

CACTUS CORNER NEWS

Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

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January 2017

Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America

**Next meeting: Thursday, January 5, 2017, 7:00 P.M. (Doors open at 6:30 P.M.)
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Center (DHHSC), 5340 North Fresno Street, Fresno**



The Chihuahan Desert Biosphere

Presented by:

Eunice Thompson

Encompassing Big Bend National Park in Texas and extending into the valley of Cuatrociénegas, in central Coahuila, Mexico we find in these areas the greatest number of endemic species of any place in North America. Focusing on the native habitats of favorite cacti and succulents we travel through Big Bend, explore areas along the Rio Grande and finally venture into one of the most diverse desert regions in the Chihuahan Desert: Cuatrociénegas. The diversity of plants in each of these regions is very high, and some are similar to both. We study and admire the plants as they 'Live on The Edge'.

I have been fortunate to visit a number of native plant habitats around the world. Focusing mostly on Mexico and its islands, but one of my dreams has been to journey to the oldest desert in the world: Namibia. I look forward to sharing the thrill of exploring this old world desert filled with life and seeing the plants that we've come to know thriving in their natural habitat.

I became passionate about Cactus & Succulents 10 years ago, and seeking knowledge of the joined as many of the local clubs in Southern CA. becoming volunteer for many of the clubs and eventually serving as a president of the Long Beach Cactus Club. I was soon able to combine my passion for travel and photography with cacti and succulents in their native habitats.

My first opportunity presented itself join an expedition to Baja California in 2008 to visit the native plants of that region. Since then my travels have taken me to many desert plant habitats in the USA and around the globe It has given me a unique opportunity to observe the hobby first hand in UK and mainland Europe and witness how the plants thrive in the most unlikely of climates.

Currently I am working on filming a travel documentary feature cactus and succulents and their impact. I am co-author of "Tea at Gordon's" – a tribute to Gordon Rowley.

Let's give Eunice a warm welcome on her first visit to our Fresno Club!

Eunice will be bringing a nice selection of plants for purchase!



DINNER at 5:00 P.M. Sal's Mexican Restaurant, 7476 N. Fresno Street, (559) 438-3030.

Menu: <https://salsmexicanrestaurants.com/menu> . Members are invited to attend.

Contact Rosanna by Wednesday, January 4th to make reservations.

Phone/Message: (559) 999-0017; Email: rfrojas@gmail.com

FROM THE PREZ ...

Hi, all,

Here we are, starting another year for the club. We have a lot ahead of us, a lot of decisions to make regarding our shows and sales, field trips, programs, etc. I hope all of you will renew your memberships and “go along for the ride.” We’ll have a great time.

Our first board meeting of the year will be Monday, January 9th, 6:00 p.m., at 3733 N. Sierra Vista. All board members should attend; if you’re not able to be there, let me know. All club members are invited. If you’re interested at all in club business, you are welcome to attend and lend your comments.

Winter is in force right now; most of your plants are resting, but you still need to keep an eye on them. Keep an eye, too, on the weather report. Protect those tender plants from a freeze by moving them up against the house, into the garage, or even inside if it looks like the temperature may go below 32° for any length of time. Frost damage to your plants may not be immediately evident. Sometimes you think you’ve dodged the bullet, only to find the damage showing up later. Trust me, I speak from experience.

Looking back on 2016, I see that it’s been over a year since Tom Meyer transplanted that 10’ saguaro into his yard. It had been donated by a lady who lived in the area near Cedar and Bullard. Our newsletter documented what an extraordinary operation it was to box it up, move it and plant it. So far, it seems fine.

The club has received a check for \$125.00 from friends of Herb Thorne’s daughter, Katie Kraetsch. Colleagues of Katie’s in the Clovis Unified Special Education Preschool and PALS program made the donation in memory of Herb and suggested that we do something with the money “that Herb would have liked.” The board will discuss this at the January board meeting.

