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Kaktos Komments

a bimonthly publication of the Houston Cactus and Succulent Society
to promote the study of cacti and other succulents



Opuntia Lindheimerii
by Tom Cardinal

From the editor**Karla Halpaap-Wood**

This edition of the KK has a few more pages, thanks to some dedicated HCSS members who contributed with articles. Thank you Kathy Fewox, Richard Stamper, Liliana Cracraft, and Tom Cardinal for the cover photo.



Astrophytum ornatum flowers
from Tom's garden

Membership**Kathy Fewox**

The May 21, 2018 meeting of HCSS was attended by nineteen members. We welcomed four guests: July Olson, Victoria Castillo, Jolie Pagel, and Wm. M. Groth.

Attending the June 27 meeting were twenty-one members. Joining us were four repeat guests: Lynne Schafer, Suzanne Siegel, July Olson, and Victoria Castillo. Also attending were first-time guests Jenn M. Smith and Saldino Munoz, Jr. Generous members donated three very nice door prizes. An *Agave titanota*, donated by Josie Watts and Bruce Moffett, was won by visitor Jenn Smith. David Thomas donated two lovely *Euphorbia milii* plants, which went home with Teresa Garcia and Imtiaz Bangee. Congratulations to the lucky winners! Liliana Cracraft continues to travel often to see her mother and cannot make it to most meetings. Her mom is in poor health, and your prayers are appreciated. In between trips to México, she has managed to prepare a few articles for the KK, and give a few talks on C&S to the West University, Braeswood Place, and Sugar Creek Gardening Clubs. She has also been invited by the Houston Federation of Garden Clubs to be their speaker in November.

As always, please send any news of HCSS members and their families to kathyfewox@aim.com.

Calendar:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| July 11, 2018 | 7:30 pm Board Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center. |
| July 25, 2018 | 7:30 pm Membership Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center.
This is our 55th anniversary with a potluck dinner |
| August 29, 2018 | 7:30 pm Membership Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center.
Program by Wally Ward, HCSS: "Hylocereus: Central America, Vietnam, Dragon Fruit, and How to Harvest and Prepare 'Wet' Cactus Seeds for Sowing or Storage."
Wally will have seeds and seedlings for the membership at the August meeting. |
| September 8-9, 2018 | Show and Sale at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center. |
| September 12, 2018 | 7:30 pm Board Meeting at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center. |

Spring Field Trip Day 1

by Kathy Fewox

The HCSS field trip to Georgetown, Austin, and Inks Lake began Friday, June 1 with us making our individual ways to our accommodations in Georgetown. Josie Watts and Bruce Moffett, Dick and Phyllis McEuen, Cindy Gray, and Kathy Fewox were staying at the Best Western Plus. David Van Langen and his wife Jennie were staying at the Days Inn just down the road. That night, Josie, Bruce, Cindy, and Kathy had Italian food at Tony & Luigi's Restaurant. The food was very good, and we had a very enjoyable time.

Saturday morning we went to Richard Stamper's plant sale. Joining us there was Robert Smith (who came for the sale only). Richard's greenhouse is wonderful, and his plants predictably perfect. There were a lot of people at the sale, besides the HCSS contingent. Among those attending were members of the Austin Cactus and Succulent Society. It was fun meeting, or in some cases becoming reacquainted with, members of other societies. It was wonderful visiting with Richard and Gloria, and seeing their beautiful new house. They very generously provided us with snacks and cold drinks.

After the sale, Dick and Phyllis split from the group in order to attend a wedding. Several of us went to lunch at Monument Cafe in Georgetown. Once we'd filled up on a variety of good things, the HCSS Traveling Show moved on to East Austin Succulents to buy (what else) more cacti and succulents. It is a wonderful nursery, and well worth visiting if you find yourself in Austin with time to kill and money to spend. All tired out, we then headed back to our motel rooms. Later, Bruce and Josie, Richard and Gloria, Cindy, Kathy, and Dave Van Langen had dinner at Catfish Parlour. Jennie Van Langen joined us briefly but felt too ill to stay. After dinner, we retired to our motel rooms to rest up for the next day's activities.

