



DRY TIMES

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No. 3

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HAPPY ST PATRICK'S DAY !!

**March meeting
Tuesday, March 6, 2012
7:30 pm**

**Burton W. Chace County Park
13650 Mindanao Way, Marina del Rey**

PROGRAM

Namibia: A Dry Place in a Wet Time, 2011
Woody Minnich

PLANT OF THE MONTH

CACTUS:

Mammillaria, hooked spine

SUCCULENT:

Conophytum, Cheiridopsis, Glottiphyllum

Sunset welcomes Woody Minnich back for a talk about his 2011 trip to Namibia (more below). Woody is a plantsman and retired teacher who now lives in New Mexico. He has traveled widely in the Americas and has lately ventured to Africa to see and photograph succulents in habitat. The membership is in for an excellent program.



Woody on a trip to Brazil

Last month Tom Glavich spoke about all types of bulbs and his talk featured many spectacular flowers.

**** If your last name begins with letter M-R, please bring goodies to munch on at the break. Thank you!**

NAMIBIA

A dry place in a wet time, 2011

Namibia, rivaled only by the Chilean Atacama, is one of the driest regions in the world. Much of its western coast, located in the southern reaches of the African continent, rarely, if ever gets rain. Some of these areas are only sustained by the seasonal nightly fogs. Due to these unique conditions, it is in some of these very arid, Mojave desert-like landscapes, where many of the world's most unique plants and animals can be found.

Similar to the infrequent rainy El Niño years that affect our California and Chilean coasts, Namibia had an extreme summer rainfall January thru April 2011. It is reported that this was one of the heaviest summer rains ever experienced in Namibia.

Our objectives were to visit this amazing country in this unusually wet time when the plants and scenery may be different than what most explorers might normally experience. We were in luck and our timing was perfect. When we arrived, the last of the torrential rains were spitting and sputtering off into the eastern reaches of the country. Windhoek, the capital of the country, was green and the weather looked promising. Needless to say, unlike some of our other friends who had visited the country the previous month, we were blessed with open roads and passable river crossings. The weather stayed sunny, warm and accommodating for the entire three weeks.

From Windhoek we took a giant clockwise loop to the south and then did the same from Windhoek to the North. We experienced the succulent-rich areas to the Orange River, and from there we migrated up to the famous Luderitz Bay. The Richtersveld vegetation in these southern environments included many fantastic plants from the statuesque *Pachypodium namaquanum* to the many jewel like mesembs. One could spend a life time studying all these different genera, some of which included: the *Lithops*, *Sarcocaulons*, *Tylecodons*, *Conophytums*, *Othonnas*, *Aloes*, *Hoodias*, *Cerarias*, *Haworthias*, *Titanopsis*, *Adromischus*, *Pelargoniums*, *Crassulas*, *Avonias*, *Larryleachias* and many, many more. On our northern loop we traveled to the west towards Swakopmund and then up to the impressive Epupa Falls on Namibia's northern border to Angola. From there we eventually meandered our way back to Windhoek. On this northern journey we encountered a very different group of succulent genera. The plant taxa generally became larger and often very sculptural. We saw: *Cyphostemmas*, *Pachypodiums*, *Welwitschias*, *Commiphoras*, *Sesamothamnus*, *Adansonias*, *Moringas*, *Aloes*, *Hoodias*, *Adenias*, *Adeniums* and so on and so on. We also stumbled across many wonderful animals, not in the game reserves, as well as some of the most beautiful indigenous peoples. The Herero and Himba tribes were both unexpected cultural highlights of this amazing trip!

I took over 10,000 photos, and a few have found their way into this presentation. Be prepared to see the trip of a lifetime and the total of Namibia, edited of course!

Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich

Cacti of the Month, March 2012 – *Hook-Spined Mammillaria*

Mammillaria is one of the larger genera in the *Cactus* family, and one of the most variable, with some members remaining as solitary columns for their entire lives, some remaining as fingernail size solitary globulars, some straight spined, and some clumped and heavily spined with hooks. Although the hooked spined species give the genus one of its common names, “fishhook cactus”, they are not as often grown as the straight spined species. They are not as friendly either, with the hooks catching on skin and clothes, and pieces of stem coming off, when least expected.



Mammillaria bombycina entered in the 2001 Intercity Show by Laverne Pitzer

Although most *Mammillaria* are native to Mexico, some species in the genus can be found from Columbia to Kansas and California. The species from the tropics and warmer areas are rarely tolerant of cold and damp. Those from the drier desert regions are also intolerant of continued damp, but can take considerable cold.

The secrets to good growth are a continued supply of fertilizer during the growing season, strong light, and maintenance of a clean and insect free growing environment.

Propagation of Hooked Spined *Mammillaria* is easy. Cuttings can be taken at any time during the growing season (April to early November), left to dry for a few days and replanted in a clean potting mix. Rooting is rapid, with short white roots generally appearing after a couple of weeks. *Mammillaria* are one of the easiest species to grow from seed. The seeds are simply placed on top of a damp potting mix, covered with a light coating of gravel, placed in a plastic bag in bright light, but out of direct sun and allowed to germinate. Germination usually occurs in a week or 10 days. The seedlings can stay in the plastic bag for several weeks until they get large enough to survive unprotected, and should then be removed to a still shaded, but brighter and drier environment. Most will survive, and grow quickly.

