



# Succulent Morsels

News of the Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society  
January 2015 Vol. 7, No. 1

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

## JANUARY'S PROGRAM:

### CACTI & SUCCULENTS ON THE COLORADO NATIONAL MONUMENT

Don Campbell will present a power point program that features the amazing cacti and succulents that can be seen close to home on the Colorado National Monument. He will feature a collection of plants that he has been following for more than 20 years as well as great examples of the many denizens of the Monument that come back every year.



The Old Gordon Trail is one of Don's favorite hikes and he has led numerous outings through the Colorado National Monument programs as well as exploring the area with his wife, Carol.

Don's program will feature spiny and spineless echinocereus triglochidiati (claret cups), Escobaria missouriensis (Missouri pincushion), flowers, tadpoles and red-eared toads in the "Black Lagoon" near the top of the trail, and hummingbirds—all denizens of the Old Gordon Trail. They're visible, that is, if you know where to look!

This should be a great program and one you will not want to miss!

## REMINDER OF OUR NEW MEETING PLACE

Any of you who have been to the Fairgrounds lately can see that there are many changes taking place. One of the major changes is our access to the Sagebrush Room. We will no longer be able to meet there on Thursdays as we have in the past. To keep our monthly meetings on Thursdays, the Board elected to move the meetings to the Mesa Mall Community Room beginning January 8, 2015. We used this room previously before we began meeting in the Sagebrush Room.

The Community Room at the Mall is entered through a single side door on the east side of Cabelas, directly west of the east parking lot. Upon entering this door, you are in the back hallway of several stores. The Community Room is the first opening on the left side of this hall. (See *the map on page 8.*) The January Board meeting will be held at the Benoit's home on Tuesday evening, January 6, from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. The address is 2182 Standing Rock Drive off South Camp Road in the Redlands.

## 2015 OFFICERS ELECTED

We are pleased to announce the following officers were elected at the Annual Dinner Meeting: Maryann Benoit, President; Janet Hassell, Vice President; Loren Benoit, Treasurer; Deb & Glenn Mallory, Co-Secretaries; Janet Hassell, Newsletter Editor; Lisa Hamilton, Member-At-Large & Archivist. Members appointed by the President are Program Co-Chairs, Don Campbell & Sheri Skeie, and Lois Davidson, Garden Coordinator.

The interest and willingness to hold these positions is appreciated by the membership and will strive to assist them as much as possible in the coming year. Congratulations, new board members!

## 2014 ANNUAL DINNER MEETING GREAT!

Almost 40 members and guests of the Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society attended the Annual Dinner Meeting on December 11, 2014, at the Iron Bar & Grille, Tiara Rado Golf Course. Maryann & Loren Benoit and their able helpers turned the evening into a memorable one. Especially nice was the photo essay and narration by Maryann, describing the various events of the Chinle membership during 2014. Here are some of the smiling faces of those who attended!





President Maryann Benoit says a big “Thank you all for volunteering to help put on the 2014 Annual Dinner Meeting for CCSS”. She would like to recognize the many members who helped make the Dinner a success and are noted here:

Don Campbell and Lynn Dunham prepared all of the materials needed for registration, silent auction and give-aways. Joy Bush collected the door prize donations from club members. She, Lisa Hamilton and Pam Johnson helped set up the door prize area and conducted the awarding of door prizes at the end of the meeting.

Thanks also to the numerous persons who gave plants, prepared them for ADM, and cared for them until the event. A special thanks to Lynn Dunham for the use of her green house! The Silent Auction set-up was done by Don Campbell, Janet Hassell, John Moore, Loren Benoit and Walt Scheer.

Maryann Benoit and Bill Hassell set up the plant area for the give-aways. Thanks to Lois Davidson and Pat Severson who manned the registration table at the beginning of the meeting and to Loren Benoit for providing the

list of attendees. Loren Benoit and Shari Skeie took care of collecting payments from the Silent Auction winners at the end of the meeting. Don Campbell talked about the Silent Auction plants and announced the winning bids.

Thanks to the many members who stayed to clean up, pack up remaining plants and materials. It takes a lot of planning, coordination and just plain hard work to put together a successful event, and thanks to all who helped make it a success.

