



Succulent Morsels

News of the Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society
February 2014 Vol. 6, No. 2

To promote knowledge, enjoyment, cultivation, and conservation of cacti and other succulent plants among its members, other individuals and organizations throughout West-Central Colorado

FEBRUARY PROGRAM:

MAKING "LIGHT" OF THINGS



Dr. Curtis Swift will present the February 13th program for the Regular Meeting of the Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society. His talk will focus on lighting requirements for indoor plants, which is very appropriate for these often dark and dismal winter days!

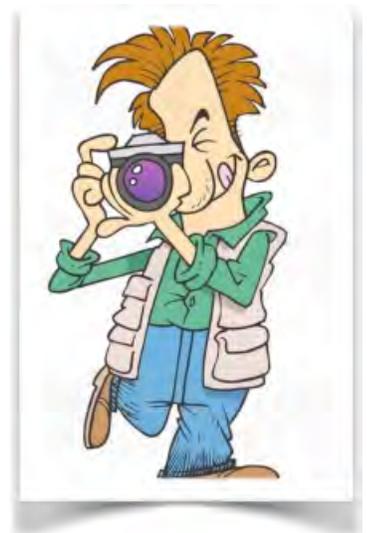
Curt will bring to the meeting his newest assessment tool, a Quantum Light evaluator, which allows the user to precisely measure the amount of light illuminating a plant. This is especially useful for any of us with "Grow Lights" and have wondered just how close these lights need to be to the plants for maximum benefit. He recommends bringing your plant lights to the meeting for testing. Those of us who depend on other indoor lights or light from windows will undoubtedly obtain sage advice on how effective these light sources are, or can be!

Don't forget that every meeting has a Show & Tell Time, give away plants, and Silent Auction plants. And Tom's wonderful cookies and/or bars. Be sure to put this meeting on your calendar!

START SHOOTIN' FOR THE 2014 PHOTO CONTEST

Once again, the Chinle C&SS will conduct their Photo Contest during 2014. The submission period will begin now (February) and run through October 2014. In order to participate, members need to send their photo files to the Newsletter Editor (Janet Hassell) at janethassell@gmail.com for publication in a Society newsletter. Please identify the photo and any description that would be interesting to our readers. Full-sized jpg files are best. Official judging will be done by an experienced photographer from outside the Chinle C&SS and winners will be announced at the Annual Dinner Meeting.!

The purpose of the contest is to see the world of cacti and succulents through the eyes of our members and to share these views via publication in the newsletter. Another purpose is to encourage active participation from the members in the activities of the Chinle C&SS. You may submit as many photos as you like, however,



at the end of the contest period, you will be asked to choose up to three photos for judging. !

! ! Criteria for judging will use the elements below as used by The Photographic Exhibitions Committee (PEC) of Professional Photographers of America to define a merit image:!

- **Impact** is the sense one gets upon viewing an image for the first time that can evoke awe, imagination, a story, beauty, or the feeling of “wow”—does the photo “knock your socks off.”
- **Technical excellence** is the quality of the image relative to focus, lens selection. Retouching, manipulation, sharpness, exposure, skillful use of lighting and correct color qualities are included in technical excellence.
- **Creativity** is the original, fresh, and external expression of the imagination of the photographer. Is it a fresh presentation of an old subject, did the photographer successfully “break the rules.”
- **Style & Composition** is important to the design of an image, bringing all of the visual elements together to express the purpose of the image. Proper composition holds the viewer in the image and prompts the viewer to look where the creator intends, often by eliminating distracting elements, attractively grouping subjects, using rule of thirds and leading lines.
- **Color Balance** is when the color tones work together, supporting the image and enhance its emotional appeal.
- **Center of Interest** is the point or points on the image where the maker wants the viewer to stop as they view the image. There can be primary and secondary centers of interest. Occasionally there will be no specific center of interest when the entire scene collectively serves as the center of interest.



BEGIN THINKING ABOUT THE 3RD PLANT SHOW WEST EVENT

Judy McCart has agreed to coordinate the 2014 Plant Show West at Bookcliff Gardens, scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, March 1 and 2. As in years past, we will ask members to provide show-quality plants for display and also to sign up to help man the Chinle display area during the show.