We had a great Christmas party last month—a lot of wonderful food and good company. As usual, Mary Drumheller decorated the tables beautifully. They look more amazing every year, Mary! Thanks to Rosanna Rojas, who wrangled the entrees as well as the rest of the potluck. Polly Dunklin and Marian Orvis handled the silent auction, and the bidding seemed brisk. Tony Sharp came through again with unique pots as gifts for the outgoing officers. Thanks to Mark Muradian for serving as emcee. Everyone appeared to be having a good time—and how could they not, with such a good group! I appreciate how members leant a hand to clear the room, and special thanks to go to Nancy Jobin and Pat Schreyer, who vacuumed the floor.

The club library will be back in service this month. Be sure to bring in your books to avoid accruing a fine. We are luckier than a lot of clubs are, in that we can keep our library at our meeting place. Other clubs have to be satisfied with their librarians just hauling in a selection of books at a time.

Our speaker this month is new to us, so let’s all turn out and give her a warm welcome. See you at the meeting, *Sue*



HAPPY BIRTHDAY: *Elton Roberts (5th); Val McCullough (9th); Monika Arreola (10th); Dennis Shamlian (13th); Theresa Flemming (15th); Mark Muradian, Ed Myhro (20th) Tony Sharp (25th); Carole Grosch (31st).*



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We sent a sunshine card to **Chuck Thew**, who is recovering from an accident. Be careful on ladders!

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News of several former members: Joyce Quinn spent Thanksgiving on a ship in Antarctica ... The *Fresno Bee* carried a guest column on December 17th, "Widow finds new joy working on Rose floats", which recounted the story of Pat La Mont and how she dealt with the loss of Don by spending part of the 2015 Holiday season working on a Rose Parade float. It's an inspiring story. I emailed Pat to tell her how much I enjoyed the article and asked if she planned to do the same this year. She was currently in New York State spending part of the holidays with family, but that, yes, as soon as she got back she would be heading for Pasadena to work on another float.

Pat was among a number of present and former club members who joined several hundred other people to say goodbye to Ron Stebles at a well-attended service on Dec. 6th. As Fred observed: "Ron had more friends than I do."

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**The latest issue of the online journal *Cactus Explorer*** is ready for download. It's number 17, a 62-page PDF. The URL is a mile long, so just Google 'cactus explorer 17'. It has an amazing amount of information and gorgeous photography.

**BIG EVENT THIS MONTH:** Huntington Desert Forum, Saturday, January 14, 2017, Huntington Botanic Gardens, San Marion. The flyer for the event is located elsewhere in this issue.

The November-December Cactus and Succulent Journal has been received by CSAA members. The contents include "Beginner's guide to *Faucaria*" by Tom Glavich, more of Myron Kimnach's memories of the Huntington, "Pushing the limits: landscaping with cacti and succulents in cold climates part 20", by Leo Chance, a new aloe discovery, etc., etc. If you are really interested in cacti and succulents, you should belong to the Cactus & Succulent Society of America: [www.cssainc.org](http://www.cssainc.org).

**Repotting mature melocacti:** A discussion on the internet recently concerned a problem of repotting mature melocacti-that is, plants that now had developed cephaliums. Several people noted that they had repotted these plants. Only to have them die. The consensus seemed to be that melocacti with cephaliums are sensitive to root disturbance. After all, once the plants develop cephaliums, they pretty much cease to grow, with only the cephaliums exhibiting any annual growth. One grower described a method he uses if he feels he must repot a melo which is in a plastic pot. Using a soldering iron, he cuts off the top half inch, or so, of the pot. Then he makes holes down each side of the pots and plants the whole works inside the larger pot. This unusual procedure limits root disturbance but allows the roots to get moisture through the holes in the inner pot.



**Club access:** President, Sue Haffner, 292-5624, [sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu); Programs, Rosanna Rojas, 999-0017, [rfrojas96@gmail.com](mailto:rfrojas96@gmail.com); Treasurer, Robert Scott, 960-3665, [Rob\\_scott85@yahoo.com](mailto:Rob_scott85@yahoo.com); Editor, Sue Haffner, 292-5624, [sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:sueh@mail.fresnostate.edu); Refreshments, Marian Orvis, 226-0145, [mforvet@comcast.net](mailto:mforvet@comcast.net); Librarian, Madeleine Mitchell, 638-2784, [madeleine43@comcast.net](mailto:madeleine43@comcast.net); Webmaster, Vickie Veen, [vickieveen@gmail.com](mailto:vickieveen@gmail.com); Sunshine, Carole Grosch, 323-8602, [cgg266@comcast.net](mailto:cgg266@comcast.net)

**A NEW DUDLEYA:** Perhaps you saw the news story of the latest dudleya discovery. Stephen McCabe, Mark Doderro and Michael G. Simpson found the new species in a restricted area of Colonet Mesa, Baja California. They named it *Dudleya hendrixii* in honor of the late musician Jimi Hendrix, as Doderro, who actually spotted it, was listening to Hendrix's song, "Voodoo Child" on his earphones at the moment of discovery.