Last but not least, thanks to Jack and his staff at the Iron Bar & Grill, Tiara Rado Golf Course, for a delicious meal and excellent service. We have reserved the site for the 2015 Annual Dinner Meeting.

## CSSA ANNOUNCES DESERT FORUM AT HUNTINGTON GARDEN

Chris Miller, Affiliate Chair of the Cactus & Succulent Society of America asks us to share this announcement for an interesting program at the Huntington Garden in San Marino, CA. It's a bit of a distance to travel for just one day, but perhaps some members may be traveling that way and would take the opportunity to attend the free forum.

### DESERT FORUM Saturday, 17 January 2015 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

9:00 – 10:00	<b>Registration</b> Please bring your CSSA or affiliated club badge or membership card for admission
9:00 – 11:00	<b>Desert Garden</b> Knowledgeable staff and docents will be stationed throughout the Desert Garden and Desert Conservatory Aloes will be flowering
11:00 – 1:00	<b>Plant Sales</b> Gate opens by the Teaching Greenhouse at 11:00 for plant sales. Cash, checks, and credit cards accepted
1:00 – 4:30	<b>Free Time</b> Attendees are welcome to tour the gardens and galleries as of 10:30

#### Lunch:

The Rose Garden Café features a variety of sandwiches and grilled items  
The tea room at Liu Fang Yuan is a lovely option for fresh Chinese food

#### Don't miss:

"Beautiful Science: Ideas that Changed the World" in Dibner Hall (Library building)  
The newly renovated Japanese Garden  
*Liu Fang Yuan*, the Garden of Flowing Fragrance (Chinese Garden)

## WHAT'S BLOOMING?

Don Campbell proves that even in December, plants bloom in the Grand Junction gardens. On the left, the endemic gazinnias persists at the CSU garden and the Bloody Cranesbill lives up to its name on the right.



## PLANT OF THE MONTH:

*Pachypodium namaquanum* is a succulent single-stemmed plant growing to four meters tall in the arid, rocky mountains of the Richtersveld in the Northern Cape and southern Namibia. Seen from a distance, the plant has the appearance of a person trudging up a slope whence its common name of "Halfmens" (Afrikaans for 'semi-human'). It is also called Elephant's trunk. The plant on the right was featured as a Silent Auction Plant at the Annual Dinner Meeting in December 2014.

*Pachypodium namaquanum* must rate as the most sought-after and lovable of all large succulents from the arid Northern Cape and southern Namibia, otherwise known as the Gariiep Region (Orange River region). These iconic survivors of the Richtersveld who have stood the test of time have a peculiar beauty about them, a mysterious almost magical side that has fascinated generations upon generations.

The plant is CITES-listed as an Appendix 1 and 2 species, which prohibits trade unless the necessary certificates and permits have been obtained. The removal of this species by collectors poses a distinct threat to its survival.

The name *Pachypodium* is from the Greek for 'thick foot', an allusion to its swollen base, while *namaquanum* is a reference to Namaqualand. This plant belongs to the Apocynaceae or Plumeria family, and usually contains milky latex rich in glycosides and alkaloids, of which is considered poisonous.

The flowers which appear from July to September are tubular, up to 50 mm long and 10 mm across at the mouth. They are red on the inside and yellow-green outside. Fruits are pale brown and split to release the wind-dispersed seeds which are about 4 mm long and are attached to a tuft of whitish hairs that act as parachutes. Seeds normally ripen from September to December. Plants are extremely slow growing, around 0.5-1.5 cm per year and can become a hundred years old or more.



*Pachypodium namaquanum* is found in dry rocky deserts at altitudes from 300-900 m above sea level in the Gariiep Centre (a centre of floristic endemism) which has the greatest variety of succulents on earth. The climate is harsh and the weather can be quite unpredictable. Rainfall that occurs mainly in the winter varies from as little as 50 to 150 mm. Extreme aridity is experienced in rain shadows of some mountains where as little as 0-15 mm falls annually. Additional precipitation is supplied by thick layers of fog that occasionally move inland from the coast. Maximum temperature in summer may reach 48°C with a mean of  $\pm 25^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Plants seem to favour rocky and stony hill slopes that are exposed to extreme summer conditions particularly heat and wind.

