encouraged (say nagged) Gard to find a source for small pumice, with Doug locating the California source.

The history of the pumice pile has been the history of hardworking club members pursuing an idea that benefits us all.

So what lies ahead? The idea to provide club members with material at 60% + below retail cost, like a sort of buyer's club, has proven successful, and could be expanded with the help of others. Jeff Miller proposes we add coir, a ground up coconut fiber used as a soil additive, while Lee Brownson suggests we add a good quality shade cloth. Stay tuned, new ideas can germinate...

To learn more about pumice, coir and potting soil, visit the club website, choose the Newsletter tab, then Newsletters Index, then the Miscellaneous tab, and scroll down to potting soil. Find the articles by month and year under the newsletters heading.

- *Coir (Coconut Husk Fiber): A Universal Potting Medium?* by Mark Dimmitt, 7/13
- *Perfect Potting Mix for Cacti and Succulents* by Tom Gatz, 10/08
- *Pots and Potting Mix* by Leo Martin, 3/16
- *Pumice* by Sue Hakala, 2/17
- *Repotting Cactus and Succulents* by Jim Oravetz, 7/90
- *So Much for Peat Moss and Watering* (no author), 10/94, 4/91
- *Soil* by Sue Hakala, 3/16

In less than two months, Dorrance Hall will be full of our members' amazing, unique and (sometimes) bizarre plants. Visitors will get to view all our wonderful plants and see a diversity that they might never have known existed. Visitors can look to these plants and the growers for inspiration and motivation for their own collections.

The 2019 CACSS Show and Sale will be held in Dorrance Hall and Boppart Courtyard on April 5, 6, and 7. Daily event times are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday and Saturday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.



Trophy winners from the 2018 show. Photo by Wendy Barrett.

Plants need to be brought to Dorrance Hall on Wednesday, April 3, between 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. (firm—last month's time was incorrect) for entry and staging. Judging takes place on Thursday, April 4, with the Show and Sale open to the public Friday, April 5 through Sunday, April 7. Our event concludes Sunday, April 7 at 4 p.m., at which time show plants and educational exhibits may be removed.

Ribbons are awarded within each division and plants are exhibited in divisions based on the number of blue first place ribbons previously awarded. Exhibitors will register as Junior Novice, Novice, Advanced, or Master division, and are judged within the same division and at the same level.

- Junior Novice (green entry cards): to age 18
- Novice (yellow entry cards): 0 – 24 first place ribbons
- Advanced (pink entry cards): 25 – 99 first place ribbons
- Master (white entry cards): 100 or more first place ribbons

A non-competitive exhibition is also an option for those wishing to share their plants without having them judged. Just let us know when you register for an exhibition number.

Registration for exhibition number and exhibition cards can be done at the upcoming February or March CACSS meetings, or contact Jeanne or Chuck Brush at 480-982-3899, or by email: jabmom2@hotmail.com.

Remember, both sections of exhibitor cards must be filled out completely with your name, exhibition number and plant name. If you are unsure of the plant name, leave it blank. Plant experts and references will be available Wednesday to assist you with identifying your plants and the category they are to be placed in.

Education is an important part of our society's mission. We would love to have members present educational displays showcasing cacti and succulents. This would be an ideal way to show off your creativity and passion. While it does take work, it is fun, and always a betterment for our society.

Our annual CACSS Show and Sale is a large undertaking that could not exist without the hundreds of volunteer hours needed to make this an extraordinary and successful event each year. Volunteering is a great opportunity to get to know your fellow club members, and learn more about the plants we love. Volunteer positions are still available and can be found at: <https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/2623229/false#/invitation>. Positions include cashiers, assistant cashiers, credit card sale operators, educators, floaters, greeters, holding area monitors, and potting up purchases. Lunch will be served to all volunteers Friday, Saturday and Sunday. This event takes a large community effort. If you volunteer your time, we ask that you please fully honor your commitment. If you do not see an opportunity listed, please contact Tom or Nick (see below) to share where you can assist.

Some final notes:

- We are asking members who have won trophies in 2018 to please return them. They can be brought to either the February or March CACSS meetings, or contact Lois Schneberger at 480-946-8373 to make other arrangements.
- Please remember the Garden's policy with regard to dogs is: "Pets and therapy animals are not permitted in the Garden. Certified service dogs only." The DBG rangers will be enforcing this rule.
- We are always in need of newspaper and various size boxes for customers to transport their plants home. If you can start collecting boxes, it will be much appreciated. You can bring them in anytime during the setup or the show.
- And, as always, if you have any questions, please reach out to the co-chairs: Thom Young (c) 480-460-0782 | te.77@q.com or Nick Diomede (c) 602-772-8282 | nich.diomede@gmail.com. If we cannot answer them, we will get you in touch with someone who can.

