



Succulent Morsels

News of the Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society
May 2015 Vol. 7, No. 5

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

MAY ACTIVITIES:

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND—BOB HAMMON



Bob Hammon is an Area Extension Agent (Entomology/Agronomy) with CSU Extension in the Tri River Area. He is a photographer of plants and insects for the past 30+ years, and makes numerous presentations on plant and insect interactions. He holds a BS from the University of Michigan and MS from Colorado State University.

Bob tells us that he is “going to speak about native pollinators associated with cactus and some important cactus pests. If weather conditions allow, I hope to include a visit to the cactus garden at the botanic garden to observe pollinators in action.” After last month’s program by Rich Alward with its emphasis on bees as pollinators, this is a great follow up program. It is always nice to go out to the gardens and experience the ecology first hand.

As always, the program begins at 6:30 pm in the Western Colorado Botanical Garden library on May 14, 2015.

OLD GORDON TRAIL FIELD TRIP ON MAY 16

Put on your hiking boots, brown-bag lunch, sunscreen & water and get ready for a fun and educational visit to the Old Gordon Trail led by Don Campbell. You may remember his power point presentation on the hike earlier this year. Now is an opportunity to see the “real thing”, up close and personal. Here is the schedule:

8:30 - 9:00 am	Gather in the Devil’s Kitchen Picnic Area
parking lot just inside the East Entrance. Restrooms are available.	
9:00 - 12:30 pm	Hike the Old Gordon Trail!
11:30 - 12:30 pm	Eat your brown-bag lunch somewhere along the trail.
12:30 - 1:30 pm	Hike back to the Devil’s Kitchen Picnic area.

Don reminds us to wear proper boots/shoes and protective clothing. Also to bring sunscreen, insect repellent, lunch, snacks and water. The Benoit’s will have a cooler with bottled water available at the start of the hike. Don Campbell will have a plant list handout.

Park pass permits are required for all vehicle entering the Monument. If you don’t have one, join up and carpool with someone who has one.



E. missouriensis (Missouri pincushion) often seen on the trail.

PUT MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL ON YOUR “TO-DO” LIST!

We’re still open for members who haven’t renewed their Chinle memberships for 2015. Dues are the same as they have been for the past 10 years—\$20 for an individual and \$25 for a family. Please send your check to “Chinle Cactus & Succulent Society”, PO Box 233, Grand Junction, CO 81502. We look forward to continuing the work of the Society with all of you! If your dues are not paid, we will unfortunately have to remove your name from our active roster and can’t continue to mail a hard copy to you. Since it doesn’t cost anything to send out the electronic copy of the newsletter, and you are currently receiving an electronic copy of the newsletter, we will move your name to our “Friends of Chinle” mailing list and continue sending it.

KEEP SNAPPING THOSE PHOTOS!

We are already receiving photos for the contest (look on page 3, 5 & 6) for the first few entries. Remember that the contest period is Jan. 1st through Sept. 30th, 2015. Photos must be taken in 2015. You may submit as many photos as you like, but at the end of the contest period, you will be asked to choose up to three photos for judging. Also, accurately identify plants, where the plant was photographed, date of photograph, etc.

It goes without saying that the subject matter should be related to cacti and succulents. If you have a comment, story, or article to accompany the photo, feel free to submit it for inclusion in the newsletter. Please submit photos in full size jpg format to ensure the best quality. Send by email to Janet Hassell, janethassell@gmail.com.

See the March newsletter for the Judging Criteria for the contest.

ALWARD’S APRIL PROGRAM A GLIMPSE INTO THE RIGORS OF RESEARCH

The April Regular Meeting of the Chinle Cactus and Succulent Society featured Rich Alward, Principal Ecologist and Owner of Aridlands Natural Resource Consulting in Grand Junction, Colorado. His presentation focused on The Colorado Plateau region of western Colorado and eastern Utah which host several rare endemic plants, including federally threatened *Sclerocactus* species that included the *S. brevispinus* in Utah and the *S. glaucus* located west of Debeque.

His research looked at the effects oil and gas exploration and production has had on endangered cacti species and the bees that pollinate them. Some surprising findings came out of his study. Proximity to oil and gas well pads actually correlated with sometimes positive effects on the size of the sclerocactus species in the study plots. This finding held true in both the Grand Junction and Utah study areas. Growth patterns were more affected by precipitation than proximity to well sites or other disturbances such as road beds, tanks, etc..