It is known that desert plants normally limit exposure to solar radiation but *P. namaquanum* simply does the opposite. In response to the lower position of the sun on the horizon during winter and the

associated cooler conditions, these plants have adopted a clever method to increase their photosynthetic effect from the sun. This is particularly important as most growth takes place during winter. The stem with its leafy flower heads always inclines towards the north at an angle varying between 20° and 30°.

This tendency, which is shared by some low-growing succulent euphorbias and the Chilean cactus (*Copiapo cinerea*), is sometimes explained by the so-called "magnetic plant" theory. It is however unlikely that those plants are attracted to the poles by magnetism. A more probable theory is that plants such as *P. namaquanum* are strongly phototropic (grow in response to stimuli by sunlight) and grow in places where the sun is in the north for the





greater part of the year. They lean northwards to allow maximum exposure to their growing shoots as well as to use the sunlight in the winter to make their flowers more visible to pollinators and thus increase the plant's chances for seed set. It is a bizarre spectacle indeed when one observes these plants 'looking' towards the north. as shown by the photo on the left.

Perhaps the most fascinating story that links these plants to the people of Namaqualand is the legend of the halfmens. It is believed that these trees are half human, half plant, which is easy to understand, for when seen in the distance against the skyline, they can easily be mistaken for humans especially when in groups of adults and young ones. Nama folklore provides a delightful explanation for the tilting of the halfmens.

*“A tribe which once occupied a more forgiving part of southern Namibia was driven southwards after a long and bloody conflict. Eventually its members found themselves fleeing to the Richtersveld, a forsaken mountain desert with a fiercely broken landscape that must have been created by the gods in a moment of rage. Overcome by grief and longing for their homeland, a few among the tribe paused to gaze northward for the last time. The gods took pity on these wretched souls and turned them into half humans or halfmens in order to comfort them with a distant view of their lost homeland for eternity (Cowling & Pierce 1999).”*

## **MORE ABOUT SANTA FE CACTUS GARDENS**

In our Chinle November newsletter, we featured photos taken by Deb and Glenn Mallory of a new Botanic Garden in Santa Fe. In response, one of our readers, John Oberhausen sent this note:

*“Hello Janet,*

*I saw this month's (Chinle) newsletter had a bit about the new botanical garden in Santa Fe and it mentioned the little cactus garden. I would just like for you and members to know that if you are in Santa Fe we now have 2 large cactus gardens 10 minutes away in Eldorado. The one we finished this past spring is almost 4000 square ft in size. For more info,(or to see the gardens ) check out our website at [CactusRescueProject.info](http://CactusRescueProject.info). John 'Obie' Oberhausen”*

The following info and photos were taken from the Cactus Rescue Project website. It's pretty inspiring!!!

*“Can one person make a difference? How about two people? It began with a spring walk in the high desert during cactus blooming season. Two friends, after hiking around New Mexico and seeing how tough, hardy, and beautiful cactus flowers were, decided to start planting them in each of their yards. Joe and Obie (shown above right), armed with thick leather gloves, barbecue tongs, a Toyota pickup with over 200 thousand miles on it, started their quest to collect cactus and in the process learned of the Santa Fe Cholla.*



*“Santa Fe Cholla, (Opuntia viridiflora, syn. Cylindropuntia viridiflora), is quite different in shape, size and color bloom from the common Tree Cholla, (Opuntia imbricata, syn. Cylindropuntia imbricata), which grows throughout New Mexico and in nearby Texas, Arizona and Colorado. Smaller and bushier, it has a bronze orange to salmon pink flower, (instead of the typical purple flower of the tree cholla). It is also an endangered species.*

*“After meeting Dave Ferguson, cactus expert and curator of the Rio Grande Botanical Gardens, and learning of the plight of the Santa Fe Cholla, it became our mission to see if two total novices could save such a beautiful and worthy plant. Thus the beginning of the Cactus Rescue Project, (CRP). Why is this plant endangered? Because it sits on*