This beautiful, newly discovered succulent is named *Dudleya hendrixii* in honor of rock star Jimi Hendrix. Credit: Stephen McCabe

[www.livescience.com/57245-newfound-plant-named-after-jimi-hendrix.html](http://www.livescience.com/57245-newfound-plant-named-after-jimi-hendrix.html)



**CLUB WORKSHOP:** The December workshop was for the most part a snack potluck, but we did look at some plants. Bill Gale brought an unusual form of *Euphorbia millii*, with the branches in a tight bun. Ann Bierbower brought *Uebelmannia pectinifera* and a *weingartia*. She also brought a flat of *sempervivum* starts to give away. Veone Gale brought an *Adenium 'Crimson Star'* (*A. swazicum* x *A. obesum*). Dan said this hybrid does not form a caudex. Eddie Etheridge lugged in a huge cycad, an *Encephalartos*. Dennis Anderson showed an unusual form of *Mammillaria carmenae*. Instead of forming a clump, this plant has a single upright head. Very odd. Dan Gale brought a *Euphorbia poissonii*, which he said is a winter grower. He also brought *Agave colorata* plants, pomegranates and mandarins to give away. It was a very *gemütlich* group, as the German would say. As always, we need to thank Doris Hooton so much for letting this group of plant nuts meet at her home. She claims to enjoy our company!

The January Workshop will be Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m., at 3733 North Sierra Vista, Fresno. Plants examined will be those in genera beginning with A and B. Mary wants those who bring plants to be able to tell us about the plant, so maybe you will have to do a bit of research. This discussion topic will be "Problem Plants". All members are welcome to attend. The idea of the workshops is that members who have plant questions should bring them there, as we don't always have time at the general meetings to give good answers to members' questions. Of course, if you have questions or plants to be identified, don't hesitate to bring them to a monthly meeting. Our plants guys will do their best for you.



### PLAYING IN THE DIRT

A magazine called *This Week* had an article a few years ago with the title: "Dirt: a natural antidepressant?" Here is an interesting excerpt:

"There may be such a thing as too much cleanliness, a new study suggests. At Bristol University in England, mice were inoculated with a harmless type of bacteria called *Mycobacteria vaccae*. These mice showed a significant rise in their levels of serotonin which caused an upswing in their sense of well being. The bacteria apparently stimulate a mood-regulating part of the brain. This finding suggests that by exposing ourselves to certain kinds of "friendly" bacteria present in soil, people may be able to combat depression naturally. This leaves us wondering if we shouldn't all spend more time playing in the dirt."

This leaves me wondering how they knew the mice had improved their sense of well being. But I suppose it was by observing their behavior: less aggression, less fearfulness, etc. But it's true, though, isn't it—that you feel better after a spell of working outside with your plants. Maybe it's because you feel you've accomplished something. So, go out and play in the dirt. It's good for you.



Talking about dirt—I found this ten year old article in *The Epi-gram*, the newsletter of the South Bay Epiphyllum Society, Palos Verdes, California:

### **DON BURNETT'S EPI POTTING MIX**

I use a large amount of epi potting mix which is more than the average novice will use for many years. I make enough of my epi mix to last at least one year. This is the mix that I use for all my plants and cuttings and how I make it.

I have four 55-gallon plastic barrels with the tops cut out to store my epi mix, #2 perlite and mini redwood nuggets. I keep the barrels covered.

To fill two of the barrels I use the following:

One 5 lb. box of bone meal which I spread over the other ingredients evenly

Two 1 cubic foot bags of chicken manure that can be purchased from Home Depot or Armstrong's Nursery

Four 2 cubic foot bags of Kellogg's Grow Mulch (I would use all azalea potting mix if it wasn't so expensive)

Five 1 ½ cubic foot bags of azalea mix which I purchase from Armstrong. This will make approximately 17-1/2 cubic feet of mix.

