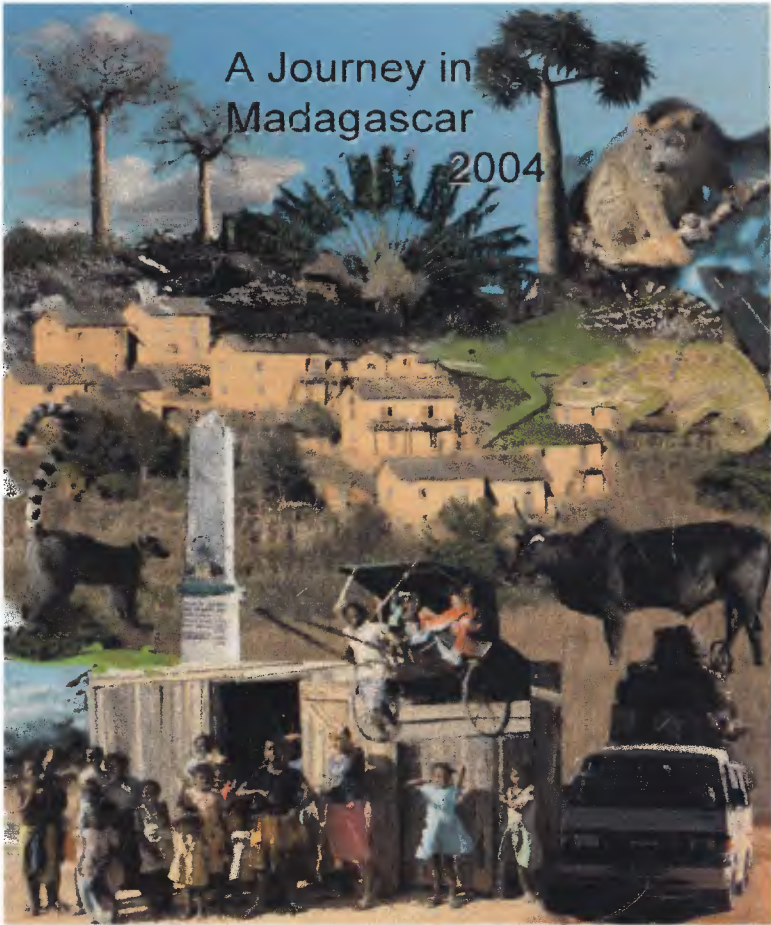


# ESPINAS Y FLORES



A Journey in  
Madagascar  
2004

## Program

**A TASTE OF MADAGASCAR**  
Stan, Tom, Ross and Phil Recount their recent Trip

## Plants of the Month

**Adromischus by Allen Clark and Tephrocactus by John Durham**

**The Newsletter of the San Diego Cactus & Succulent Society Inc.**  
**Affiliated with the Cactus & Succulent Society of America**

**Volume 39 Number 11**  
**Saturday November 13**  
**1:00 PM Room 101 Casa Del Prado**  
**Balboa Park, San Diego CA**

# Presidents Message

October 17, 2004

**G**reetings everyone! What an odd morning today - I awoke to the sound of water coming from the sky - rain at last! After breaking yet another record for days without rain - it is certainly a welcome sight, and I can just hear the plants drinking it up.

We had a very fun and interesting meeting last weekend and, as usual, it was great to see so many of you there. There were a number of announcements of interest. Chris Miller talked about the Fall Festival at the Wild Animal Park (Oct. 30-31) and asked for volunteers to help out with a booth talking with people and selling plants. Though by the time you read this, this event will have passed, I wanted to remind you what an important job Chris and all her volunteers do at the WAP. Not only do they develop and maintain the entire Baja and Old World Succulent Gardens at the Park, they also grow plants and sell them at events to raise money for improvements in the gardens. As a Society, I think this is one of our best and most important projects. Chris can always use more volunteers so please contact her about helping out. **MANY THANKS TO CHRIS AND HER DEDICATED, HARD WORKING CREW!**

Our editor, Paul Steward, is working on a "Bob Taylor 100th Birthday Issue" for December and has asked that if anyone has old pictures of Bob, events at his nursery, of short vignettes about him, please forward them to Paul.