Sign up sheets will be available at the February meeting for display plants and to work shifts at the display. In addition, you can email Judy at ladyj512@bresnan.net or call her at 623-9279. We have had good participation in this event the last two years, and hope to this year. It is a lot of fun to get together and “talk cactus”.

We are also requesting plant donations to sell. In the past we have handled the sales with 50% of the sale price going back to the Chinle C&SS, 25% to Bookcliff Garden, and 25% to the owner of the plant.

See page 8 for suggestions to help you prepare your plant(s) for showing.

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

In 2014, we are suggesting that members share articles and photos with the Society for publication in the newsletter. Topics can be totally at your discretion, and we encourage folks to submit interesting articles, photos, and information about their experiences with cacti and succulents.

An excellent example of a member contribution to the newsletter is Kenton Seth’s piece and photos featured on the next two pages.

ANTELOPE ARE ALIENS..., and *Pediocactus despainii*

By Kenton Seth

"I take a yearly trip to Utah at the beginning of winter and the end of my work season. This year, I went alone and spent all of it in the San Rafael Swell.

"We all know that camping trips are just excuses to look at cacti in nature, so I won't hide it here. I know the Swell has a few special ones, but had not seen them. My friend John Stireman in Sandy, UT, gave me a tipoff to look for *Pediocactus despainii* on "the Wedge" an unsurprisingly shaped plateau on the north end of the swell, some handful-dozen-miles Northwest of Green River.

"*Pediocactus despainii* is a rare plant. In fact, it is listed as endangered. Also coming to the name "San Rafael Footcactus," it is described in Stanley L. Welsh's "A Utah Flora" as growing among limestone. True enough, I saw a limestone mini-plateau while driving along last November on the Wedge (which leads to an epic overlook that anyone within 200 miles has no excuse not to visit. (That's all of us!) I had watched the desert species of bighorn sheep while I ate breakfast that morning, which are allegedly members of Utah's largest heard of such beasts. They were frequent in the swell in November. In fact, the whole trip, wild burros and all, would turn out to be more animal-than plant-rich.

"So, on both: I parked the truck and wandered about for hours. This is not a bad thing when you are on holiday, but generally frowned upon or interpreted as mental illness when you are not. With sun-aspect in mind, I walked around this limestone hillock, expecting that a geophyte (ground-hugging) tiny barrel cactus might prefer to look a certain way, maybe even face East for convenient mecca-prayer. Finally, on the South-face, in a sandy-loam softly-mortared limestone pavement between sparse and ancient Junipers and few if any other plants at all, there they were. A thorough search revealed half a dozen individual plants.



"Now, *Pediocactus despainii*, like too many cute little chaps of its ilk, shrinks underground for the winter, so that it was on the South face may only mean that these particular plants were the last to sink underground while their cooler-sited colleagues may have gone underground already. This whole sinking-away business seemed weird to me as a cactus neophyte, but after looking at profiles of the plant- which has, underground, the proportions of a sausage, it is easy to believe. And mechanically speaking, a plant would not have to lose much water to lose a lot of length, like a green juicy accordion.

"I stared at this puckered little gem for some time, just less than level with the ground and certain to be invisible after the next wind gust. It has obvious protruding areoles, which are topped with unimpressive flattened, often crooked spines, which really fail to hide the body of the plant. The areole tips are not terribly woolly, which (in addition to *Pediocactus despainii*'s coppery flowers) separates it not-too-cleanly from the related *Pediocactus winkleri*, which grows nearby, blooming pinkish, and may hybridise with *despainii*, but is generally not in the San Rafael Swell. (According to The Intermountain Flora). There is another species which bears a patent family resemblance called *P. bradyi*, endemic to one Marble Canyon in Arizona, so by affinity, my interest in these other two species grows, as well.

