



Central Spine

Newsletter of the Central Arizona Cactus and Succulent Society



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Plants from the collection at Bach's Greenhouse Cactus Nursery by Nick Diomede.

CENTRAL ARIZONA CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY FEBRUARY MEGA AUCTION

Sunday, February 27, 2022

Papago Buttes Church of the Brethren

2450 N. 64th Street

Scottsdale, AZ 85257

Plant Drop off: 1:30 p.m.–2 p.m. | Auction: 2-4 p.m.

This event will take the place of our February general meeting.

All activities will be held outdoors in the church courtyard. Be prepared for the day's weather.

We will be limiting this event to current CACSS members. All participants must be wearing their CACSS badge. Masks will be required. A greeter will be stationed in the courtyard to provide you with a bidding number. You will use this number in place of your name when placing bids during the silent auction. We request you bring something to write with.

There is no sign up for this event and the attendance number will not be limited.

Please do not linger in front of any plants. After placing your bid, please keep moving so that others may come and look at the plants and maintain a respectable social distance. You may return to check on your bid after exiting the bidding area.

After the auction ends, please wait until our volunteers use a highlight marker to indicate the winner. You may then collect your plant and bid sheet and proceed to the cashier. Credit/debit cards will be the preferred method of payment, however cash and checks will be accepted.

We need donations, tables and volunteers to make this a successful event. Donations should be healthy cactus and succulents, art, books, supplies, or any other cactus and succulent related items. We have to supply our own tables for this event. Any that you can bring prior to the auction starting will be greatly appreciated.

Volunteers are needed to help with setup, cleanup and using a highlight marker to indicate the winning bidders on bid sheets.

Please remember that church services will be ending as we start to set up the auction at 1:30 in the courtyard. We need to be respectful to them and maintain social distance.

Fundraisers such as this one help us continue with our purpose.

Plants are so numerous on the planet, we've simply given up trying to coin common names for most of them. This is especially true for succulents. Very few cacti and succulents have well-established accurate common names. Where names of hummingbirds have common names like Jewelfront, Brilliant, Emerald, Sapphire, and Sungem, in the succulent world, we typically stick to the Latin names, which includes a genus and a species.

Most people don't realize, however, that it takes some work to even come up with these Latin names. There are specific rules surrounding a valid name for a plant, governed by the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature (ICBN). There's even a committee for settling disputes!



From left, photo 1 *Agave utahensis*, photo 2 *Homalocephala texensis*, photo 3 *Mammillaria mazatlanensis*.

So, have you noticed that many Latin (=scientific) names follow a certain format? Of course, the general format for a scientific name is a genus followed by a species. So, that tall cactus in your yard may have a common name of saguaro, but its scientific name consists of its genus (*Carnegiea*) and its species (*gigantea*). A single name consists of combining the genus and species together; so, the saguaro's scientific/Latin name is *Carnegiea gigantea*. The genus and species are always italicized.

But, beyond the general format of genus + species, a scientific name must be Latinized. One of the common ways to name a plant is to use the name of the locality or distribution of the plant as the species name. To Latinize a place, you modify it slightly to end with the Latin suffix “*ensis*.” So, if you see a plant name where the species name ends in “*ensis*” or “*ense*,” then what precedes that suffix is the place that the plant was named for.

For example, a relatively common agave encountered in cultivation is *Agave utahensis* (photo 1). Guess what place that one was named after? Yep, it is named after the place “Utah,” but “*ensis*” had to be tacked onto the end of the species name to “Latinize” the name. Some more examples of common place names used in succulents include *Homolocephala texensis* (photo 2), *Mammillaria mazatlanensis* (photo 3) and *Weingartia riograndensis* (photo 4).



From left, photo 4 *Weingartia riograndensis*,
photo 5 *Thelocactus tepelmensis*.

Knowing this little rule can help you figure out a little history behind the plant. However, sometimes it can be a little confusing. For example, *Agave giganteus* is often assumed to be a really big plant because of the name! But now you know, that isn't necessarily the case.

Agave giganteus is actually named for the place it is found—the Sierra de la Giganta in Mexico. Similarly, *Cylindropuntia anteojoensis* is sometimes thought to have its name derived from the Spanish for reading glasses (*anteojos*, which translates roughly to “before the eyes”). However, sure enough, that cholla is from Mount Anteojo in Mexico.

So now, armed with that little bit of knowledge, you can go out and impress your friends by telling them how a plant got its name. When you see *Thelocactus tepelmensis* (photo 5), you can be confident in your knowledge that the cactus came from Tepelmeme, and under your breath you can curse the sadistic describer of the species for forcing you to learn how to even say that name.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Cricket Peterson

Exciting news!

We have a date for the 2023 Show & Sale at the Desert Botanical Garden. It will be March 28-April 2, 2023. The thing is though, we currently have no Show & Sale chairperson to organize the event. So, if members want it to happen, we need people to step up and volunteer. It takes months of planning which will start at our next board meeting March 20. If you would like to help with the Show & Sale for 2023, please contact me at cricketcacss@gmail.com. Or, give me a call 602-326-2604.