Long time member (and awesome artist) Dorothy Byer has some serious health issues and is needing to let much of her plant collection go. If you are interested in purchasing some of Dorothy's plants, you can contact her at (760)726-1545. We wish Dorothy the very best. 34

We also had some great presentations at the meeting. Phil Bunch, the "King of Pachyform Mesembs," wrote a good, concise article and gave an interesting talk, including many beautifully grown examples, of these great little plants. Thanks Phil! And thanks also for getting the Yahoo Group up and running - this is a fun way to keep in contact, get answers, and stay informed between meetings. Our Main presentation featured Burl Mostel from Rare Plant Research in Oregon. His slide tour of Venezuela was fascinating and beautiful. By the sound of the questions and talk afterward, Burl seems to have created some interest in visiting this country and exploring some of those remote regions. Many thanks to Burl for making the trip down and sharing his adventures.

At the November meeting, we will be taking reservations for our annual HOLIDAY PARTY. It will again be catered by Top Hat and feature gift plants, gift exchange and some surprises - so be sure to save the date, December 11, for this fun party! See you on the 13th! If you have not brought snacks in a while - IT'S YOUR TURN...

Cover: A collage by Stan Yalof

Pam Badger pambad1@mac.com



## October Brag Table Winners

### CACTUS

1st *Opuntia basilaris*

Deya Wilson

2nd *Echinopsis* sp.

Peter Walkowiak

2nd *Mammillaria muehlenpfordii*

Andrew Wilson

3rd *Astrophytum myriostigma*

Mark Fryer



1st time Exhibitor and 1st place  
Winner Deya Wilson

### SUCCULENTS

1st *Pachypodium lealii* v. *saundersonii*

Joe Quijada

2nd *Adenium swazicam*

Peter Walkowiak

2nd *Fouquieria macdougalii*

Allen Clark

3rd *Glottiphyllum parvifolium*

Andrew Wilson

3rd *Ravenala xerophyton*

Rudy Lime

3rd *Euphorbia knuthii*

Rudy Lime

Judged by, Phyllis Flechsig

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## Please I Need Your Help

As Pam Badger let you know at the last meeting I am planning an article celebrating Bob Taylor's 100th year for the December newsletter. I have some biographical material provided by one of our members but would like the article to resemble the television show "This is Your Life" so I am seeking amusing anecdotes, remembrances, one liners and so on... if only to say "Dick and Jane" salute you on your 100th.. I know there were meetings and picnics that took place in his garden and I'm sure more than one of you have a plant or cutting that came by way of Bob. Please help me.. My e-mail and address are on the back of the newsletter. Your contribution does not have to be long, just a paragraph or a few lines.... That's all... Thanks, Paul

# ADROMISCHUS

By Allen Clark

**A**dromischus is a genus from southern Africa belonging to the family Crassulaceae. Its closest relatives within that family are Cotyledon and Tylecodon. The genus name means "thick or stout stalk", and most plants maintain a compact, shrubby form. They display a substantial diversity of leaf shape, color and markings even within a particular species (*A. marianiae* is a good example), and from species to species.



*Adromischus trigynus*

Their distribution and habitat ranges throughout desert and mountainous areas of South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. Many species grow in the fissures of quartz outcroppings in montane areas. Others are common in areas of flat desert and other open land, and enjoy the shade of scrub vegetation for part of the day.



*Adromischus "Frosty"* (a hybrid)

I acquired my first Adromischus at a garden store in Seattle a number of years ago, and still have and enjoy that plant. One of the virtues of the genus is that the plants are generally small, and can be kept that way. I successfully grew that plant and a number of other succulents in a small south-facing upstairs window. In nature, they frequently grow in crevices, and so will tolerate bright sun for long periods during the day. Plants having



reddish or brownish markings will display them best with high light.