References:

- E. Anderson, **The Cactus Family**
- J. Pilbeam, **Cactus for the Connoisseur**
- R. Craig, **The Mammillaria Handbook**
- C. Innes & C. Glass **Cacti**

Tom Glavich April 2003

PLANT OF THE MONTH 2012

Cactus

Succulent

CACTUS

SUCCULENT

March	Mammillaria, hooked spine	Conophytum, Cheiridopsis, Glottiphyllum
April	Astrophytum	Pelargonium, Sarcocaulon
May	Parodia (Notocactus)	Euphorbia – Madagascar
June	Echinopsis	Pachypodium, Adenium
September	Ariocarpus, Leuchtenbergia	Stapelia, Fockea, Raphionacme
October	Ferocactus, Echinocactus	Dudleya, Echeveria
November	Melocactus, Buiningia, Discocactus	Crassula, Sedum

February 2012 Plant of the Month Winners

Junior Cactus

None entered

Senior Cactus

1 st Place	Brian Gold	<i>Gymnocalycium saglionis</i>
2 nd Place	Brian Gold	<i>Gymnocalycium spegazzinii</i>
3 rd Place	Brian Gold	<i>Gymnocalycium baldianum</i>

Junior Succulent

1 st Place	William Wilk	<i>Aloe</i> cv. Lizard Lips
2 nd Place	Gretchen Davis	<i>Aloe</i> cv. Blue Elf
	Judy/Bill Campbell	<i>Aloe</i> hybrid
3 rd Place	Gretchen Davis	<i>Aloe</i> cv. David Verity
	Lemona Lott	<i>Aloe</i> cv. Saunaoe

Senior Succulent

1 st Place	Laurel Woodley	<i>Aloe</i> cv. Guido
2 nd Place	Laurel Woodley	<i>Aloe</i> cv. Coral Fire
	Nels Christianson	<i>Aloe</i> cv. DZ
3 rd Place	Brian Gold	<i>Aloe</i> cv. Midnight

The February POM judges were Bonnie Ikemura and Phillip Herrera accompanied by Tom Glavich.



UPCOMING EVENTS

March 3 & 4, "Prelude to Spring" Winter Bulb Festival, UC Irvine Arboretum. March 3 10 am – 4 pm, March 4 11 am – 3 pm. Info.: Laura Lyons 949-824-5833.

March 23 & 24 Orange County Cactus and Succulent Spring Show and Sale, 9am-5pm, 1000 S. State College Blvd, (Anaheim Methodist Church), Anaheim CA, Contact Vince Basta 714-267-4329.

April 7 & 8, South Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale at South Coast Botanic Gardens, 26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes, CA, info. 310-832-2262.

April 14 & 15, Green Scene Plant Sale, at The Fullerton Arboretum, 1900 Associated Rd., Fullerton CA 92831.

May 5 & 6, Sunset Cactus and Succulent Society Show and Sale, Veterans Memorial Center, Garden Room, 4117 Overland Ave., Culver City CA, info. 310-822-1783.

May 6, South Bay Epiphyllum Society Show and Sale, 9am-4:30 pm, South Coast Botanical Gardens, info. 310-833-6823.

May 13, Huntington Plant Sale, 10 am – 5 pm, Huntington Botanical Gardens, 1151 Oxford Rd., San Marino CA, info. 626-405-2160.

May 18 & 19, Gates Cactus and Succulent Society, 31st Show and Sale, Fri & Sat 9 am – 4:30 pm, Jurupa Mountains Cultural Center, 7621 Granite Hill Drive, Glen Avon, CA, info. 951-360-8802.

May 26 & 27, Central Coast Cactus and Succulent Society Annual Show and Sale, 10 am – 4 pm, Ludwick Center, 864 Santa Rosa, San Luis Obispo, CA, info. 805-237-2054, www.centralcoastcactus.org

June 2 & 3, San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society Summer Show and Sale, Balboa Park, Room 101, info. 858-382-1797.

June 9 & 10, Los Angeles Cactus and Succulent Society Plant Show and Sale, 9th from 9 am – 5 pm, 10th from 9 am – 3:30 pm, Sepulveda Garden Center, 16633 Magnolia Blvd., Encino CA, info. lacss.contact@gmail.com



Conophytum obcordellum "Lambertence", collection of John Matthews
photo by N. Christianson

If you don't collect stamps, please save the envelope you received this newsletter in for Nels. Thank you.

About DRY TIMES

DRY TIMES is published monthly by the *Sunset Succulent Society* (SSS), whose officers are:

President	Rosalie Gorchoff	(310) 822-1783	Vice Pres.	Brigitte Williams	(818) 455-1246
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		2nd Vice Pres., Plant of the Month		Laurel Woodley	

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