He discussed several study methods to evaluate the pollinator communities and used several techniques to evaluate whether pollen augmentation made any difference in cacti fruit production. They did discover that if bees were near oil and gas sites, there was a negative correlation between being nearer to the site(s) and the number of bees, and some decrease in fruit production among cacti, although not statistically significant.

The research process, he explained, was very tedious—counting bees, measure cacti height and circumference, and marking blooms as controls. Weed control is also important in preserving endangered species but difficult to maintain at remote and multiple oil and gas sites. The weeds often win!

WHAT'S BLOOMING? "Sclerocactus mesa verde!"

by Don Campbell

In 1994 I purchased two *Sclerocactus mesa verde* plants for \$10 each from Mesa Garden in Belen, NM. They arrived in the mail as very small bare-rooted seedlings. Since they were so small, I potted them and planned to let them gain some size before transplanting into my outdoor C&S garden at our old house on Avenal Lane. It didn't take me too long to over water and one of the two seedlings lost it's roots.



Sclerocactus mesa verde - Morning,
March 30, 2015 - 9 flower buds

I'd never tried grafting cacti before, however, the prospect of losing a rare little cactus seedling that I'd just paid \$10 for inspired me to give it a try. Fortunately, the previous year I'd potted up several joints of the cold-hardy spineless *Opuntia debreczyi*.

The graft took and a year later I transplanted both the grafted and un-grafted plants outside in my C&S garden at our old house on Avenal Lane. Over the next couple of decades, both plants survived/thrived and, after maturing, bloomed each spring.

In the spring of 2014 we sold our Avenal Lane house and moved a short distance to a new house on Link Lane. Before leaving Avenal Lane I dug up and potted a number of my smaller outdoor cacti, in anticipation of adding a small outdoor C&S garden to the Link Lane house. These potted plants languished in their pots all summer-long. Finally, in early winter, I established a small C&S garden at the new house.



Afternoon April 5, 2015
The plant in the rear is the grafted
plant and has two fewer flower buds.
The ungrafted plant has 5 of 9 flower
buds open.



Afternoon, April 6, 2015. Six of nine flower buds open.

In the spring of 2015 I was delighted to find that all of my transplanted outdoor cacti had survived the move and neglect they had endured the previous summer and were preparing to plump up, bud out and bloom.

For additional info re *Sclerocactus mesa verde*, copy and paste in your browser: *Sclerocactus mesa verde* (Mesa Verde cactus) - Rare Plant List

APRIL GARDEN PARTY'S PRESENT SOME "BINDING" CHALLENGES!

Gardeners at the April 1st ("no foolin'") Garden Party at the CSU Extension Garden were Maryann & Loren Benoit, Tom Burrows, Don Campbell, Janet & Bill Hassell and Glenn Mallory. We found the usual pesky weeds

such as coshia, bind weed, thistle, rabbit brush, and cochineal infestations. All in all, however, the CSU garden seems to be in good shape into the spring.



Gardeners on April 18th at the



Western Colorado Botanical Garden included Maryann & Loren Benoit, Tom Burrows, Lois Davidson, Janet & Bill Hassell, Glenn Mallory and Kate Weissenburger (who just happened to be celebrating her birthday that day, in and amongst the prickly things!). Bind weed seems to have taken over the western portion of the garden which is most challenging to remove, especially when it emerges out of an opuntia patch.



Bindweed - VERY nasty stuff!





Birthday girl, Kate, selects an *Cylindropuntia imbricata* for planting at her home. A “perk” for her gardening efforts!



Multiple buds are harbingers of many blooms to come! The garden should be extra beautiful this year. Come visit in early May

JUST IN FROM PHOENIX!

Dave Kennedy, Reporter

The Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society Show & Sale was the weekend April 11th and 12th, 2015, at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix. We went down today to have a look.

Admittedly it's been some time since I've been to the Denver one but this show appeared to be quite a bit bigger. The sale portion was smaller than the Denver sale, though. The sale at Phoenix was outside on a very nice day. The gardens were blooming nicely, but we didn't experience much of it as the no-see-ums were out in force and chased us back to the car. (Sorry, Dave!)

Here are a selection of Dave's photos from the event,

showing some of the prize winners as well as the displays and sales areas.





PLANT OF THE MONTH: Mountain Ball Cactus (*Pediocactus simpsonii*)

Other Names: Simpson's hedgehog cactus, Simpson's pincushion cactus, Simpson's footcactus

Family: Cactaceae (Cactus Family)

Description: single spherical stem is 6 inches in diameter with conical-shaped tubercles in spires. Each tubercle is tipped with an areole containing two brown central spines and 20-45 short radial spines. White, yellow, or pink flowers are produced in April with tan, dry fruits appearing in midsummer.