I grow my plants in a well-drained mix that contains some organic material as well as sand. I have found that watering is a matter of careful balance, as many plants will drop leaves as a natural means of survival if they're left too dry during hot weather. If they're too wet, they will rot easily, especially when nights are cool. Most of my plants initiated new growth in September, after their summer flowering. Others are beginning a bit later. This is when I begin to be very careful with my watering, with our diminished warmth and shorter day length.



*Adromischus cristatus*

Another advantage of adromischus is that most of them can be propagated easily from leaf cuttings. (Many, in fact, will produce roots from the broken leaf base lying on the top of the mix). After letting the leaf dry out for a few days, place the base into the potting mix. Stabilize the leaf until the roots emerge and anchor the plant. New leaflets will appear from the base, and usually the old leaf will shrivel as the young plant becomes established. Providing some extra warmth for cuttings in propagation will often hasten the process.



Two forms of *Adromischus cristatus*

Here are a few of my favorite species:

*Adromischus cooperi*: Leaves are plump, and range in shape from triangular to elongated. The common feature to all forms is the crinkled edge to the upper margin. This plant is often called the Plover's Egg because of its markings. It's an easy and vigorous species to grow, perfect for the beginner.

*Adromischus cristatus*: This species is also quite variable, but is distinguished by its leaf margins, which resemble a finger-crimped pie crust. Leaf markings vary from spotted to a covering of a whitish frost. Another dis-



*Adromischus cooperi*



Three forms of the highly variable *Adromischus*

tinguishing characteristic is the profusion of brown hair-like aerial roots on the stalk of the plant. These are notably absent in variety *zeyheri*, however; in this variety, the leaves are an apple green, devoid of any markings.

*Adromischus filicaulis*: This species is distinguished by its spindle-shaped leaves. Many have plain green leaves, while others have red to purple markings against a silvery base color. These varieties need high light to display their best.

*Adromischus phillipsiae*: This species is unique in that its flowers are pendulous. They vary in color from deep rose to bright orange-yellow, unlike the subtle pastels and whites of other species.



*Adromischus cooperi* in flower.

The leaves themselves are variable in color and shape, though all are somewhat spoon-shaped and grow in a loose rosette pattern. This characteristic makes the species difficult to grow from cuttings. Some botanists believe that this species is transitional to *Cotyledon*.



*Adromischus phillipsiae*

I hope this very brief discussion will encourage you to try a few plants from this large and confusing genus. I've found my efforts to be very rewarding.

The best reference for this genus is available in our own library: *Adromischus* by John Pilbeam, Chris Rodgeron and Derek Trimble. I've found very brief and superficial discussion in other books, but this slim volume is full of good information.

Good growing!

# Fear Not Tephrocactus

by John Durham

There was a time when the mention of anything related to *Opuntia* conjured up images of ungainly prickly pear with deadly needle-like spines or invisible stinging glochids that seemed to jump off the plant onto unsuspecting hands. These were plants best pruned with a machete. The advice was that everyone should grow one...just one. For this reason, many people, including yours truly, avoided them like the plague. However, in time, the more experienced members of our group enlightened me to the joys of *Opuntia* and the related genera. As I discovered, there is a myriad of interesting and manageable plants to be found in these groups.



*T. geometricus*

Along with *Pterocactus*, *Maihueiopsis* and *Cumulopuntia*, *Tephrocactus* is one such genera containing compact and beautiful plants. The name *Tephrocactus* is derived from the