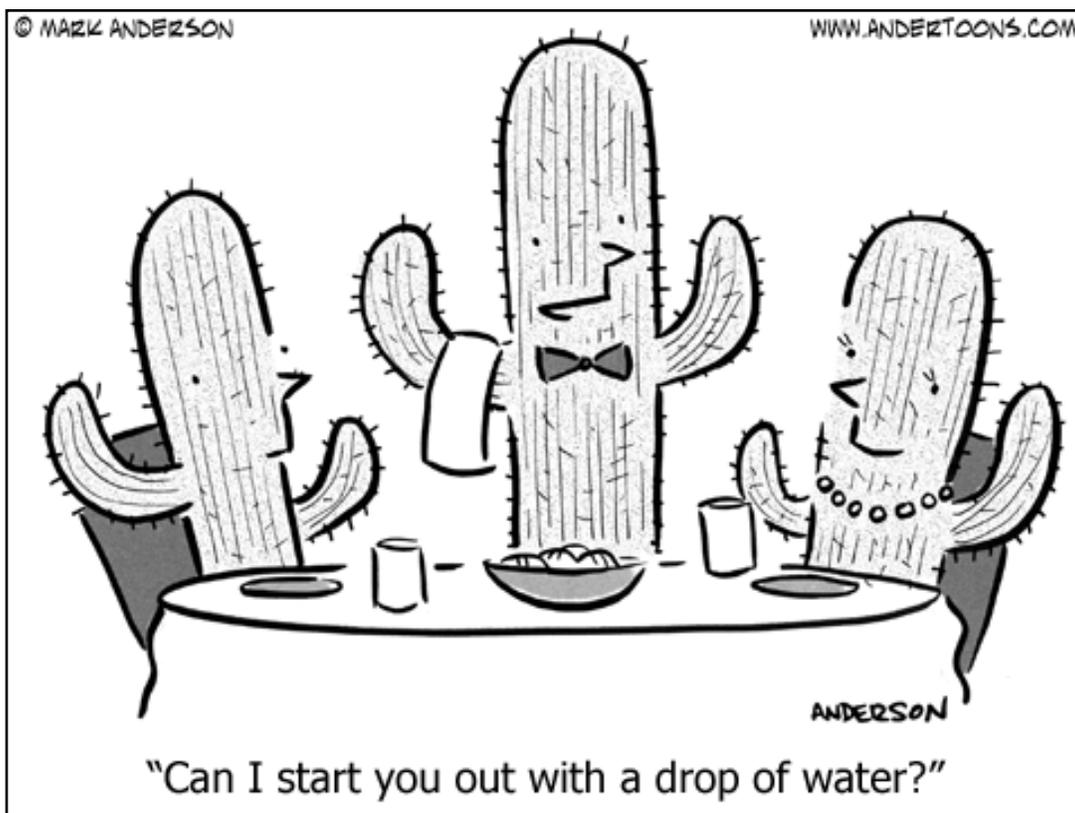
prime real estate and its existence is no competition to builders, developers and the public's lack of knowledge about its plight. Without the park limiting development, the Santa Fe Cholla could already have been gone.

"Santa Fe is one of two homes to the Santa Fe Cholla. There are approximately only 100 mature plants left in the park. Its second home is 20 miles north between Pojoaque and Espanola where some small groups are found at random places....With numerous Santa Fe Cholla growing in our own yards we hope to eventually complement or exceed the quantity found in the wild. We're continuing to root plants for distribution to friends, neighbors and interested parties. in Colorado and New Mexico. We've been very encouraged by the interest people have shown in Santa Fe Cholla once they know about its status as an endangered plant here in NM. We've taught classes and have planted Santa Fe Cholla in many community gardens.

"Can two people make a difference? We sure are working on it! We are now partnering with the NM EMNRD Forestry Division in an effort to ensure the survival of this beautiful cactus."