I want to give a big "Thank You" to Nick Diomede and Sue Hakala for organizing the nursery tour in Tucson on January 22. I loved seeing all the great plants at Bach's, B&B, Mesquite Valley Growers Nursery, Tohono Chul Gardens, and Plants for the Southwest. I think everyone who went came home with a few plants to add to their collections. I know I did.

Be sure to mark your calendar so you don't miss out on our upcoming events. February 27 will be the Silent Auction and March 19 will be a tour of Boyce Thompson Arboretum.

IN MEMORIAM: KATHY OAKEY

Editor Sue Hakala

I have been notified of the passing of Master Gardener and club member Kathy Oakey. If you knew Kathy and can write an article for the newsletter about her, please contact me at CACSScentralspine@gmail.com.

CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA *TO THE POINT* NEWSLETTER By Judy Goodrode

I am sending along some good news for all of CACSS members. The CSSA has decided to distribute our new electronic newsletter, *To The Point*, to all affiliate club members at no charge. Let's hope we return to a more normal year in 2022.

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CACSS, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in 1973, is an affiliate of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America.

The purpose of the CACSS is to:

- study, propagate and cultivate cactus and succulents
- educate members and the public
- aid conservation programs
- support the Desert Botanical Garden and other institutions

We use our funds to:

- Make an annual donation to the Desert Botanical Garden and a smaller donation to Boyce Thompson Arboretum, which varies depending on the Society income.
- Make donations to our parent organization, the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, to support research and their mission.
- Pay for renowned speakers for our monthly meetings and workshops.
- Provide a circulating library.
- Host an annual judged cactus and succulent show and plant sale, except during COVID. We split the proceeds of our plant sale, 50/50, with the Desert Botanical Garden.

Other membership benefits include:

- free plants and silent plant auctions
- monthly newsletter filled with valuable information
- trips to private and wholesale nurseries in AZ and California
- workshops and Propagation Education Group meetings
- invitations to members' open gardens
- access to experts
- seed depot
- social events, and more
- meeting at the Desert Botanical Garden which provides our meeting space and supports other projects

You can make a donation at any time to the CACSS to support the organization. Mail donations to: CACSS, P.O. Box 63572, Phoenix, AZ 85082-3572.

The bright green color of this 3/4 inch spider makes it blend right in on a prickly pear cactus. This species of spider does not make a web. Instead, it waits for an insect on the pads or in a flower of a prickly pear. It will then pounce on its prey like a cat, giving it the name “lynx.”

If you see one, you will be sure to notice the oval abdomen and “hairy” look to the legs. It can be found in the southern United States from coast to coast and into Mexico and Central America wherever prickly pears are found.

The female will make a web only when she is going to hang her egg sack in it. She hugs the sack with her legs, protecting it. Use your search engine to see one by typing in “green lynx spider on prickly pear.” The spider hunts on many different kinds of flowers and makes capturing insects look easy. Rejoice and be glad to have them in your landscape.



Mammillaria spinosissima by Justin Thiel.

MID-STATES CACTUS
AND SUCCULENT
CONFERENCE By David
Potts

The Kansas City Cactus and Succulent Society is inviting all Cactus and Succulent Society of America affiliate members to attend the Mid-States Cactus and Succulent Conference June 9-12, 2022. KCCSS is hosting the conference at the Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center in Independence, MO.

Our website, kccactus.com, has details and a mail-in registration form. The sale will be free access to the public Friday and Saturday.

A cloudy sky, dotted with intermittent rain showers and a January chill that would not leave, provided the backdrop for our January Tucson nursery crawl. While no head count was taken, we had thirty-two members registered for the trip, with a number of those bringing family and friends. General appearances seemed that all enjoyed themselves.

The morning started at Bach's Greenhouse Cactus Nursery, then onto Tohono Chul, followed by Mesquite Valley Growers, B&B Cactus Farm, and ending the day at Plants for the Southwest. Each offered a feast for any plant enthusiast or cactophile.



An impressive display of color and shapes at B&B Cactus Farm.

It was apparent everyone took advantage of the generous discounts offered, and it was evident the staff and ownership were overjoyed at having our membership visit them en-masse. We received a warm and friendly welcome at each of the club's favorite nurseries, with staff ensuring we were all well taken care of.

Sue Hakala and I worked hard to put this event together during these challenging times. We are ecstatic everyone enjoyed themselves and hopeful we might be able to offer this event in the future.



Left, vibrant color on display at Mesquite Valley Growers, Right, we are never disappointed with the specimens at Plants for the Southwest.



Left, Mike Gallagher enjoys B&B Cactus Farm and right, Kathy Miller finds some plants at Bach's Cactus Nursery. Photos by Sue Hakala.

April 29 through May 2, the greater Phoenix area will participate in the 2022 City Nature Challenge. This is a global effort to observe and document as much urban biodiversity as possible, while engaging in community science. Using a free app called iNaturalist, anyone can get involved and share observations, anywhere from neighborhoods to local parks.

This is the second year the greater Phoenix area will participate in the challenge, and last year we placed 30th in the world out of over 400 urban areas around the globe! The local challenge is being co-organized by Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University, City of Chandler Parks and Recreation, Metro Phoenix EcoFlora Project, and Educating Children Outdoors (ECO).