Sunday, June 3 started out with the Best Western group up early for breakfast before loading up our vehicles and checking out. We were to meet up with David and Jennie at the Days Inn parking lot at 8 o'clock. After some stops for gas, we arrived at Inks Lake State Park at about 9:15.

THE CACTUS SHACK

by CACTUS BOY

The First Annual Cactus Shack Open House happened Saturday, June 2, 2018 in Georgetown, TX. We were delighted to have 24 guests on a hot and sunny day. We had 7 folks from HCSS and 17 from the Austin Cactus & Succulent Society. The photo of Richard & Bruce is courtesy of Rocky Ryan. The rest of the photos are courtesy of Mike Rupe.





SPRING 2018 FIELD TRIP DAY 2

by CACTUS BOY

INKS LAKE STATE PARK

It was wonderful to visit with the HCSS crew at the Cactus Shack open house on June 2nd.

The next day we rendezvous(d) at the Days Inn in Georgetown and drove west on Highway 29 to Inks Lake State Park

This lake is associated with Lake Buchanan. This area is part of the Llano Uplift of Pre-Cambrian (600 Million years ago) origin. Characterized by pink Gneiss, the park presents an excellent example of Texas Hill Country beauty.

David Van Langen was our indigenous tour guide (that is, indigenous to HCSS). Here's a look at the crew.



First we went down a trail by the park HQ and discovered beautiful Texas Persimmon trees and two types of Echinocereus.



Persimmon trees



Echinocereus

Then we went over to the lake to walk on one of the Gneiss “Islands”.



Along with a small yellow sedum and ubiquitous wild flowers



sedum



skeleton leaf



buckwheat



tickweed

we found a pair of collared lizards. The male was quite happy to be photographed, but the female attacked our guide!!



Shocking!! Our last stop was on the opposite end of the park at “The Devil’s Waterhole”. A trail leads up from this point to an overlook up Valley Spring Creek. We saw some fine *Yucca constricta*, *Opuntias* and at least two types of fern.



Yucca constricta



Opuntia



ferns

By 10:30AM we had finished our visit. Talk about hot!! Until next time....

July Cactus of the Month

Kathleen Canty

Name: *Melocactus neryi*

Synonyms: *Cactus neryi* (K. Schumann, Britton & Rose 1922), *Melocactus guaricensis* (Croizat 1950), *Melocactus schultzeanus* (Buining & Brederoo (1973)

Common Names: Turk's Cap, Apple cactus (the Greek name literally means apple cactus)

Habitat / Distribution: western and central Venezuela, northern Brazil, and Suriname

Description: stem, is depressed globose, dark blue-green to yellowish green and 2-7;" ribs 9-15 sharply acute, 1 central spine pointing upward; areoles sunken into notches; cephalia (dense mass of areoles producing flowers and fruits) is broad with fine dense reddish to orangeish red bristles; flowers barely exerted above cephalia pink to purplish crimson, fruits pink to lilac pink sometimes flattened

Cultivation / Growth: occurs at elevations between 100 and 500 m; In the northern portion of the range it occurs in the Llanos and in the south in the Amazon forest (on rocky outcrops). This species occurs on gneissic granitic rocky outcrops. It is pollinated by hummingbirds and dispersed by lizards. It grows in Zone 11, in light shade to full sun. Two phases of growth – juvenile and adult.

Availability: Cites: IUCN Red List – least concern

Remarks / Comments: One potential threat may be burning of the grasslands in the savanna (Llanos of Venezuela). Another potential threat is vandalism and removal of the plant from the wild.

My Experience: The melocacti are very difficult to identify - especially during the juvenile stage (even by experts) and resemble many other globular cactus species. This particular plant was purchased at a cactus show and labeled as an *Echinocactus texensis* (Texas Horse Crippler). After five or six years it had still never bloomed and I began to suspect it was a *Melocactus*. A few months before developing the cephalium, it began changing by becoming more robust and the spines turned from a brownish color to whitish grey. The spines also became more rigid and formed a sort of cage around the plant.