"It was not while I genuflected over *Pediocactus despainii*, but while knelt over a closely-neighbouring *Sclerocactus parviflorus* to adopt its seeds, that the aliens came. Up to that time, the birds had made regular but brief clapping noises as they flew juniper-to-juniper. But then came an identical, but drawn-out dull clatter. I heard it move behind me, at some distance, from West to East. Moving as little as possible and crouched on the ground, I looked over my shoulder to see a group of eight Antelope cruise by with their cloud of dust. They did not see me, and were pretty close. But the leader of the pack stopped at some point to look at me, The rest followed suit and



fanned out on either side of him (or her) to slowly walk toward me. It was very much an opening number from West Side Story. Then they simultaineously ran back the way they came, perpendicular to me, (which means circling, in part!) stopped, fanned out, and walked slowly towards me again. And back again- they did this a third time. It must be that dance number from the middle of the show, I guessed.

“Being nearer than I've ever been to Antelope/Pronghorn, I found them to look too silly and too surprisingly small (barely hip-high!) to be alarming, although some animal part of me thought I ought to be alarmed at eight wild, horned animals

which were walking, quite deliberately, toward me. What with their noses attached to the front of their funny heads like some sort of afterthought, they looked pretty African, but even more Alien, really. Bulgy eyes, too. Small, pale things: Aliens in mid-day in the Utah Desert.

“Amused, I snapped pictures the whole time. When they finally took off in the direction they were initially headed, I went back to rolling *Sclerocactus* seeds out of the spiny mother-plant and onto the sand where I could gather them. Now, when I look at the awkwardly bulging Sclero seedlings under flourescent lights in my guest room, I giggle a little. “

WHEN“GRAFT”IS A GOOD THING!

Don Campbell's presentation on grafting plants at the January Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS on January 9th was informative and the demonstration fascinating. In case you missed the meeting, here are some of the key points that Don discussed.

The reasons grafting is done is to 1) increase the number of plants, i.e., mass production, 2) speed the growth of rare species, and 3) allow exotic species to grow under harsher conditions.

The root stock is the plant onto which the scion (or to be grafted plant) is grafted. Desirable traits of root stock is that it is healthy and actively growing, has longevity, has cold & heat tolerance, is not prone to producing offsets or rapid growth, and an appropriate size for the plant to be grafted. Plants must be from the same cactus family in



Don shows two plants typically propagated by grafting.



Example of multiple grafted plants at Crumps Nursery.

To prepare the root stock for grafting, the top portion is sliced off horizontally, using a sterile knife or razor blade. Then, the margins of the cut are beveled so that when the cut area dries, it doesn't shrink into a concave configuration, thus pulling apart the graft. When the root stock is cut, you will be able to see a vascular bundle in the center. It is this vascular

bundle that must be married up to at least a portion of the similar vascular bundle on the scion in order for the graft to be viable.

Again using a sterile knife or blade, cut the scion you wish to graft. If it is fairly large, a horizontal cut will work as the vascular bundle will be large enough to “mate” with the root stock bundle. If you are grafting a small diameter plant, you can cut the scion at a 45 degree angle to expose a larger area of the vascular bundle. The root stock and scion are then pressed together and held in place with weighted string as shown in photo on the right, using clothespins or rubber bands. They need to remain undisturbed for a week to 10 days in order for the graft to “take”.



A Christmas Cactus graft on an Epiphilium.



Showing the bevel prep & string-and-weight ! method to join the scion to the stock.



Jon Hall (above), in keeping with the theme of the January program, brought in this lovely specimen of *Pachypodium brevicaulis* that he grafted, for Show & Tell.



CHINLE BOARD HAS FIRST 2014 MEETING

January 6th, the new Board of Directors met at the Benoit's, to review 2013 and plan for 2014. From left to right is Lynn Dunham (Program Co-Chair), Janet Hassell (V. President and Newsletter Ed.), Maryann Benoit (President), Loren Benoit (Treasurer), Judy McCart (Member at Large), Don Campbell (Program Co-Chair), Lois Davidson, Garden Activities Coordinator, Tom Burrows (Secretary & Webmaster), and Bill Hassell (Immediate Past President). This year promises to be full of activity, education, and fun!!! Come out and participate!

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME IS HERE!

It's hard to believe that another year has come and gone! And with the advent of 2014, it is time to renew your membership to the Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society. Dues will remain the same as last year: \$20 for an individual and \$25 for a family. What comes with membership?