*T. paprycanthus*

Greek word, *tephra*, meaning ashes. Much of the species share a dull, ash-colored skin. Originally in Genus *Opuntia*, they were moved into their own genus and later gained additional species from Genus *Cumulopuntia*. There are six distinct species recognized, but that's where the argument starts. With such a variation in spination and common characteristics, varieties are sometimes identified as their own species or closely related plants are lumped into Genus *Tephrocactus*. It's best left to the experts to sort out the synonyms. They have the distinct jointed segments of *Opuntia*, with stems that are cylindrical in shape and a branched structure like a low bush. The jointed segments can be tall and fragile and easily knocked loose as in *T. articulatus* or low and compact, as with *T. geometricus*. They can have long, wide, white spines as in *T. articulatus v. paprycanthus* or compact tufts of glochids and no spines as in *T. molinensis*. *T. weberii* is covered with long, wavy translucent spines and *T. articulatus v. inermis* appears to have





*T. weberii*

no spines at all. *T. articulatus* v. *paprycanthus* gave the genus its common nickname of 'Paperspine Cactus', or for some of us, 'Papierstachelkaktus'. *T. articulatus* v. *inermis* is commonly sold as the 'Pinecone Cactus'.

A native of Argentina, *Tephrocactus* grow at an altitude between 2000 and 8000 feet in the Northwest corner of the country on the slope of the Andean Cordilleras range. Located just below the Tropic of Capricorn, in the provinces of Salta, Jujuy and Catamarca, they share habitat with *Opuntia*, *Gymnocalycium*, *Cereus*, *Trichocereus*, *Echinopsis*, *Pterocactus*, *Cleistocactus* and *Parodia*. The region is temperate, averaging mid 40 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter and mid 70 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer. This is the Southern Hemisphere, so the seasons are reversed. The average yearly rainfall is roughly 25 to 28 inches with most occurring in the summer months, December through March.

Propagation is by cutting or seed, but with the stem segments of some breaking off so easily, one just needs to place the detached piece in

dry soil and wait. It's an easy plant to share with friends. Soil mix should be a little calcareous, but any well draining soil mix will support it. It likes full sun and liberal watering in the dry months, but I suspect a bit of stress from withholding water can effect the skin color and whiten up the larger flat spines in *T. articulatus* v. *paprycanthus*. I don't know of any pests that effect them and I have yet to see a mealie on a *Tephrocactus*. Perhaps the plant tastes like ashes, but I suspect that the tough exterior skin and open form of the plant doesn't appeal to them. Not an easy bloomer, they may need a cooler, longer winter than we experience in San Diego. They do not grow fast, but the are hardy and easy to grow.

Even though *Tephrocactus* share the traits of the parent, *Opuntia*, including the spines and glochids, this is one you won't need a machete to prune. **Fear not!**



*T. molinensis*



# CSSA Promotional Article

**2**005 would be an excellent year to join CSSA as you would be able to attend our **biennial convention** scheduled for August 5-10 in **Scottsdale, Arizona**. Held in the heart of cactus country, the upcoming convention promises to be one of the best ever.

**The Scottsdale Plaza Resort** will be the most luxurious venue a CSSA convention has ever experienced. It's admittedly hot in the Phoenix area in August, which is why we were able to secure a room rate of \$89 per night for rooms normally going for \$300 or more per night. But everything inside is air-conditioned, of course; and you won't have to travel outside from one location to another as we did some years ago at the convention held at Arizona State University in Tempe. An outstanding array of speakers has been lined up including **Sheila Collenette, Chuck Hanson, John Lavranos, Len Newton, and the Fitz-Maurices**. Plant vendors and the traditional **rare-plant auction** will offer a tempting array of plants and plant-related items. Field trip day will feature trips to the **Desert Botanical Garden, the Boyce Thompson Arboretum, the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum** and a trip out into the **desert** to see **plants in habitat**. You'll be wishing you could clone yourself. Throughout the convention there will be plenty of activities scheduled for non-cactophile spouses and

children. Finally there will be a week long **pre-convention tour** to the **Four Corners area**, an area of spectacular scenic beauty and home to some of our choicest North American cacti. For more information and future updates on the convention visit the CSSA website.