Range: occurs throughout the western United States from Oregon to South Dakota, north to Montana, and south to New Mexico. At Colorado National Monument, look for it growing at lower elevations in powdery soils amongst pinyon, juniper, and sage.

Did you know: a favorite among gardeners and cactus collectors, the mountain ball cactus is native to Colorado and the Four Corners region. Although it may not be hard to find the mountain ball cactus growing here at Colorado National Monument, this incredibly spiny cactus has become endangered or threatened throughout other parts of its range.

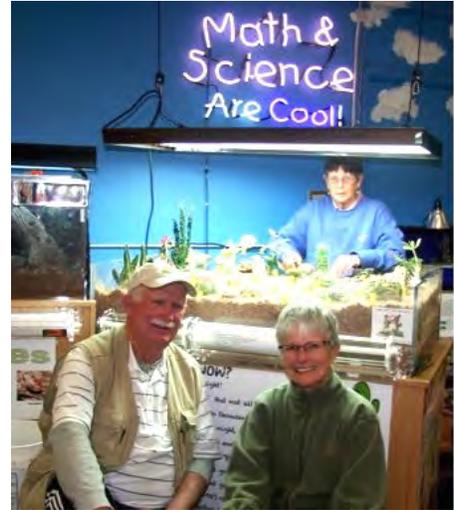
Thanks to the National Park Service web page on the Colorado National Monument for this information. Photo by Janet Hassell, taken April 10, 2015, in her cactus garden.

MATH & SCIENCE DISPLAY UPDATE

Work continues to progress on the Chinle C&SS display at the Math & Science Center. The plants have been selected and placed, and what remains is a final adjustment of the light source height, descriptive information on the “rollers” in front of the stand, format and location of other information such as a glossary of terms, information on the “lifestyle” of succulents and how plants are classified. Don Campbell has led the project with assistance from Chinle members, Lois Davidson, Janet Hassell, Glenn Mallory and Walt Scheer.



Selection of plants obtained from Crump's Greenhouse in Buena Vista, CO.



Helpers on the project.



The “final” (almost) project.



Don checks out the plant placement.

(Photos by Don Campbell.)

We will continue to keep you posted on the progress of this display. Don says “we still have some tweaking to do to get it just right.” Take a trip to the M&S Center and see for yourself.

In Memory of Charlie Baker

Long time member of the Chinle Cactus and Succulent Society, Charlie died this week. We will recall his dry sense of humor, his love of penstemons, and his knowledge of succulents. He willingly drove Lois and himself the long distance from Cedaredge to attend meetings. On the 2009 Garden Tour, everyone was amazed at the wild flowers that grew abundantly in his gardens. He leaves his wife Lois and many good friends, but will be long remembered.



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE!



View from the rear of Don Campbell's vehicle!

Some cacti that never need watering (from Maryann Benoit)



CALENDAR OF EVENTS - May through June 2015

- MAY 4 Chinle C&SS Board Mtg - 7-9 pm
2182 Standing Rock Drive
The Redlands off S. Camp Road
- MAY 6 Garden Party - Saturday, WCBG at 9 am
- MAY 14 Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS
6:30 pm
Program: "Insects & Cacti"
Presenter: Bob Hammon, Entomologist
Location: Western Colorado Botanical Garden Library
- May 16 Chinle Field Trip - Old Gordon's Trail
Meet at Devil's Kitchen area parking lot between 8:30 and 9 am.
Bring a sack lunch, water.
Lunch will take place on the hike.
Remember sun screen, hats, and cameras.
- MAY 20 Garden Party - Wednesday, CSU, at 9 am
- JUNE 1 Chinle C&SS Board Mtg - 7-9 pm
2182 Standing Rock Drive
The Redlands off S. Camp Road
- JUNE 6 Garden Party - Saturday, WC Botanical Gardens - at 8 am
- JUNE 11 Regular Meeting of the Chinle C&SS
6:30 pm
Program: Growing Outdoor Cacti & Succulents
Presenter: Leo Chance
Location: Western Colorado Botanical Garden Library
- JUNE 20 Garden Party - Saturday, CSU Extension - at 8 am

NOTICE: No regularly scheduled meeting in August. Will be replaced by a Field Trip to Crumps Greenhouse in Buena Vista. Details forthcoming!

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 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm.

Meetings are held in the Western Colorado Botanical Garden Library,

641 Struthers Ave., Grand Junction, CO. 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