- Hands-on cactus and succulents gardening opportunities at club-maintained public gardens
- Garden tours and field trips
- Help and advice on growing indoor and outdoor cacti and succulents
- Monthly meetings with educational programs and refreshments
- Plant drawings and exchanges
- Monthly newsletters
- Annual dinner meeting
- Opportunities to meet lots of really great people
- and best of all, having fun!

"Such a deal, right?" Bring your dues to the next meeting or mail a check to Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society, PO Box 20000-5028, Grand Junction, CO 81502-5028.

“SCENE” AT THE JANUARY MEETING!

“Who’s who in the photos?”: Top left to right- Don Campbell talks about the silent auction Euphorbia; Julie Bursi and Janet Schaeffer looking over the grafted plants display; Maryann Benoit presiding over her first CC&SS meeting as President.



Above, left to right, Shari Sheie visits with Mary Moran before the meeting begins; Dave & Anna Mathews chat with Lois Davidson, our new Garden Activities Coordinator; and Don gives us a glad hand as he visits with Janet Schaeffer.

”BY ANY OTHER NAME IS JUST AS PRICKLY”

Around the first week of January, the modest *Echinocereus triglochidiatus* became a bit of a political issue, due in part because of what name should be used in legislation to give the plant official state status.



As background (according to a Denver Post article of Jan. 7, 2014 and a similar article in the Grand Junction Sentinel on the 6th), the impetus to seek official state status for the *E. triglochidiatus* began when four Douglas County Girl Scouts, members of Troop 2518, began working toward a Bronze Award. The Scouts conducted research and consulted with botanists and naturalists as to what cactus should have official state status and decided on the *E. triglochidiatus*. They are working with State Rep. Carole Murray, R-Castle Rock, who is sponsoring the legislative process to make this happen.

So what is the problem? Well, the common name given to this cactus by cactophiles, cactus and succulent references and expert authorities, is

“Claret-cup Hedgehog”, not “King Cup.” As noted by Tom Burrows, whatever we do “should express support for the concept, if not the name. The main idea we need to get across is that if Colorado has an official state cactus, it should not have a name that provokes cactus experts to ask *What the h___ is that?*”

Don Campbell, Mesa County’s “Mr. Cactus”, has stated that “I think the Claret Cup cactus is indeed the generally accepted, and in my opinion, best common name for the number of different but similar *Echinocereus* species/varieties/forms found across ‘cactus county’. I also found one author that lists ‘King’s **Crown** Cactus’ as one of several common names for *E. triglochidiatus*.”

Don also shares that for cactus “hair-splitters”, Dave Ferguson, cactus and succulent expert, indicates two varieties of *E. triglochidiatus* in Colorado, both commonly know as Claret Cup. (The two varieties are *E. triglochidiatus* var. *mojavensis* and *F. inermis* found on the Western Slope, and *triglochidiatus* var. *triglochidiatus*, found on the Eastern Slope.)

President Maryann Benoit contacted Rep. Murray to suggest the name of the plant be changed to the more commonly used name, “Claret Cup”. Murray states that in order to change anything in the Bill, someone would need to appear at the hearing scheduled for January 28th and testify regarding the necessary changes. Don Campbell has contacted members of the Denver CC&SS to ask if one of them could attend the hearing.

Stay tuned for an update at the February Chinle C&SS meeting!!!

GARDEN PARTY TIME APPROACHES!



Hard to believe it will be garden party time next month. As always, members are encouraged to pony up and help with the important work of the Society to maintain the gardens at the Western Colorado Botanical Gardens and the Colorado State University Extension Gardens. A beginning schedule of gardening activities is posted on our Calendar of Events on page 11 of this newsletter. Dates can also be found at our Chinle website. Starting times begin at 9 am until the weather becomes too warm and then we start at 8 am. The Chinle C&SS does have a collection of tools for gardening, but participants are encouraged to bring their own as most people have their favorites!

Lois Davidson, Garden Activities Coordinator supports gardening activities as a very integral part of our purpose as a Society in the Grand Valley. It also provides a tremendous sense of accomplishment and self-satisfaction when the work is completed. If you can’t garden for some reason, consider making a visit during a Garden Party to encourage those members who are able to garden! Give gardening a try! Every level of effort is appreciated...and there are always tasty treats to be had during the mid-morning break!