I place all of the above on my driveway and turn it over with a shovel until the mix is blended to my satisfaction. I then place the mix in two of my 55 gallon barrels.

The third barrel is used to hold three 2 cubic feet bags of redwood mini nuggets that I purchase from Home Depot (the nuggets are approximately ¼" to 3/8" in diameter.)

The last 55-gallon barrel is filled with one 3 ½ cubic foot bag of #2 perlite that I purchase from Armstrong Nursery.

The ratio of my mix, mini redwood nuggets and perlite is as follows:

5 parts of my mix

1 part #2 perlite

1part mini redwood nuggets

I also use this mix on all of my rhipsalis and they seem to love it. When I pot my epies and cuttings, I place a small amount of 6-20-20 Bandini Start-N-Grow fertilizer that I purchase at Home Depot. If you cannot find this fertilizer, use a 2-10-10 slow release. After adding the last fertilizer, I top dress the pot with more of my mix and lightly water.

A simpler mix you might want to try is:

5 parts azalea mix

1 part #2 perlite

1 part redwood mini nuggets

Add a small amount of a slow release 2-10-10

When I give epies to people who have never grown them before, this is the mix I tell them to use:

3 parts cactus mix

2 parts Grow Mulch or azalea mix

Add a small amount of 2-10-10 fertilizer and lightly water.

Purchase a water meter and check the new planting before watering again. I have killed more epies by over watering than anyone. Watch your watering!

When you come up with a good mix that works in the area you live in, stay with it.

Good luck! ***Don Burnett***



# THE HUNTINGTON

LIBRARY, ART COLLECTIONS, AND BOTANICAL GARDENS

1151 Oxford Road, San Marino, California 91108 (626) 405-2100

BOTANICAL GARDENS

## DESERT FORUM

*Saturday, 14 January 2017*

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- 9:00 – 9:45 **Registration**  
Please bring your CSSA or affiliated club badge or membership card for admission  
In order to receive free admission, you must arrive by 9:45. Late arrivers will need to pay for Huntington admission.
- 9:00 – 11:00 **Desert Garden**  
Knowledgeable staff and docents will be stationed throughout the Desert Garden and Desert Conservatory  
Aloes will be flowering
- 11:00 – 1:00 **Plant Sales – (exclusively for CSSA and club members)**  
Gate opens by the Teaching Greenhouse at 11:00 for plant sales - *please, no early bird shopping, and no shopping after 1:00.*  
Cash, checks, and credit cards accepted
- 1:00 – 5:00 **Free Time**  
Attendees are welcome to tour the gardens and galleries as of 10:00 am

### **Lunch:**

The Café in the visitor center features a variety of sandwiches, salads, and grilled items

The tea room at Liu Fang Yuan is a nice option for fresh Chinese food

The coffee shop by the bookstore offers a small selection of pre-made options

# Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society

## Membership Application/Renewal

### Annual Membership Renewal Due January 1<sup>st</sup>

Single Membership renewal ...\$15.00 - Family Membership renewal ...\$25.00

**New Memberships** include a one-time fee of \$5.00 per member for each name badge as follows:

Single Membership...\$15.00 plus one name badge \$5.00 = \$20.00

Family Membership...\$25.00 plus two name badges \$10.00 = \$35.00

Checks payable to: Fresno Cactus & Succulent Society (FCSS)

Mail to: FCSS – 415 W. Home Ave., Fresno, CA 93728

#### INFORMATION FOR CLUB USE ONLY:

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZipCode \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday(s) Optional – Month & Day \_\_\_\_\_

The club publishes an annual Roster containing all current members' information as shown above and distributes it to club members. If you do not want some of your information published in the Roster let us know.

I am interested in helping out in the following areas. Please contact me.

Show & Sale    Programs    Library    Publicity    Technology

Refreshments    Hospitality    Sunshine    Special Events

How do you wish to receive your Newsletter, "Cactus Corner"?    E-mail   or    US Mail

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No Thank You    Yes, I agree to the uses of these materials described above, except for any restrictions noted below.

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