To participate, download the free iNaturalist app or visit inaturalist.org. Once you have created a login, search for the *2022 City Nature Challenge: Greater Phoenix Area* project and join. Then, take photos of wild organisms like plants and animals and share observations with the project.

All observations will automatically be included in the challenge and count toward our area's total. May 3-8, identifications will be made of what was seen. The areas with the most observations, most species and most participants will be announced on May 9.

The greater Phoenix area organizers will provide opportunities for participants and collaborators to receive training, enjoy events and learn more about urban biodiversity.

Interested in collaborating, participating or learning more? Please visit greaterphoenixcnc.com. Learn more about the global challenge at citynaturechallenge.org.

The City Nature Challenge is organized on a global scale by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and the California Academy of Sciences. The CACSS will be listed as a collaborator for this event.

Publication of material in the *Central Spine* does not imply agreement with the ideas expressed therein by any portion of the membership of the CACSS, nor does it constitute an endorsement or support for any portion of such material by the CACSS, or the *Central Spine*, regardless of any position or office held by the author. All such material represents a comment and/or personal opinion of the author.

A great big **Thank You** goes to Nancy Mumpton for her many years of service as CACSS Librarian. We appreciate her devotion, time, hard work, and knowledge, all keeping the CACSS library collection in great shape. Well done, Nancy!

I'll be taking over for Nancy as librarian. Recently retired, I bring 25+ years of academic, medical and patient library experience. I am happiest tending to my collection of *Sansevieria*, *Aloe*, *Haworthia*, *Gasteria*, and *Euphorbia*.

PLEASE NOTE: While we are currently unable to have our large library collection available at the meetings, we will have the **Red Library Return Bin** there.

Please bring your returns to the meetings held at Papago Buttes Church. Happily, the collection will be available when we meet again in Dorrance Hall during July, August and September.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at azdiana53@gmail.com

LANDSCAPE DESIGN FOR REDUCED MAINTENANCE Submitted by Rita Gosnell
on behalf of the Carefree Desert Gardens

Are you wanting an attractive garden, yet tired of investing your time and money? Sadly, landscapes aren't always designed with maintenance in mind. The result? Landscape that is over pruned and underwhelming, not reflective of the original design. Noelle Johnson, aka AZ Plant Lady, says, "Improper plant selection, watering and other avoidable factors compound the higher demand for maintenance."

On Saturday, February 12, 2022, Carefree Desert Gardens welcomes horticulturist Noelle Johnson, writer of the popular garden blog *Ramblings from a Desert Garden*. Noelle. With her degree in urban horticulture, she is an instructor at Desert Botanical Garden and Tucson Botanical Garden. She is the creator of the popular online course, *Desert Gardening 101*. During this presentation, she will show you how to avoid, and fix, those areas of your garden that take a lot of work so you can have a beautiful outdoor space with less maintenance.

The program, including a plant raffle, will begin at 9:30 a.m. and run approximately until noon at the Carefree Desert Gardens Pavilion located in the town center.

A \$5 or more donation is appreciated to support these programs. For information call 480-488-3686. This is the second of four programs of the 2022 Carefree Desert Gardens seminar series.

The plant pictured is a *Euphorbia piscidermis* (fish skin). It's a very slow-growing, rare *Euphorbia* native of Ethiopia. Due to how slowly it grows, all the plants that I have are grafted, as is this one.



They only grow to about five inches tall, so this one is fully grown. It's a very firm plant with no leaves, no spines and is soft to the touch. So far, none of my plants have flowered. I grow them in my greenhouse, so they get no direct sun and are never under 50F in the winter. They get watered like everything else in the greenhouse, about once every two weeks in the summer and about once a month in the winter.

This month, the CACSS had an outing to Tucson which featured stops at several local cactus nurseries. Members posted lovely photos of incredible plants that were seen and purchased by the group. These posts helped lessen the sting for those of us unable to attend.

Pictures of cactus in bloom are beginning to show up on the FB feed. It seems like the season begins earlier and earlier each year as the growing season is so long in Arizona, plus many of our members have greenhouses. *Mammillaria* seem to be blooming in abundance.



Agave of the Month: Agave 'Kissho Kan' posted January 13 by CACSS member Tom Gatz.

I really enjoyed seeing CACSS member Barbara O'Connor's collection of crested saguaro photos. One of her hobbies is photographing crested saguaros within driving distance of her home. January was a busy month for her.

Tristan Davis posted a favorite find of his from a big box store in 2016. It finally bloomed this year, verifying his suspicion that it was a hard to find plant. It was a *Cleistocactus variispinus*, proving "the more you know, the more you can enjoy big box stores!" Tristan said. Keep your eyes peeled for a related question I will be asking on our FB page! You can join the FB page at: <https://m.facebook.com/groups/cacss2/>



Succulent of the Month: Aloe hybrid 'Safari Rose' posted January 17 by CACSS member Chris Ginkel.

Be sure to visit CACSS on the web at: centralarizonacactus.org, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube at: CentralArizonaCactus, and members only at: CentralArizonaCactus Swap and Shop.