PRESENTING PLANTS FOR SHOW

The following tips are from the New Mexico Cactus and Succulent Society which were given prior to their show several years ago. The advice is still sound, so review them in preparing your plants for the

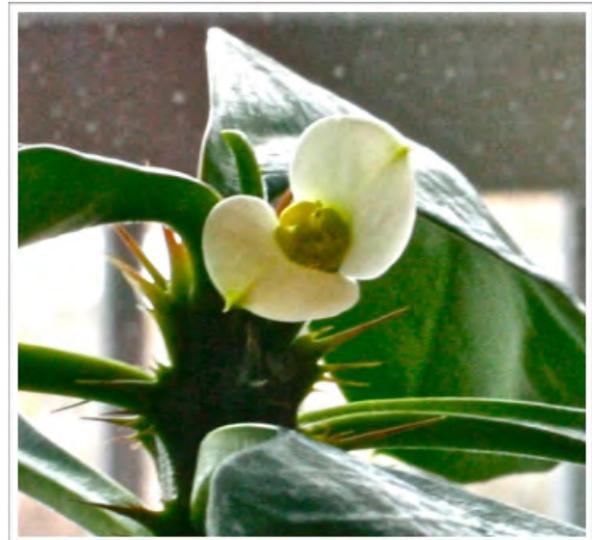
- Plants need to be in good condition, not etiolated, badly scarred or sunburned, or malformed.
- No infestations of insects or other diseases.
- Remove dead flowers, dried-up leaves, water and dirt spots on good leaves, dust, spider webs. Use tweezers, paint brushes, cotton swabs, etc.)
- Apply an attractive top dressing.
- Choose pots that do not distract from the plant, generally plain and clean, free from cracks and chips. Try mineral oil or cooking oil,



Don shows his prize winners at the !
2013 Plant Show West. !

WHAT'S BLOOMING

From Janet Hassell's *North-facing window* (amazing!), the Crown of Thorns (*Euphorbia millii* v. *peppermint candy*) shown below produced blooms on January 6, 2014.



The *Pachypodium bispinosum* above left and the *Euphorbia millii* v. *alba* on the right, bloomed as well, with more buds on the way. These plants were acquired on our field trip to Crump's Greenhouse this past summer.

HORSESHOE CHRISTMAS TREE

FOR SALE!

Annual Dinner Meeting attendees will remember the unique tree that Judy McCart had made as part of the event decorations. She reports that she would like to sell it to a lucky member. It's priced at \$150, mostly to cover her welding and horseshoe costs.

It would be a great display piece for a saddle shop or gift store, or just to use at the holidays. If you are interested, give Judy a call at 623-9279 or email her at ladyj512@bresnan.net.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS: JANUARY- APRIL 2014

- FEB 3 Chinle C&SS Board Meeting - 10 am
2182 Standing Rock Dr - The Benoits*
- FEB 13 Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS
Program: LIGHTING REQUIREMENTS
FOR INDOOR PLANTS
Presenter: Dr. Curtis Swift*
- FEB 28 Friday - Set up for Plant Show West - 1 pm - Bookcliff
Gardens*
- MAR 1-2 Plant Show West - Saturday, 10-4, Sunday, 12-4*
- MAR 10 Chinle C&SS Board Meeting - 10 am
2182 Standing Rock Dr - The Benoits*
- MAR 13 Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS
Program: TBA
Presenter:
6:30 pm, Sagebrush Room, Mesa County Fairgrounds*
- MAR 22 First 2014 Garden Party - Saturday, 9 am
Western Colorado Botanical Garden*
- APR 2 Garden Party - Wednesday, 9 am
CSU Extension Garden*
- APR 7 Chinle C&SS Board Meeting - 10 am
2182 Standing Rock Dr - The Benoits*
- APR 10 Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS
Program: TBA
Presenter:
6:30 pm, Sagebrush Room, Mesa County Fairgrounds*
- APR 12 Garden Party - Saturday, 9 am
Western Colorado Botanical Garden*
- APR 19 Arbor Day/Earth Day Event - Lincoln Park - Times
TBA*