Of course, there is no reason not to join the CSSA right now. You would still get a complete set of journal and newsletter issues for 2004. Under our new editor, Russell Wagner, the journal sets a new standard for innovative lay out with all articles lavishly illustrated in color. Peter Bockenthien, editor of *To the Point*, provides members with an interesting array of useful information in the newsletter. Both publications are worthy additions to your library. Joining the CSSA also gives you access to our **Seed Depot**, which provides members with seeds of rare cacti and succulents at very reasonable prices. For a complete list of other CSSA services to members see the listing in any issue of the CSSA newsletter, *To the Point* in your society's library or visit the CSSA website at <http://www.cssainc.org>. Membership information is available at both of the above-mentioned sites. A CSSA membership offers a lot for the very modest sum of \$35 a year.

Good Growing!  
Bob Barth Publicity Chair

# A Taste of Madagascar

November Program

**E**arlier this year, four SDCSS members wandered through a few parts of this great island. We marveled at plants, animals, ecology, gems, geology, and the people at this cross-roads of Gondwana. We four, Phil, Ross, Tom, and I will give a glimpse of our experiences at the November meeting.

About 80% of plant and wildlife was endemic. You'll view giant Baobabs, ancient Alluadias, plants that exist nowhere else, lemurs, reptiles and amphibians, birds, and experience a slice of the local arts and culture. Of necessity, we'll skip lightly, saving details for a future talk. And would we go again. You bet!

*Stan Yalof*



# Upcoming Events

## 2004

**Mid-October** : CSSA Tour to Chile, home to Copiapoa, Eriosyce, Eulychnia and others. See itinerary in last issue of To The Point.

**December 3 & 4** : "December Nights" in Balboa Park

**December 4**: 2005 Anza Borrego Desert Nature Center - Holiday Fiesta and Open House. 4-7 PM (760) 767-3098

**December 11**: SDC&SS Holiday Party. Details to follow

## 2005

**January 8**: San Diego Bromeliad Society --- Exotic Bromeliad Auction 10:00 AM Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 104. information: rvitacco@cox.net. Proceeds support the World Bromeliad Conference, San Diego, 2006. Plant Donations accepted.

**January 15** : CSSA Board Meeting at Huntington Botanical Gardens

**April 16** : CSSA Board Meeting at Huntington Botanical Gardens

**May 21** : First Annual Encinitas Garden Festival and Gardeners Marketplace. Info: arosado@ci.encinitas.ca.us

**July 1 - 3** : CSSA Annual Show and Sale at Huntington Botanical Gardens

**August 5 - 11** : CSSA 31st Biennial Convention, Scottsdale Plaza Resort, Phoenix, Arizona Host Club: The Central Arizona Cactus & Succulent Society Special Rate for Rooms \$89 per night (Normally \$300)

Convention Chairman, Duke Benadom Program Chairman, Leo Martin e-mail: leo1010@attglobal.net Confirmed speakers already include Sheila Collette, Chuck Hanson, John Lavranos, Mark Muradian, Gard Roper, Guy Wrinkle.

## 2006

**January 14** CSSA Board Meeting, Ahmanson Class Room, HBG

**April 15** CSSA Board Meeting, Ahmanson Class Room, HBG

**June 30 - July 2** CSSA Show and Sale, HBG

**August 17 - 20** British C&SS International Convention at Loughborough University in England. Speakers from Argentina, Australia, South Africa and the USA already confirmed. For further details contact David Kirkbright, 71 Lakes Lane, Newport Pagnell, MK16 8HT, England, or e-mail at: Kirkbright@bcandss.fsnet.co.uk

September 2 : 23rd Huntington Symposium, HBG

September 3 : CSSA Board Meeting, Ahmanson Class Room, HBG

September : Succulenticon 2006 in Perth, Western Australia. Sponsored by the C&SS of West Australia, Contact Shirley Laslett, Secretary, at 348 Hardey Rd, Cloverdale, W. Australia 6105, Australia.

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Brag Table: Kay Quijada

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Susan Hopkins

Winter Show: Ed DeLollis

History: Terry Parr

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Balboa Park Desert Garden: Susan Hopkins

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