**Thanks, guys! Your Rescue Project is cactus conservation at its finest!**

## ☆ ON THE LIGHTER SIDE!

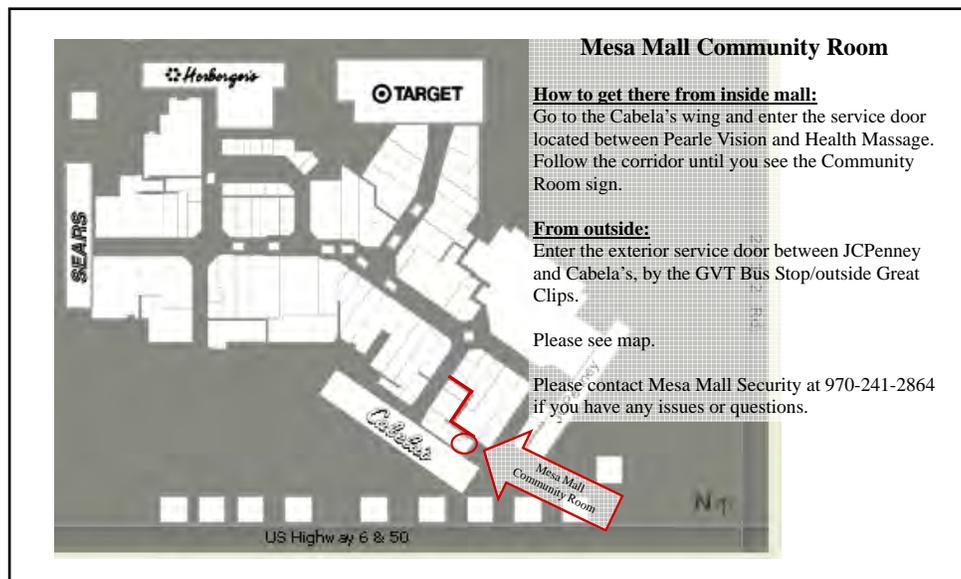


# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY-MARCH 2015

- Jan. 5 Chinle C&SS Board Mtg - 7-9 pm  
2182 Standing Rock Drive  
The Redlands off S. Camp Road
- JAN 8 Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS  
6:30 pm  
Program: Cacti & Succulents on the Colorado National Monument  
Presenter: Don Campbell  
Location: Mesa Mall Community Rm
- JAN 17 Program at the Math & Science Center  
1-2 pm  
Presenter: Janet Hassell  
Topic: Dish Gardening with Cacti & Succulents
- FEB 2 Chinle C&SS Board Mtg - Time to be announced  
2182 Standing Rock Drive  
The Redlands off S. Camp Road
- FEB 12 Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS  
6:30 pm  
Program: Managing Soils & Water Needs  
Presenter: Dr. Curtis Swift  
Location: Mesa Mall Community Rm
- MAR 2 Chinle C&SS Board Mtg - Time to be announced  
2182 Standing Rock Drive  
The Redlands off S. Camp Road
- MAR 12 Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS  
6:30 pm  
Program: Insects & Pesticides  
Presenter: Bob Hammon, CSU Extension Entomologist  
Location: Mesa Mall Community Rm

ALSO IN MARCH: GARDEN PARTIES TO BEGIN!!! TIMES & DATES TO COME!



**2015 Chinle Cactus and Succulent Society Board**

President: Maryann Benoit  
970-270-3287

Co-Secretaries: Deb & Glenn Mallory  
970-245-6168

Treasurer: Loren Benoit  
970-254-7471

Vice President &  
Newsletter Editor: Janet Hassell  
970-263-0910

Web Master: Tom Burrows  
970-462-6767

Member at Large: Lisa Hamilton  
970-987-1418

Program Committee:  
Don Campbell: 970-245-5088  
Shari Skeie: 970-963-7266

Past President: Bill Hassell  
970-263-0910

Garden Activities Coordinator:  
Lois Davidson  
970-242-2879

**Chinle Cactus and Succulent Society usually meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm.**

**Meetings are held in the Community Room at the Mesa Mall. Guests are always welcome.**

**Chinle Mailing Address: Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society  
PO Box 233**

**Grand Junction, CO 81502**

**CHINLE C&SS WEBSITE: [www.chinlecactusclub.org](http://www.chinlecactusclub.org)**



*Seven Swans (?) A-swimming...but no Partridges!!*