The Cochimí were the native inhabitants of central Baja California from El Rosario in the north to San Javier in the south. They were simple hunter-gatherers with no knowledge of agriculture or metallurgy. They may have learned the technique of pottery-making before the arrival of the Spanish, but their culture was simple, conforming to their arid environment and nomadic lifestyle. They relied on fishing in the coastal areas and gathering fruits, including cactus and seeds, for survival in other areas.



Cochimi territory in Baja.

Colonization of the Baja Peninsula began in the early 17th Century with arrival of Sebastián Vizcaíno, exploring the present-day site of Cabo San Lucas where he faced a force of 800 native warriors. Vizcaíno did manage to build a fort at La Paz, but after a skirmish with the local natives, the post had to be abandoned. Other attempts to establish settlements at La Paz and at San Bruno, north of Loreto, failed due to lack of resources and unreliable supplies from the mainland.

In 1697, Jesuit missionaries began establishing missions, eventually building 16 throughout the length of the Baja Peninsula. To make the missions successful, the natives had to be concentrated in rancherías located near the missions. This made the aboriginal groups susceptible to smallpox, typhus, measles, and other infectious Old World diseases. By 1767, with the expulsion of the Jesuits and the subsequent occupation by the Dominicans, the indigenous populations had declined past the point of recovery.

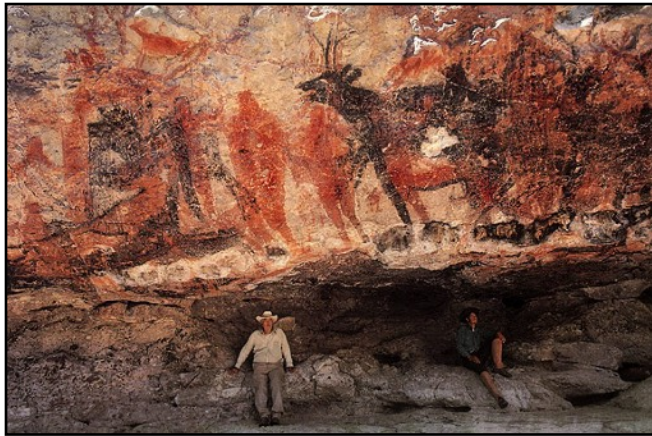
The vast majority of Baja Indians have disappeared, and those that have survived in the north are represented by as few as a dozen individuals or as many as a few hundred. By the time of the 1900 census, people speaking indigenous languages had dropped to 1,111. Those tribes speaking the language of the Yuman linguistic family, including the Cochimí whose ancestors had migrated to the Baja Peninsula thousands of years ago, had almost disappeared by the 2000 census. Most of the Cochimí speakers live in Ensenada, Mexicali and Tecate, having lost their culture over a hundred years ago.

In the central mountains of the Baja Peninsula lies the Great Mural region, containing the rock paintings of Sierra de San Francisco, a UNESCO World Heritage site. These pictographs and petroglyphs lie within the historic territory

of the Cochimí, and the late prehistoric Comondú Complex, being dated as long ago as 7,500 years. It is not known if the ancestors of the Cochimí were responsible for the paintings because they denied it to eighteenth-century Jesuit missionaries. The French naturalist, Leon Diguét, made the first studies of the area between 1889 and 1913.



The Viscaíno Biosphere Reserve, created in 1988, is the largest wildlife refuge in Mexico and covers over 9,625 square miles. The preserve is named after Sebastián Viscaíno, and was one of the areas inhabited by the Cochimí. The *Mammillaria* subgenus *Cochemiea* is named after these ancient people. *Ferocactus diguetii* is named after Leon Diguét.



Cochimi wall art.



Mammillaria cochemiea maritima by Peter Breslin.



My favorite tool is an old shower curtain that I use when doing yard work. It has held piles of soil, rocks, branches that have been trimmed, along with plants that are ready for planting. It helps keep the area where I'm working organized and tidy.

FOUR DESERTS AND THEIR PLANTS

By Sue Hakala

Can you match the four Arizona deserts with their indicator plant? Match left column to the correct plant in the right column. Answers are found in the newsletter.

1. Sonoran
2. Great Basin
3. Mojave
4. Chihuahua

- A. *Agave lechuguilla*
- B. *Yucca brevifolia*
- C. *Carnegiea gigantea*
- D. *Artemisia tridentata*



Above *Artemisia tridentata*, right *Yucca brevifolia*.



