



DRY TIMES

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No. 9

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September meeting
Tuesday, September 6, 2016
7:30 pm

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

PROGRAM

Under the Spell of Succulents
Jeff Moore

PLANT OF THE MONTH

CACTUS:
Melocactus, Buiningia

SUCCULENT:
Stapeliads, Fockea, Raphionacme

Jeff Moore has owned and operated a small retail nursery, Solana Succulents, in Solana Beach, for 24 years. He gained a bit of local fame for his “undersea” succulent gardens. He is married with two sons. Jeff has published two succulent books: “Under the Spell of Succulents” and “Aloes and Agaves in Cultivation.” His talk will follow the flow of his first book with discussion and images of growers, collectors, landscaping, container gardens, bonsai, along with major succulent categories such as *Aloe*, *Agave*, *Aeonium*, cacti, etc. He will also talk about the bookmaking process. Jeff will bring books and plants to sell.





Jeff Moore

** If your last name begins with **M–R** please bring in goodies for the refreshment table.

2016 Plant of the Month

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>CACTUS</u>	<u>SUCCULENT</u>
September	<i>Melocactus, Buiningia</i>	<i>Stapeliads, Fockea, Raphionacme</i>
October	<i>Gymnocalycium</i>	<i>Adenium, Pachypodium</i>
November	<i>Copiapoa, Matucana</i>	<i>Haworthia</i>

Plant of the Month, Cactus: *Melocactus, Buiningia*

Melocactus are among the first cacti found, probably discovered and brought back to Europe by Columbus. Species native to Venezuela were in cultivation in England (and well grown even by our standards) as early as 1569! They are native to the Central America, the Caribbean and coastal South America, the range stretching up to Puerto Rico, and west into tropical Peru.

Melocactus are immediately recognizable by the large cephalium that develops on mature plants. *Melocactus* grow as normal appearing, but flowerless, globular cacti until they reach maturity. This can take from 6 to 15 years in cultivation, with a greater range in habitat. Once they reach maturity, the body stops growing vigorously (it still grows slowly). Most of the plant energy goes into producing a cylindrical flowering and fruiting structure known as a cephalium. This is usually white, with short hairs of yellow, orange or red. As the years go by, the cephalium becomes more cylindrical, with the base becoming more colorful. The flowers are usually a red-purple, and the fruits are almost always a bright red, to attract birds. With age, the cephalium can grow to 18 inches or more in height, occasionally bifurcating or trifurcating.

Melocactus curvispinus f. lobelii is the first pictured *Melocactus*. The 1570 description is that of a plant the size of a medium pumpkin or the largest of melons, weighing 9 1/3 pounds with 14 bulging ribs bearing ‘fearsome’ horny incurved spines like a porcupine or hedgehog. You might as well have the first.

Melocactus matanzanus has a white cephalium with orange to red spines getting denser towards the edge. Native to Cuba. Start like spines.

Melocactus oaxacensis is an olive green plant, smaller than most other *Melocactus*. The cephalium tends to be short, with dense brown spines. Flowers are a dark rose. This species is native to Oaxaca, and rarely seen.

Buiningia are (as far as known) confined to a single state in Brazil, Minas Gerais, and are concentrated around the town of Pedra Azul. *Buiningia* (and the rest of the *Coleocephalocereus*) are distinguished by producing a cephalium (a region of dense hair like spination from which flowers and fruit appear). Although other genera of *cacti* have cephalia, the cephalia of *Buiningia* are located on one side and are mostly contained in a groove in the stem.

References:

Britton and Rose, **The Cactaceae**; Edward Anderson, **The Cactus Family**; Rowley, **A History of Succulent Plants**; Innes, C. and Glass, C., **Cacti**

Tom Glavich November 2004



Buiningia purpurea at Itinga, Minas Gerais, photos by N.Christianson



Buiningia aurea at Pedra Azul, Minas Gerais



Melocactus ernestii at Itinga, Minas Gerais

Plant of the Month, Succulent: *Stapeliads, Fockea, Raphionacme*

Stapeliae are stem succulents which are often angular. Most species are less than one foot in height. They represent about thirty families, the most common being *Caralluma*, *Duvalia*, *Echidnopsis*, *Edithcolea*, *Hoodia*, *Huernia*, *Orbea*, *Quaqua*, *Pseudolithos* and *Stapelia*. Most abundant in warm, dry climates, they originate from southern Africa to the Arabian peninsula and east to Pakistan, India and Myanmar. One single species is found in Europe. The stapeliads are known for their beautiful flowers, frequently star-shaped with intricate structure and often with foul odor.

The genus *Fockea* contains 6-10 southern African caudiciform dioecious vines. Most common in collections are *F. angustifolia*, *F. capensis* and the rapidly growing *F. edulis*. They are not very demanding in culture but require a winter dormant period. The plants are self-fertile, requiring two plants to set seed.

Raphionacme has about 36 species which can be found from Angola and Congo east to Tanzania and south to South Africa. There has been debate whether *Raphionacme* should be placed in Asclepidaceae or Apocynaceae with most botanists currently favoring the latter. These are medium to large tuberous plants which require a winter rest. Some of the most common in collections are *F. burkei*, *F. flanaganii*, *F. globosa*, *F. grandiflora*, *F. longifolia*, and *F. procumbens*.



Vining of *Fockea edulis*



Rhytidocaulon fulleri, photos by N. Christianson

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 3, Huntington Botanical Gardens Succulent Symposium, all day at the Huntington.

Sept. 10, Long Beach Cactus Club annual Plant Auction, 12:00-5:00pm, Rancho Los Alamitos, 6400 Bixby Hill Rd., Long Beach, CA 90615, info: 562-631-5876.

Oct. 22 & 23, Palomar Show and Sale, Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4, San Diego Botanic Gardens, 230 Quail Gardens Rd., Encinitas, Info: hciservices@gmail.com 858-382-1797.

Nov. 5 & 6, San Gabriel Cactus and Succulent Society, 9AM-4PM Both Days Show and Sale, LA County Arboretum, 310 N. Baldwin, Arcadia, CA. Manny Rivera 626-780-6957 or John Matthews 661-714-1052.

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.	Laurel Woodley, Plant of the Month
Secretary	Peggy Oberg	(310) 645-7946	Treasurer	Gretchen Davis

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