References: Anderson, Edward F. 2001. *The Cactus Family*. Portland, Oregon: Timber Press. 456-457, 463. The online cactus identification guide was also very helpful and can be accessed at www.cactiguide.com.

July Succulent of the Month

Dave Thomas

Plant name --- *Ibervillea tenuisecta*

Family --- Cucurbitaceae

Description --- The plant grows mostly under ground a large caudex up to two feet across and three inches thick. From that grows vines that are very long and will get into your other plants so be mindful of this. Some times sold as *Ibervillea lindheimeri* it is a fat plant that makes a nice add to ones collection.

Origin --- Mexico/U.S.A.

Temperature --- Upper 70's is best for watering, very little during dormancy Nov. through April.

Light --- Strong in direct light is best but can be grown in direct sun.

Water --- Let the plant dry out before watering.

Soil mix --- I use two parts pumice and one part potting soil.

Propagation --- From seed.

This is a wonderful to own and will be with you for many years if properly cared for.



August Succulent of the Month

Jeff Boggan

Monsonia herrei

Synonym: *Sarcocaulon herrei* "BUSHMAN' S CANDLES"

Family: Geraniaceae

Habitat: Namaqualand, Western South Africa. Arid climate, mountain plant, soil is a quartzite grit. Waterfall in the area is less than 10 inches a year. Grows in the rocks where there is good drainage.

Description: A shrub-like xerophytic caudiciform plant. It grows 12 to 20 inches tall. The stems are fleshy with gray to brown thin bark that splits open as the plant grows revealing new green bark beneath. The roots form fleshy tubers. These plants burn easily because of its waxy bark, hence the term "bushman's candles". It does have spines.

Flower: The flower is white with a yellow center which is said to have a nice fragrance. The flowers will remain on the plant for weeks. It blooms late winter through spring.

Cultivation: It is best grown from seed. Although its habitat is the Southern hemisphere seedlings grown in the Northern Hemisphere will grow according to the season. Water during the growth season and resist watering during its dormant season. Apply a light misting to the trunk of the plant during the dormant season to keep it from drying out.



Comments: It grows slow and looks like a bonsai. It would do well in a sunny window. The more sun the better it likes it. Just remember to water once a week when the leaves are sprouting and green. Stop watering when the leaves turn brown and start to drop off. Be sure that it receives good ventilation; remember these plants originate on wind sweep mountain sides.

many unique garden decorations. Additionally, their sunroom houses many other smaller plants in pretty and whimsical containers.



After spending some time talking to Tom and Maryann, and admiring their beautiful place, Mike and I came home with some beautiful plants. We were able to adopt a *Cereus peruvianus monstrose*, a *Pilocereus grovellei*, two *Cleistocactus*, a *Ferocactus gracillis*, a golden barrel cactus, a magnificent *Euphorbia monstrose crestata*, and an *Espostopsis*. They are now located in the front of our house, to welcome our visitors. Karla went to visit the day before together with her son Tristan and got a large *Pilocereus azureus*, a *Pilocereus palmerii*, a *Pachycereus pringlei*, a *Stetsonia coryne* and an *Espostopsis dybrowskii*. As Tristan did all the heavy lifting and loading he got to keep a *Cleistocactus baumannii*, *Cleistocactus samaipatanus*, a huge euphorbia and a golden barrel cactus.





Pachycereus pringlei



Schinopsis dominos



Stetsononia coryne



Melocactus melocatomes



Notocactus magnificus



Mammillaria mystax



Mammillopsis senilis



Melocactus melocotodes



Notocactus leninghausii



Pachycereus marginatus



Echinopsis oxygona



Ferocactus



Hildewintera colademononis



Tephrocactus articulatus



Astrophytum ornatum



Astrophytum asterias



Euphorbia lactea crested



Spring Sale May 12-13 at Metropolitan Multi-Service Center



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