The Education Group has requested a regular column in the newsletter featuring growing tips for beginners. This is the first. If you have any suggestions for topics, please forward them to the editor at CACSScentralspine@gmail.com.

TIPS

- Growing in the Sonoran Desert is like growing plants nowhere else. No matter how great or experienced a gardener you might have been in some other part of the country, it's different here. Ask for help before you buy and plant. This means no impulse buying.
- Know the micro environments in your yard when planting landscape plants. Know where the coldest/hottest places are so you can plant appropriately. Don't place a plant that can only tolerate lows of 50F in a place in your yard that can get to 30F. Move a thermometer around the yard throughout the the year, and keep notes. Do research to find out temperature tolerances of plants you are considering buying. There are plenty of websites that can help.
- If planting in the blazing afternoon sun, look to Sonoran Desert plants. Know that otherwise, the plant probably needs some filtered afternoon shade. Stand in the sun for a half an hour in July and see if you would agree.
- Learn to water landscape plants slowly and deeply, say once month for 40 minutes in the hot months, if you don't get rain. This is to help the roots grow deep and away from the hot upper regions of the soil.
- Most importantly, plant the right plant in the right place and everyone will be happy.

Read articles that have been in the CACSS *Central Spine* newsletter since the 1970's that give advice about growing in the low desert. They will help you be a better grower. Visit the club website, choose Newsletters, the Newsletter Index, then choose the Miscellaneous index. There is a big section for beginners. Scroll through the entire index and find other articles of interest. The indexes capture the brain trust of members past and current. Enjoy!

Answers Desert and Plants

1. C.

2. D.

3. B.

4. A.

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The New Year brought a multitude of posts and an increase of 64 members for January. Arizona members are already planning for spring while those in colder climates are waiting for the snow to subside.



Aloe elegans by Cricket Caires-Peterson.

Popular posts:

- It's not too early to sign up to volunteer for the 2019 CACSS Show and Sale in April. Volunteers are still needed! What a great way to meet new people, learn about cactus and succulents, support our society, and see some amazing plants and vendors.

- If you haven't already seen it, do yourself a favor and check out Tristan Davis' post of January 12, *Agave Extravaganza 2019*, by the PEG group. Tristan shared a wonderful photo album (PEG *Agaves*) of 44 mature *Agave* including identification. This year's event had a record 52 attendees.

- Photos and positive comments were shared from the Kelly Griffin lecture on *Copiapoa*. Many attendees went home with plants from the silent auction.

- “What causes saguaro arms to turn up or down and get into such crazy shapes?” Mariana Dale, a reporter

from KJZZ, posed this question to FB members. Several members offered information. A later post by Mariana included a link to her informative article, “Q & AZ: What Shapes Saguaro Cacti?”

- Saguaros are always a popular topic of discussion. People cannot get enough of these icons of the desert. Saguaro questions this month included, “Should I move my saguaro?” to “Do you need a permit to move a saguaro from a private residence?”
- My favorite posts this month were photos of cactus in habitat. Hikers shared photos from: Demmeron Valley UT; Tonto National Forest; Tecate, MX; Catalina

Mountains; Carefree; Superstition Mountains; and McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Time to get off the couch and put on your hiking boots!

- Eric Lundberg's post on January 9 included photos of two frost sensitive succulents, each covered with different types of frost cover. One cover was made of heavier material but did not reach completely to the ground resulting in frost damage to the plant. An "excellent demonstration of how frost protection coverings are less about materials and more about trapping heat radiating from the ground."
- Twenty-five requests were made for plant identification.
- Several posts were made in the category, "What's wrong with my plant?" Discussions followed with instructions on how to deal with cochineal scale, rust, fungal diseases, and *Aloe* cancer.
- Chris Ginkel posted a photo January 22 of a lovely variegated *Agave parryi* v. *truncata*. This led to discussion about many beautiful and rare cultivars dropping in price and becoming more available in nurseries. Keep checking those big box stores. You never know what you might find!

Each month a photo of a cactus and succulent posted by CACSS FB members is selected.

The CACSS FB Cactus of the Month, *Borzicactus/Loxanthocereus hoxeyi*, was taken by Jose Quinonez and posted January 9. Spectacular!

Succulent of the month was posted by Cricket Caires-Peterson on January 7 of her *Aloe elegans*.

The post with the Most Likes (336) and Shared by 181 members was "Barrel Cactus Carding in Mexico" posted by Ryan Bjornstad.

Thank you for sharing your lovely photos.

February should bring the beginning of a wonderful bloom season!

You can join the CACSS FB page at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cacss2/>



Borzicactus/Loxanthocereus hoxeyi by Jose Quinonez.